PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

SIXTH SERIES—VOLUME 229

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FORTY-SECOND YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 1992-93

COMPRISING PERIOD
19 July—27 July 1993

HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

(FORMED BY THE RT. HON. JOHN MAJOR, MP, JUNE 1993)

PRIME MINISTER, FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE—The Rt. Hon. John Major, MP
LORD CHANCELLOR—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mackay of Clashfern
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS—The Rt. Hon. Douglas Hurd, CBE, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke, QC, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT—The Rt. Hon. Michael Howard, QC, MP
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY)—The Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT—The Rt. Hon. John MacGregor, OBE, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE—The Rt. Hon. Malcolm Rifkind, QC, MP
LORD PRIVY SEAL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Wakeham
LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—The Rt. Hon. Tony Newton, OBE, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT—The Rt. Hon. John Gummer, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NATIONAL HERITAGE—The Rt. Hon. Peter Brooke, CH, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EMPLOYMENT—The Rt. Hon. David Hunt, MBE, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SOCIAL SECURITY—The Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER—The Rt. Hon. William Waldegrave, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND—The Rt. Hon. Ian Lang, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND—The Rt. Hon. Sir Patrick Mayhew, QC, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION—The Rt. Hon. John Patten, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HEALTH—The Rt. Hon. Virginia Bottomley, MP
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD—The Rt. Hon. Gillian Shephard, MP
CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY—The Rt. Hon. Michael Portillo, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES—The Rt. Hon. John Redwood, MP

LAW OFFICERS

ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Sir Nicholas Lyell, QC, MP
LORD-ADVOCATE—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Rodger of Earlsferry, QC
SOLICITOR-GENERAL—Sir Derek Spencer, QC, MP
SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND—Thomas Dawson, Esq, QC

MINISTERS NOT IN THE CABINET

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY—The Rt. Hon. Richard Ryder, OBE, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE, FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE—
Minister for Overseas Development—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Chalker of Wallasey
The Rt. Hon. Alastair Goodlad, MP
The Rt. Hon. Douglas Hogg, QC, MP
David Heathcoat-Amory, Esq, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE, HOME OFFICE—
The Rt. Hon. The Earl Ferrers
Peter Lloyd, Esq, MP
David Maclean, Esq, MP
FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY—Stephen Dorrell, Esq, MP
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Sir John Cope, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY—
Minister for Energy—Tim Eggar, Esq, MP
Minister for Industry—The Rt. Hon. Tim Sainsbury, MP
Minister for Trade—Richard Needham, Esq, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT—
Minister for Public Transport—The Rt. Hon. Roger Freeman, MP
Minister for Aviation and Shipping—The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Caithness
MINISTERS OF STATE, MINISTRY OF DEFENCE—
Minister of State for Defence Procurement—Jonathan Aitken, Esq, MP
Minister of State for the Armed Forces—Jeremy Hanley, Esq, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT—
Minister for Housing, Inner Cities and Construction—The Rt. Hon. Sir George Young, MP
Minister for Local Government and Planning—David Curry, Esq, MP
Minister for the Environment and Countryside—Tim Yeo, Esq, MP
MINISTER OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT—Michael Forsyth, Esq, MP
MINISTER OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY—
Minister for Social Security and Disabled People—The Rt. Hon. Nicholas Scott, MBE, MP
MINISTER OF STATE, SCOTTISH OFFICE—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, QC

MINISTERS OF STATE, NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE—
Robert Atkins, Esq, MP
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Wheeler, MP
MINISTER OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Blatch, CBE
MINISTER OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—
Minister for Health—Dr. Brian Mawhinney, MP
MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD—Michael Jack, Esq, MP
MINISTER OF STATE, WELSH OFFICE—The Rt. Hon. Sir Wyn Roberts, MP

DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND MINISTERS

Agriculture, Fisheries and Food—
MINISTER—The Rt. Hon. Gillian Shephard, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—Michael Jack, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES—
The Earl Howe
The Hon. Nicholas Soames, MP

Defence—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Malcolm Rifkind, QC, MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE PROCUREMENT—Jonathan Aitken, Esq, MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES—Jeremy Hanley, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—The Lord Cecil of Essenden

Education—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Patten, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Blatch, CBE
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCHOOLS—Eric Forth, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION—Timothy Boswell, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Robin Squire, Esq, MP

Employment—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. David Hunt, MBE, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—Michael Forsyth, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Viscount Ullswater
Miss Ann Widdecombe, MP

Environment—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Gummer, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Housing, Inner Cities and Construction—The Rt. Hon. Sir George Young, MP
Minister for Local Government and Planning—David Curry, Esq, MP
Minister for the Environment and Countryside—Tim Yeo, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Strathclyde
Tony Baldry, Esq, MP

Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Douglas Hurd, CBE, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Overseas Development—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Chalker of Wallasey
The Right Hon. Alastair Goodlad, MP
The Rt. Hon. Douglas Hogg, QC, MP
David Heathcoat-Amory, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—The Hon. Mark Lennox-Boyd, MP

Health—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HEALTH—The Rt. Hon. Virginia Bottomley, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
Minister for Health—Dr. Brian Mawhinney, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Hon. Tom Sackville, MP
The Baroness Cumberlege, CBE
John Bowis, Esq, OBE, MP

Home Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT—The Rt. Hon. Michael Howard, QC, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. The Earl Ferrers
Peter Lloyd, Esq, MP
David Maclean, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Charles Wardle, Esq, MP

Law Officers' Department—
ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Sir Nicholas Lyell, QC, MP
SOLICITOR-GENERAL—Sir Derek Spencer, QC, MP

Lord Advocate's Department—
LORD-ADVOCATE—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Rodger of Earlsferry, QC
SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND—Thomas Dawson, Esq, QC

Lord Chancellor's Department—
LORD CHANCELLOR—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mackay of Clashfern
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY—John M. Taylor, Esq, MP

National Heritage—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NATIONAL HERITAGE—The Rt. Hon. Peter Brooke, CH, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Iain Sproat, Esq, MP

Northern Ireland Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND—The Rt. Hon. Sir Patrick Mayhew, QC, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Robert Atkins, Esq, MP
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Wheeler, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Earl of Arran
Michael Ancram, Esq, MP

Paymaster General's Office—
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Sir John Cope, MP

Privy Council Office—
LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—The Rt. Hon. Tony Newton, OBE, MP
LORD PRIVY SEAL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Wakeham

Public Service and Science, Office of—
CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER—The Rt. Hon. William Waldegrave, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY—David Davis, Esq, MP

Scottish Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND—The Rt. Hon. Ian Lang, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Fraser of Carmyllie, QC
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, MP
Allan Stewart, Esq, MP
Sir Hector Monro, MP

Social Security—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SOCIAL SECURITY—The Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
Minister for Social Security and Disabled People—The Rt. Hon. Nicholas Scott, MBE, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Henley
Alistair Burt, Esq, MP
William Hague, Esq, MP

Trade and Industry—
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY)—The Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Energy—Tim Eggar, Esq, MP
Minister for Industry—The Rt. Hon. Tim Sainsbury, MP
Minister for Trade—Richard Needham, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CORPORATE AFFAIRS—Neil Hamilton, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TECHNOLOGY—Patrick McLoughlin, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND SMALL FIRMS—The Baroness Denton, CBE

Transport—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT—The Rt. Hon. John MacGregor, OBE, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Public Transport—The Rt. Hon. Roger Freeman, MP
Minister for Aviation and Shipping—The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Caithness
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Robert Key, Esq, MP (Minister for Roads and Traffic)
Steve Norris, Esq, MP (Minister for Transport in London)

Treasury—

PRIME MINISTER, FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE—The Rt. Hon. John Major, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke, QC, MP
CHIEF SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Michael Portillo, MP
FINANCIAL SECRETARY—Stephen Dorrell, Esq, MP
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Sir John Cope, MP
ECONOMIC SECRETARY—Anthony Nelson, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Richard Ryder, OBE, MP
LORDS COMMISSIONERS—
Irvine Patnick, Esq, OBE, MP
Nicholas Baker, Esq, MP
Timothy Wood, Esq, MP
Timothy Kirkhope, Esq, MP
Andrew Mackay, Esq, MP
ASSISTANT WHIPS—
Robert G. Hughes, Esq, MP
James Arbuthnot, Esq, MP
Andrew Mitchell, Esq, MP
Michael Brown, Esq, MP
Derek Conway, Esq, MP

Welsh Office—

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES—The Rt. Hon. John Redwood, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Sir Wyn Roberts, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Gwilym Jones, Esq, MP

Her Majesty's Household—

LORD CHAMBERLAIN—The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Airlie, KT, GCVO
LORD STEWARD—The Viscount Ridley, TD
MASTER OF THE HORSE—The Lord Somerleyton
TREASURER—Greg Knight, Esq, MP
COMPTROLLER—David Lightbown, Esq, MP
VICE-CHAMBERLAIN—Sydney Chapman, Esq, MP
CAPTAIN OF THE HONOURABLE CORPS OF GENTLEMEN-AT-ARMS—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Hesketh
CAPTAIN OF THE QUEEN'S BODYGUARD OF THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD—The Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne
LORDS IN WAITING—The Viscount Long, CBE, The Viscount Astor, The Viscount St. Davids, The Viscount Goschen
BARONESS IN WAITING—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Trumpington

SECOND CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSIONER, REPRESENTING CHURCH COMMISSIONERS—The Rt. Hon. Michael Alison, MP

...RIDGE
REFERENCE LIBRARY

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

THE SPEAKER—The Rt. Hon. Betty Boothroyd, MP

CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Michael Morris, Esq, MP

FIRST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Geoffrey Lofthouse, Esq, MP

SECOND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Dame Janet Fookes, MP

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL—

Dr. John G. Blackburn, MP, Joe Benton, Esq, MP, Frank Cook, Esq, MP, Patrick Cormack, Esq, MP, Mrs. Gwyneth Dunwoody, MP, Alan Haselhurst, Esq, MP, Robert Hicks, Esq, MP, James Hill, Esq, MP, Norman Hogg, Esq, MP, Roy Hughes, Esq, MP, Sir John Hunt, MP, Barry Jones, Esq, MP, Martyn Jones, Esq, MP, Sir James Kilfedder, MP, Sir David Knox, MP, John McWilliam, Esq, MP, Michael J. Martin, Esq, MP, Iain Mills, Esq, MP, Edward O'Hara, Esq, MP, Sir Giles Shaw, MP, Michael Shersby, Esq, MP, Roger Sims, Esq, MP, Mrs. Ann Winterton, MP, Nicholas Winterton, Esq, MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION—

The Rt. Hon. The Speaker (Chairman), The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP, The Rt. Hon. Alan Beith, MP, The Rt. Hon. Paul Channon, MP, The Rt. Hon. Tony Newton, OBE, MP, The Rt. Hon. Peter Shore, MP

SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION—R. W. G. Wilson

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—

Sir Clifford Boulton, KCB (Chairman), Sir Alan Urwick, KCVO, CMG, D. J. T. Englefield, J. Rodda, FCA, I. D. Church, Mrs. S. J. Harrison

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—B. A. Wilson

OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

SPEAKER'S SECRETARY—N. Bevan, CB

ASSISTANT SECRETARY TO THE SPEAKER—Mrs. M. E. Thomson

TRAINBEARER—D. J. Lord, MBE

DEPUTY TRAINBEARER—P. L. Warwick

DIARY SECRETARY—Mrs. S. Norvell

SPEAKER'S CHAPLAIN—Rev. Canon D. C. Gray, TD, PhD

SPEAKER'S COUNSEL—H. Knorpel, CB, QC, T. J. G. Pratt, CB

ASSISTANT TO SPEAKER'S COUNSEL—P. Harvey, CB

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS

SECRETARY TO THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Ms P. A. Helme

DEPARTMENT OF THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—Sir Clifford Boulton, KCB

CLERK ASSISTANT—D. W. Limon, CB

CLERK OF COMMITTEES—J. F. Sweetman, CB, TD

PRINCIPAL CLERKS—
- W. R. McKay (Public Bills)
- C. B. Winnifrith (Table Office)
- R. B. Sands (Select Committees)
- G. Cubie (Overseas Office)
- A. J. Hastings (Journal Office)
- R. J. Willoughby (Private Bills)
- D. G. Millar (Select Committees)
- M. R. Jack, PhD (Standing Committees)
- R. W. G. Wilson (Domestic Committees)
- W. A. Proctor (Financial Committees)

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL CLERKS—S. A. L. Panton, Mrs. J. Sharpe, Ms A. Milner-Barry, F. A. Cranmer, R. J. Rogers, C. R. M. Ward, PhD, Ms H. E. Irwin, D. W. N. Doig, D. L. Natzler, E. P. Silk, A. R. Kennon, L. C. Laurence Smyth, S. J. Patrick, D. J. Gerhold, C. J. Poyser, D. F. Harrison, S. J. Priestley, A. H. Doherty, P. A. Evans, R. I. S. Phillips, R. G. James

SENIOR CLERKS—Ms P. A. Helme, D. R. Lloyd, R. A. Lambert, B. M. Hutton, J. S. Benger, DPhil, Miss E. C. Samson, N. P. Walker, M. D. Hamlyn, P. C. Seaward, DPhil, C. G. Lee, C. D. Stanton, H. R. Neilson (acting), D. Steel (acting), D. J. Clarke (acting), P. E. Bolton (acting)

CLERKS OF DOMESTIC COMMITTEES—K. J. Brown, P. G. Moon

ASSISTANT CLERKS—A. Y. A. Azad, C. A. Shaw, P. M. Hensher, Ms L. M. Gardner, F. J. Reid, M. Hennessy, G. R. Devine

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—G. E. Clayton, Miss R. J. Challis, S. D. Barrett

HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—L. L. Kaye, A. P. Hubner, Miss S. J. Fox, Mrs. P. Fisher, F. McShane, J. D. Whatley, M. Clark, Miss A. M. Loader, Miss F. L. Allingham, Mrs. L. M. Nugent, J. A. L. Dresner, M. P. Oxborough, N. P. Wright, Ms C. M. Genis, Mrs. C. Oxborough, R. W. A. Barrand

SPECIALIST ASSISTANTS—J. K. Wheatley, Miss S. Phipps, PhD, A. J. Wood, Miss C. M. French, Ms C. L. Auchterlonie, Miss J. Towns, C. B. Dibben, J. Cable, V. A. A. Mengot, R. J. Gartside

EDITORIAL SUPERVISOR OF THE VOTE—B. Tidball, DEPUTY—Miss L. Lewis, ASSISTANTS—Miss B. Balcomb, J. Puricelli, K. B. Wood, P. D. Howlett, Mrs. L. R. Shade, P. A. Jack, P. L. J. Sullivan

SECRETARIES—Mrs. G. E. C. Sclater (Clerk of the House), Mrs. S. D. Pamphlett, Miss S. P. Chubb, Mrs. D. Gent, Miss A. T. Power, Miss D. J. Somers, Mrs. K. J. Georgiou, Mrs. S. A. Carrino, Miss L. Young, Mrs. H. Agnew, Miss S. Littlebury, Mrs. J. Stott, Mrs. A. M. Douglas, Miss K. McClelland, Mrs. B. Hunter

EXAMINERS OF PETITIONS FOR PRIVATE BILLS—R. J. Willoughby, B. P. Keith

REGISTRAR OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS—R. B. Sands

TAXING OFFICER—R. J. Willoughby

SUPERINTENDING CLERK—R. A. Broomfield

CHIEF OFFICE CLERKS—Miss A. Fuki, J. Hole, Miss E. Segal, A. Catinella, Mrs. D. B. Nelson, Miss C. A. Benger

DEPARTMENT OF THE SERJEANT AT ARMS

SERJEANT AT ARMS—Sir Alan Urwick, KCVO, CMG

DEPUTY SERJEANT AT ARMS—P. N. W. Jennings

ASSISTANT SERJEANT AT ARMS—M. J. A. Cummins

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SERJEANTS AT ARMS—P. A. J. Wright, J. M. Robertson

CLERK IN CHARGE—Miss S. J. Scott Thomson

ADMISSION ORDER OFFICE—A. Chipperfield, BEM, Mrs. S. J. Warren, A. J. Spencer

PRINCIPAL DOORKEEPER—R. H. Usher

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL DOORKEEPERS—C. E. Gray, J. C. W. Cooper

SENIOR DOORKEEPERS—R. A. F. Chapman, D. Shiels, J. Town, R. J. Tyack, R. D. Walkerdine

HEAD OFFICE KEEPER—M. Bryant

SENIOR OFFICE KEEPERS—V. M. Roccia, K. R. Dickason, C. R. Harris, BEM

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MANAGER—Mrs. M. Mainland

NURSING SISTER—Miss S. Todd

PARLIAMENTARY WORKS DIRECTORATE—

DIRECTOR OF WORKS—H. P. Webber

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF WORKS—B. C. Sewell

PRINCIPAL WORKS OFFICERS—A. Makepeace, R. Bentley, G. Goode, B. R. Hall, C. Hillier, M. Moone, J.F. Moore, M. Trott

SENIOR PROFESSIONAL TECHNICAL OFFICERS—C. Brown, C. Cowell, J. Eaton, T. Fox, S. Howard, T. Jardine, B. O'Boyle, J. Stone

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER—A. Blake

DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER—Mrs. S. Morrison

DEPARTMENT OF THE LIBRARY

LIBRARIAN—D. J. T. Englefield

DEPUTY LIBRARIAN—Miss J. B. Tanfield

LIBRARY AND RESEARCH—

ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS (Heads of Division)—S. Z. Young, Miss P. J. Baines, B.Litt

DEPUTY ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS (Heads of Section)—K. G. Cuninghame, Mrs. J. M. Wainwright, FIInfSc, C. C. Pond, PhD, Mrs. C. B. Andrews, R. C. Clements, Mrs. J. M. Lourie, R. J. Ware, DPhil, C. R. Barclay, Mrs. J. M. Fiddick

LIBRARY CLERKS, SENIOR—Ms F. Poole, Mrs. C. M. Gillie, Ms C. E. Nield, R. J. Twigger, T. N. Edmonds, R. J. Cracknell, CStat, Miss O. M. Gay, Miss B. McInnes, B. K. Winetrobe, Miss M. Baber, Ms A. Walker, Mrs. H. V. Holden, Mrs. G. L. Allen, Mrs. P. Carling, Miss J. Seaton, FLA, A. J. L. Crompton, Mrs. K. Greener, Mrs. P. Strickland, Miss V. A. Miller, Ms H. M. Jeffs, S. A. Wise (period), Mrs. J. Roll (temporary)

ASSISTANT—R. S. Dewdney, Dr. A. Davies, Ms W. T. Wilson, E. H. Wood, Miss N. J. Chedgey, M. Nawaz, P. Bowers, PhD, M. P. Hillyard, T. E. Dodd, A. C. Seely, Ms J. K. Dyson, Miss F. M. Watson, G. Danby, PhD, W. F. Lea, PhD, Miss P. M. Hughes, PhD

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Mrs. P. A. Ball, P. W. Skerratt (period), J. A. Prince, MLS (acting)

SENIOR LIBRARY EXECUTIVES—K. N. H. Parry, ALA, Miss C. E. Fretten, ALA, Mrs. P. V. Wiles, Miss I. O. White, ALA

EDUCATION OFFICER—Mrs. C. Weeds; ASSISTANT—Mrs. C. C. O'Connor

HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—E. L. V. MacGregor, Ms B. A. Rowlands, ALA, J. P Brevitt

HIGHER LIBRARY EXECUTIVES—Mrs. D. W. Clark, Miss M. H. Fletcher, Mrs. G. C. Brown, Mrs. P. E. Cook, ALA, Ms H. Armstrong, Miss E. J. Jones, ALA, G. Haig, Miss G. L. Cooper, Mrs. E. H. Riley, ALA, Mrs. F. M. Ward, Mrs. M. A. Azim, ALA, Ms F. Whittle, T. C. Holmes, C. M. Sear, Ms J. B. Hall, ALA, R. Freebury, ALA, A. D. Parker, ALA, Ms Z. A. Smallwood (acting), Miss C. M. Blair, ALA (acting)

EDITOR, WEEKLY BULLETIN—D. B. Inns

LIBRARY EXECUTIVES—P. E. M. Ward, Mrs. J. M. Smith, ALA, Miss J. Lyall, ALA, Miss C. Owens, Miss D. J. Gillings, Miss L. K. Fleming, Mrs. J. Priestley, Miss C. M. A. Chambers, Miss P. Rix, Miss S. Pepin, ALA, P. C. Tomes, R. O. Steeden, G. G. Newell, Miss A. Hatton, Miss V. S. Spratt, B. Smith (acting)

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Miss N. Harlond, Mrs. A. J. H. Mara, D. A. Brown, M. Greenhill (Head Library Attendant), Ms J. Fessey, A. J. Fuller, Miss J. M. Perkes, Mrs. H. Onyskiw, A. Clark, Miss A. Gual, Mrs. S. P. Sinclair, Ms M. A. Moulton, Miss N. M. Sutherland, Miss K. E. Susilovic, Mrs. C. Millar, Mrs. P. M. Burnett, F. M. Codd (acting)

VOTE OFFICE—

DELIVERER OF THE VOTE—H. C. Foster

DEPUTY DELIVERER OF THE VOTE—J. F. Collins ASSISTANT DELIVERER OF THE VOTE—O. B. T. Sweeney

BOOKSHOP MANAGER—C. D. Lister HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICER—B. G. Underwood

SUPERINTENDING CLERKS—Mrs. S. Fuzio, A. J. Ashton

VOTE OFFICE ASSISTANTS—G. E. Howard, C. P. Williams, P. Hannett, J. Harrington, M. D. Cook

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

DIRECTOR—J. Rodda, FCA

FEES OFFICE—

ACCOUNTANT—A. J. Lewis

DEPUTY ACCOUNTANT—A. R. Marskell ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANTS—M. Fletcher, Mrs. G. Crowther

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Mrs. D. C. Hill, N. P. Crawley HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Mrs. J. Peach, Mrs. G. M. Baker, Miss R. Harrison, Ms M. R. Morris, G. L. Turner EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—D. M. Allen, D. J. D. Woods, Ms P. R. Mills, Miss S. V. A. Weaver, P. H. Olden, A. D. Rowlands, Ms S. French, Miss T. D. Ruewell, Miss M. Oliver, Miss D. M. McGuire, Mrs. S. M. Chalmers, R. [illegible] P. Edwards, Mrs. C. J. Stockton, A. C. Martin

FINANCE OFFICE—

HEAD OF OFFICE—M. J. Barram, IPFA, MBCS,

ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANTS—Miss M. M. McColl, R. H. A. Russell, ACMA

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Mrs. N. Norman, Ms S. Peterson, IPFA (secondment)

HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—P. McGuinness, Ms K. Bigwood EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Miss D. E. Johnson, P. F. Dawson, Miss V. E. Wilson, Miss D. O. McElderry, P. Barratt (temporary), Miss V. Browne (temporary), Miss R. Astbury (temporary)

ESTABLISHMENTS OFFICE—

HEAD OF OFFICE—B. A. Wilson

DEPUTY HEAD OF OFFICE—J. A. Robb

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER—Miss P. J. Hurford HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICER—M. Page

PERSONNEL OFFICE MANAGER—Miss J. Bremner PERSONNEL OFFICERS—C. L. Watson, Miss C. E. Jackson, Mrs. R. A. Baker, Mrs. A. McGuinn

COMPUTER OFFICE—

COMPUTER OFFICER—R. S. Morgan, FBCS, FIInfSc NETWORK PLANNING OFFICER—J. Fishenden

NETWORK SUPPORT OFFICER—Mrs. J. M. Cleveland COMPUTER SUPPORT MANAGER—Miss M. Morrison

EXECUTIVE OFFICER—C. J. Bumstead

COMMON SERVICES UNIT—

HEAD OF UNIT—V. H. Stocker HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—R. Gunn, M. J. H. Caswell

INTERNAL AUDITOR—A. A. Cameron SENIOR AUDITOR—S. J. Lewis

STAFF INSPECTOR—R. C. Collins

WELFARE OFFICER—Mrs. A. Mossop

DEPARTMENT OF THE OFFICIAL REPORT

EDITOR—I. D. Church

DEPUTY EDITOR—P. Walker

PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT EDITORS—R. V. Hadlow, J. Gourley, W. G. Garland, Miss H. A. Hales

ASSISTANT EDITORS—Ms C. V. Grainger, Miss V. A. A. Clarke, Miss L. Sutherland, S. M. Hutchinson, C. Fogarty

COMMITTEE SUB-EDITORS—D. Crosswell, Mrs. A. Roberts, Miss V. A. Widgery, Mrs. H. J. G. Natzler, Miss M. Babington, Mrs. A. Street, L. Gilmore, Ms G. Hardgrave, P. Oglethorpe, P. Hadlow, Miss C. Hanly, M. Watson, Ms K. Stewart, J. Ransley, Mrs. E. J. Gregory

REPORTERS—Miss E. Morris, Ms J. Dall, Ms P. Kelly, Miss K. Myers, Ms J. Warrington, Ms D. Jones, Mrs. J. Symons, Mrs. J. L. Davies, Miss E. A. Jarka, Miss J. Goodman, Miss J. Levy

PRINCIPAL TRANSCRIBER—D. N. Harrington, MBE

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL TRANSCRIBERS—Mrs. M. J. Harding, Miss J. Beck (acting)

IT MANAGERS—Miss J. L. Brown, R. Daniels

PRINCIPAL HANSARD ASSISTANT—Miss R. Washington

SENIOR HANSARD ASSISTANT—J. Brake

ANNUNCIATOR SUPERINTENDENT—A. E. Thompson

REFRESHMENT DEPARTMENT

DIRECTOR OF CATERING SERVICES—Mrs. S. J. Harrison, MHCIMA

OPERATIONS MANAGER—N. M. Hutson, MHCIMA

CATERING ACCOUNTANT—D. R. W. Wood, FCA

EXECUTIVE CHEF—I. Gabay, MBE

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATOR—Mrs. S. M. Nicholls, FHCIMA, MIPM

CATERING MANAGER, HOUSE OF COMMONS—P. Gale, MHCIMA

CATERING MANAGER, BELLAMY'S—Ms S. Hovells, LHCIMA

BANQUETING MANAGER—C. J. Griffiths

ASSISTANT BANQUETING MANAGER—Miss C. Skidmore, LHCIMA

ASSISTANT CATERING MANAGER—M. W. E. Johnson

ASSISTANT CATERING ACCOUNTANT—Mrs. B. A. Langley

PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR—Mrs. A. G. Lunn

DEPUTY EXECUTIVE CHEF—S. Norris

SYSTEMS MANAGER—D. Capstick

SHORTHAND WRITER TO THE HOUSE—Mrs. P. J. Woolgar

HEAD OF SECURITY—Chief Superintendent A. E. F. Longhurst, LVO

DEPUTY HEAD OF SECURITY—Superintendent C. M. Harris

POSTMASTER—J. Arnold

TRANSPORT MANAGER—J. W. Jones

SUPERVISOR OF PARLIAMENTARY BROADCASTING—Miss M. E. Douglas

DIRECTOR OF THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY—Dr. M. G. Norton

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
[WHICH OPENED 27 APRIL 1992]

FORTY-SECOND YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SIXTH SERIES **VOLUME 229**

TWENTY-THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1992-93

House of Commons

Monday 19 July 1993

The House met at half-past Two o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Oral Answers to Questions

WALES

Rural Post Offices

1. **Mr. Martyn Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many representations he has received on the subject of rural post offices since 1 May; and if he will make a statement.

The Minister of State, Welsh Office (Sir Wyn Roberts): Seventeen such representations have been received, including a petition with 1,098 signatures.

Mr. Jones: I thank the Minister for that reply. I am not surprised that he received so many representations in one month. I have received 10,000 responses that have been directed at the Secretary of State for Social Security, to whom most reponses would be directed. Will the Minister talke to his right hon. Friend and ensure that the Secretary of State does not reduce payments through the Post Office but actively encourages those payments, because the Minister and the Secretary of State for Wales have held their posts long enough to know that post offices are essential to rural areas in my constituency and those of other hon. Members in Wales?

Sir Wyn Roberts: The hon. Gentleman will be aware that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave an assurance on 18 May that pensioners and other beneficiaries may continute to collect their benefit from a post office if that is their preference. That was confirmed the following day by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Social Security, who explained during a debate on the matter that the new forms would make it clear that beneficiaries could collect their benefits from post offices.

Mr. Jacques Arnold: Did not the question arise from the trial carried out by the Department of Social Security to see whether beneficiaries required to be paid through vouchers or credit to account? Is it not the case that the Department received an unequivocal answer from social security beneficiaries and that Conservative Members, who represent the overwhelming majority of rural areas, would have said the same in the first place?

Sir Wyn Roberts: My hon. Friend will be aware that that matter concerns my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Social Security. It is high time that we nailed that canard about automated credit transfer being compulsorily required.

Mr. Hain: Surely the Government must concede that they are still pressing ACT through, although perhaps not by compulsory measures. That will threaten well over half the rural post offices in Wales. Does the Minister agree that, unless the Government provide alternative work for those sub-post offices that depend on benefit claimants as a lifeline for their business, his assurances are worthless?

Sir Wyn Roberts: Government business through the Post Office has increased in recent years. My right hon. Friends and I have said that ACT is not compulsory and that the choice whether to receive payments through a post office or through a bank or building society remains with the beneficiary.

Mr. Dafis: Is the Minister aware that the possibility that the Monopolies and Mergers Commission will allow newspapers to be distributed through supermarkets is another threat that is looming on the horizon for small post offices and shops? That might provide a short-term

improvement in the availability of newspapers, but the long-term effect would be damaging. Does the Minister agree that that would be a further blow to the shops and post offices that are essential to the community and the quality of life in rural areas?

Sir Wyn Roberts: The Government are committed to maintaining a national network of post offices and that, of course, includes rural post offices. That does not mean to say, however, that some rural post offices may not be closed for business reasons. That is a matter for Post Office Counters Ltd.

Single-parent Families

2. **Mr. Thurnham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received about the cost to public funds of supporting single-family families in Wales: and if he will make a statement.

8. **Mrs. Gorman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the number of lone parents in Wales.

The Secretary of State for Wales (Mr. John Redwood): I have had several hundred letters and messages, overwhelmingly in support of what I said—especially about teenage pregnancies.

Mr. Thurnham: I congratulate my right hon. Friend. Has he seen the memorandum addressed to him on page 12 of today's edition of *The Times*? Does he agree that grandparents are not without some responsibility for the children of teenage single parents, as is the case in the United States, Italy, Germany and, I understand, France? Will he ask the Child Support Agency to extend its interest to include grandparents as well as parents?

Mr. Redwood: My hon. Friend makes a valuable point. I hope that all hon. Members will agree that, wherever possible, all members of the family should help if a young lady is pregnant and in need of support from parents or others. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Social Security is reviewing the matter and I am sure that he, too, will look carefully at what my hon. Friend said today.

I hope that the Labour Members will take this opportunity to put it on record that they, too, would like to do something about teenage pregnancies—and especially for schoolgirls—and echo my comments that, wherever possible, we should encourage people to settle down and gain a little more experience before having babies.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. As I understand it, Question 2 is linked with Question 8. Is that correct? The Secretary of State did not announce that that was the case.

Mr. Redwood: If you would like me to do so, Madam Speaker, I should be happy to link the two questions.

Madam Speaker: I understand from the right hon. Gentleman's Department that the two questions are linked.

Mrs. Gorman: My right hon. Friend will be pleased to know that I have taken the trouble to read the remarks from his recent speech in Wales which have been so widely reported. Does he accept that I entirely agree with the gist of his remarks, which was that the fathers of such children should be made responsible for them? Does he agree, however, that less than 15 per cent. of single-parent families were single-parent families when the births were registered, and that most single mothers were cohabiting when the children were born or they are widowed or divorced women who are bringing up children on their own?

Does my right hon. Friend further agree that we should reform the provisions of the welfare state that allow fathers to walk away from their responsibilities, rather than create a witch hunt surrounding young women who are made pregnant by young men with no sense of responsibility for what they are doing?

Mr. Redwood: I agree with my hon. Friend that the intention of Government policy is to pursue the fathers where possible and to ask them to make a contribution. We think that they should make a financial contribution. We should like them to make other kinds of contributions to family life, but that will not always be possible. My hon. Friend asked how many single parents there were in Wales. The answer is 68,000, and I confirm that not all of them are the teenage parents on whom my hon. Friend and I primarily concentrated our remarks.

Mr. Hanson: Does the Secretary of State accept that his comments on single mothers have caused great offence throughout Wales and that, on reflection, he would have done better to spend his time in Cardiff talking about other matters? Will he take it from me that single mothers especially are often the victims of the effects of 14 years of Tory Government—homelessness, unemployment, poor quality of life and poverty? It would be far better if the right hon. Gentleman targeted the issues rather than single mothers.

Mr. Redwood: If the hon. Gentleman does not understand the connection between the points that I am making and the problems in which he claims to be interested, he ought to go back to the drawing board. His remarks are not surprising, coming as they do from a member of the nowhere party. Labour Members do not know what their view is on anything; they do not seem to have a view on single parenthood and what should be done to encourage people to have children in wedlock, after stable relationships have been formed. That is an important contribution to the social debate, and I hope that the hon. Gentleman will soon learn why it is important.

Mr. Donald Anderson: The Secretary of State did, indeed, address a serious problem; clearly, resentment exists on estates about alleged queue jumping. But, on more mature reflection, does not he think that he might have shown a little more compassion in his speech? If he wants to crusade, should not he crusade against the conditions and the environment on many of our estates, rather than against people who are the victims of those conditions?

Mr. Redwood: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman does not know that I went to the estate in question to look at the conditions there. I promised people on the estate that if they came forward with sensible plans for improvement, I would view them with a kindly eye and see whether we could help. Of course I want to attack rotten conditions on housing estates; but I also want to open a bigger debate on

social conditions generally, because it is not just the Government but people—grandparents, parents and the whole of society—who should contribute to improvements.

Mr. Jonathan Evans: Is my right hon. Friend aware that the views of the hon. Member for Delyn (Mr. Hanson) are not shared by the hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. Carlile), who sadly is not present, and who welcomed the remarks made by my right hon. Friend? Does my right hon. Friend agree with the point made by the hon. Member for Swansea, East (Mr. Anderson) that there is resentment over social housing allocation policy? If we are to address that issue, we must consider the needs of single parents; but ultimately, we need more social housing. May I therefore direct my right hon. Friend's attention to that issue? I urge him to announce further housing for those who are socially disadvantaged and who will never be able to afford to become home owners, unlike so many people in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: My hon. Friend makes an important point. I am pleased to announce that 487 dwellings, which are currently empty and not being used in the public estate, are to be brought forward for rent and sale from the NHS estate. I hope that will be widely welcomed in the House.

My hon. Friend is right, as was the hon. Member for Swansea, East, in thinking that there are difficult issues of allocation for councils to consider, because we wish to encourage people to settle down in stable relationships and marriages before they have children.

Mrs. Clwyd: Will the Secretary of State now acknowledge that his attack on single mothers was ill-judged and vindictive? Does not he realise that 70 per cent. of single parents are widowed, separated or divorced? Is he aware that 90 per cent. of single parents want a job and that the problem is not just the lack of jobs but the pathetic inadequacy of the child care system? Can he explain why one in four health authority family planning clinics has been shut and the Government have refused to insist on sex education as part of the school curriculum? Why does not he use a bit of common sense instead of crude scapegoating?

Mr. Redwood: Once again, the nowhere party has not listened to what I have said and is not interested in the debate. I have always made it clear that when relationships have broken down, someone has died or a partnership has been forced apart, for reasons beyond the control of any individual, I am, of course, extremely sympathetic. That was not the issue that I was opening up in my speech. I was opening up the case of teenage pregnancies where there was no intention of the father playing a proper role in the family or trying to do so. I still wish to know whether the Labour party approves or disapproves of that.

Welsh Language Education

3. **Mr. Ian Bruce:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what proportion of Welsh school children are taught using Welsh as their first language; and what assessment his Department has made on the progress of such children into further and higher education relative to those using English as their first language.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Welsh was the sole or main medium of instruction for 16 per cent. of primary school pupils in September 1991, and 15·8 per cent. of secondary pupils in Wales were attending a Welsh-speaking secondary school, as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988. Provisional analyses of the information for the 1991-92 school year shows that 33 per cent. of pupils from Welsh-speaking schools went on to further or higher education. That compares with 30 per cent. of pupils from all local education authority and grant-maintained schools in Wales.

Mr. Bruce: I am sure that my right hon. Friend would agree that that shows that the Government's policy of keeping Welsh a living language has been extremely successful. What effect does he think that Labour's failure to support the Welsh Language Bill—and, indeed, the fact that Plaid Cymru has voted against it—will have on our excellent policy?

Sir Wyn Roberts: My hon. Friend will be interested to learn that all the progress in Welsh-medium education has resulted from the Education Act 1944. We sought to improve matters further through the Welsh Language Bill, which represents a considerable advance for Welsh speakers and will mean that guidelines will be prepared by the Welsh Language Board, under which local education authorities will state what provision they are making for Welsh medium education.

Mr. Rogers: At some time in his busy schedule, will the Minister take time to instruct his stool pigeons who are brought forward to ask questions——

Hon. Members: Order.

Madam Speaker: Order. I consider that somewhat unparliamentary language, and I would be glad if the hon. Gentleman would withdraw his comment. If he is going to put a question, will he do so?

Mr. Rogers: I withdraw the remark, Madam Speaker.

Will the Minister of State instruct those whom he has brought into the Chamber to fill up Question Time in the basic knowledge relating to the Welsh language? Perhaps he will tell the hon. Member for South Dorset (Mr. Bruce), who has crept into the Chamber and begun criticising Labour's policies on Welsh, that if it were not for the Labour party—particularly Labour-controlled authorities in south Wales—there would be no Welsh language in the form in which we are discussing it? Will the Minister also ask the hon. Member for South Dorset—whom he has dragged in to act for him this afternoon—to recognise that the outstanding results announced today follow the excellent work done to support the Welsh language in south Wales?

Sir Wyn Roberts: If the hon. Gentleman's party has some responsibility for the success of the Welsh language, is not it curious that it did not support the Third Reading of the Welsh Language Bill? As for the hon. Gentleman's comments about my hon. Friends, I note that some hon. Members representing parts of the United Kingdom other than Wales are present on the Opposition Benches. Perhaps Welsh Opposition Members should table rather more questions; then they might have the same luck as my hon. Friend the Member for South Dorset.

Defence Procurement

4. **Mr. Fabricant:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the effect of defence procurement on Welsh industry.

Mr. Redwood: It was estimated in 1991 that defence procurement accounted for some 4,000 jobs, or 2 per cent. of manufacturing, in Wales.

Mr. Fabricant: Has my right hon. Friend made any assessment of the effect on defence procurement jobs that would have resulted had the Labour party—the "caring party"—been elected at the last general election?

Mr. Redwood: It was estimated at the time of the last general election—I do not believe that the Labour party has ever withdrawn the policies involved—that 115,000 jobs in defence-related industries would have been wiped out in the United Kingdom, to say nothing of the jobs lost in the Army, Navy and Air Force. We can truly say that, when it comes to jobs in Wales, the Opposition are the demolition men; we are standing up for Wales and winning new jobs for it.

Mr. Roy Hughes: Does the Secretary of State appreciate that all Opposition Members welcome defence cuts? We also recognise, however, that they have a tendency to put people out of work. The truth is that the Government have not succeeded in turning swords into ploughshares. What is more, market forces will not cure the evil; we need active intervention by the Government.

Mr. Redwood: I am sad to learn that the hon. Gentleman welcomes job losses. As for his second point, he is entirely wrong: we are taking steps to try to encourage companies to diversify. We are keen to diversify both the Welsh industrial base and the product ranges of individual companies. A Ministry of Defence secondee is currently helping the Welsh Development Agency with that important task. However, we also want the country to be well defended—and that is better news for jobs than it would be under Labour.

Mr. John Marshall: Will my right hon. Friend confirm that Wales is part of the United Kingdom's defence export industry, which creates thousands of jobs across this country? Those jobs would be destroyed if we listened to the Labour party. Does my right hon. Friend really believe that Government intervention could help, when historically it has proved very expensive and has ended up destroying jobs in many once fine companies, such as British Shipbuilders and Rover?

Mr. Redwood: My hon. Friend is right: defence exports are important to Wales, as they are to the rest of the United Kingdom. Having sound defences here provides a platform from which we can export suitable products.

Mr. Wigley: Is the Secretary of State aware that, over the past 10 years, 50 per cent. of the defence procurement budget has been spent in south-east England and an average of 2 per cent. in Wales? If cuts are made in Welsh military and defence establishments, will the right hon. Gentleman try to secure more investment expenditure from that budget? What is his policy in that regard?

Mr. Redwood: Of course we will try to encourage Welsh companies to respond to procurement opportunities through the offer of support available from Ministry of Defence expertise, the Welsh Development Agency and elsewhere. I will battle for more jobs for Wales over the months and years ahead, in the way that I have been doing since I was appointed.

Mr. Murphy: Bearing in mind that many thousands of Welsh people who work in defence-related industries, including the royal ordnance factory in Glascoed in Gwent, depend very heavily on contracts from the MOD, does the Secretary of State agree that British forces should buy and use British equipment?

Mr. Redwood: Wherever possible, that is desirable. We also have to think about European Community procurement rules and value for money. I want British companies to do well, to win the competitions and supply the goods. I will not be shy in arguing for British success.

Coronary Heart Disease

5. **Mr. Simon Coombs:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the incidence of premature coronary heart disease in Wales in 1980 and in the latest year for which information is available; and if he will make a statement.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales (Mr. Gwilym Jones): There were 4,052 deaths of Welsh residents under the age of 75 from coronary heart disease in 1992, compared with 5,676 deaths in 1980.

Mr. Coombs: I am sure that the whole House will approve the substantial improvement in the health of the Welsh people that those figures represent. Does my hon. Friend agree that there is a very strong correlation between premature coronary heart disease and diet? Does he further agree that there is a link between people's eating habits and what they are taught at school? If he does agree, will he make representations, as the Minister responsible for the health of the Welsh people, to the Department for Education about the place of home economics in the core curriculum to ensure that schoolchildren in Wales are taught diet and nutrition as part of that curriculum?

Mr. Jones: I am grateful for the welcome that my hon. Friend gave those figures. The work of health promotion in schools is already being undertaken by the Health Promotion Authority in Wales. I was in Rhondda on Friday, visiting one of the life education centres, and I saw how effective the authority is at promoting healthy living messages to schoolchildren, including the importance of balanced diets.

Mr. Llew Smith: Does the Minister accept that there is a link between not only heart disease and diet but heart disease and poverty?

Mr. Jones: We acknowledge the range of factors that are combating the fight against coronary heart disease, as we do other efforts to try to meet health-gain goals throughout Wales. A range of other measures has to be taken into account, including balanced diet, more regular exercise and anti-smoking campaigns. If the hon. Gentleman had studied closely the figures that we have set and our goals, he would know that in Wales, according to various health indicators, we have started from a low base and we have to reach a higher attainment level. We have set ourselves a target of a 33 per cent. reduction in premature death from cardiovascular disease over the next 10 years.

Mr. Morgan: The level of premature heart disease is still very high in Wales. Open-heart surgery was invented in Wales, where Sir Magdi Yacoub carried out much of his earlier training before moving to Harefield. In January 1984, nine and a half years ago, the then Secretary of State for Wales, now Lord Crickhowell, made a promise to increase the number of open-heart operations in Wales from 500 to more than 1,100 a year. That promise has probably got whiskers on it, as the number of operations has not yet reached 600—indeed, it is so prehistoric that a dinosaur movie called "Thoracic Park" could be made about it.

Mr. Jones: I thought that it was a representative of "Jurassic Park" posing that question. The hon. Gentleman clearly does not listen. If he had taken any opportunity to study this important matter, he would know that we have undertaken a £500 million expansion programme to increase to 800 the number of heart operations in the University hospital of Wales. Only four weeks ago, I announced from the Dispatch Box the go-ahead for a second cardiac centre at Morriston in Swansea to take the number up to 1,400.

West Wales Task Force

6. **Mr. Ainger:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he will convene a meeting of the strategy group of the West Wales task force.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The next meeting of the strategy group will he held in the autumn on a date yet to be decided.

Mr. Ainger: Is the Minister aware that that answer is totally unsatisfactory? The last time the strategy group of the task force met was on 25 January, when the former Secretary of State for Wales, now the Secretary of State for Employment, assured the group that the new director would be in place as soon as possible, funded by the Welsh Development Agency. Is he also aware that, on 28 April, the right hon. Gentleman assured business men in my constituency that the director would be appointed in May? There is still no director for the task force. What is the Minister going to do about it?

Mr. Jones: The question of the director for the task force is being urgently considered by that task force and all the other local authorities involved. It was appropriate for them to have an input concerning the sort of director that they wanted. There is no lack of activity, however, regarding implementation of the important objectives of the task force. This year, we committed £2·5 million under the rural initiative; £250,000 under the LEADER scheme; and £3·7 million to upgrade rural and urban development activities.

Unemployment

7. **Mr. Flynn:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what new proposals he has to reduce unemployment levels.

Mr. Redwood: We intend to reduce unemployment by continuing our successful economic policies of low interest rates, a very competitive economy, low inflation, good road and rail links, good training and encouraging and promoting investment.

Mr. Flynn: What is the Secretary of State's reaction to the figures that I sent him which show that, according to a new methodology used by the House of Commons Library, the unemployment percentage in Newport, West is the joint highest in Wales? What is his reaction to the fact that, last year, Newport, West witnessed the second-largest increase in unemployment in any Welsh constituency? In those circumstances, how can the Government or anyone else contemplate taking away assisted area status from Newport? Will he give an unequivocal answer this afternoon that that will not happen and that he is virgorously opposing that insane suggestion?

Mr. Redwood: The hon. Gentleman will have to contain himself a little longer. As soon as the European Community has completed its review of the Government's proposals, my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade will present them to the House. I hope that that will happen soon. The hon. Gentleman should wait and see the outcome. The hon. Gentleman can be assured that I have, of course, argued a vigorous case for Wales, as he would expect me to do.

Why does not the hon. Gentleman welcome the fact that, since 1986, long-term unemployment in Wales has fallen by 40 per cent? Why does not he welcome the fact that the Welsh unemployment rate is below the United Kingdom average? Why does not he welcome the fact that it appears that the United Kingdom average has now fallen beneath the EC average? All that is good news and I hope that the hon. Gentleman will get behind it.

Mr. Sweeney: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the policies of low inflation, low interest rates and a stable work force, which have been pursued by our Government, are the right prescription? Is not it time that the Opposition recognised that and supported the Government rather than carped and moaned about unemployment?

Mr. Redwood: I agree that those are the right policies. My hon. Friend might like to know that, at noon today, an order was announced for 4 million new telephones worth £50 million. That is good news for jobs in Cwmcarn in Gwent where those telephones will be manufactured.

Mr. Kinnock: I particularly welcome that last piece of good news and the efforts undertaken by the Welsh Office to encourage further orders for the Abercarn plant. Confidence in that plant is well established and it is wise to build on it. Is the Secretary of State aware, however, that, in the past year, the pharmaceutical industries of Wales have lost more than 500 jobs? Since 1985, because of the Government's introduction of the limited list for drugs for national health service prescriptions, pharmaceutical manufacturers have moved their development and production facilities elsewhere, which has meant, of course, that jobs have gone elsewhere.

In the interests of the health of patients and the health of the economy, will the right hon. Gentleman use all possible offices to persuade the Government to review that limited list policy so that we create a much stronger domestic base for our pharmaceutical industry and thereby help the health of the nation and the health of the economy?

Mr. Redwood: I am grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for his first remarks. I will look further at the

issues of pharmaceutical investment and job transfers from Wales, which were raised in a previous Question Time. I have asked for a review of the position. I am happy to meet the interested pharmaceutical companies to see whether there is anything that the Government can do to improve the climate further so that companies stay in Wales and invest there.

Mr. Richards: Is my right hon. Friend aware that vacancies are appearing for chairmen of companies in Wales, one of which was recently snapped up by that champion of lost causes, the hon. Member for Caerphilly (Mr. Davies), although I do not recall the job being advertised? Does he agree that that may be the first sign that the Opposition are about to change their shadow Secretary of State and, possibly, have their fifth shadow Secretary of State before Christmas? Four of the shadow Secretary of State's predecessors are sitting on the Opposition Back Benches this afternoon.

Mr. Redwood: My hon. Friend makes his point extremely well. I can reassure him that, if that happened, it would not lead to an increase in unemployment, because no doubt there would be a replacement for the person going.

Mr. Barry Jones: British Aerospace at the Broughton works in my constituency has announced 250 redundancies, which would bring the total number of job losses at that great plane-making plant to more than 1,000 in just over one year. Why must such highly skilled, loyal, able and very productive plane makers lose their jobs in that way? It appears to me that the Government and the Cabinet have no strategy for Britain's manufacturing industries. Does the Secretary of State agree that, if the Government's policy continues as it appears to be doing, the United Kingdom will be denuded of a manufacturing base? What will he do to assist the plane-makers at Broughton, who are losing patience at the bleeding away of their jobs after doing everything that they have been asked to do for many years? They are the best, most loyal, most skilled and productive workers, so what will the Government do to assist them?

Mr. Redwood: A productivity miracle is under way in this country—production is more than 10 per cent. up on the figures for the past year. It is desperately important that, as productivity rises that quickly—and we want it to—enough orders are won so that jobs are not lost and people can make many more products at the much better unit costs that have been established. I shall look at any proposition that the hon. Gentleman cares to put to me about the tragic situation in his constituency, because I do not like to see those job losses any more than he does. The problem is connected with cutting costs, which will mean that the company is more competitive in the future, and is obviously related to the demand for the planes. If there are ways in which the Government can help to promote more sales of planes—that is the only way to get these jobs—I am happy to do whatever is necessary and legal.

Mr. Hawkins: My right hon. Friend will probably not be aware that, in some cases, what is good news for reducing unemployment in Wales may be bad news for other parts of the country. He may not yet be aware that, in my constituency, Burtons Biscuits, which is a subsidiary of Associated British Foods, has a factory that has announced up to 600 redundancies, whereas it hopes to increase production at its factory in Llantarman in Wales. Will my right hon. Friend join me in doing all that he can to ensure that any of my constituents who work at the factory and wish to take up vacancies at Llantarman are able to? Will he work with his right hon. Friends in other Departments to try to change the mind of the company so that it reduces or withdraws the redundancies in my constituency?

Mr. Redwood: I am happy to look at my hon. Friend's suggestion about the transfer of workers. However, there will be times when rationalisation is needed to make a business competitive. Again, the best answer is to get out there and sell more of the underlying products so that we can have more jobs overall. It is a fearfully competitive world and unfortunately it is necessary for British manufacturing to continue to lower its costs and make improvements in its processes, or there will be no jobs at all in manufacturing. That is the essential first step to grow a bigger manufacturing base.

Mr. John D. Taylor: I welcome the priority given by the Secretary of State to reduced interest rates to support the economy of Wales. Does he agree that that has come about through the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the exchange rate mechanism?

Mr. Redwood: That and other factors obviously lay behind successive Chancellors' decisions on interest rates. I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman will join me in welcoming the current level of rates, which are low by European standards and are allowing the substantial recovery that we so desperately need. I hear good reports from some manufacturers about volume gains and I want to see them spread ever more widely. I want to see more British products sold in British shops.

Mr. Ron Davies: I start by declaring my interest in a company which is registered as Quality Training Services. The people of my constituency will not thank the Secretary of State for his earlier remarks, in which he played politics with their jobs. Is he aware of the efforts that were made over the weekend to safeguard the dozens of jobs and the hundreds of training opportunities throughout south Wales which are threatened by the collapse of Commercial and Industrial Training Services Ltd. in my constituency? Is he aware that the well-known Tory quango-gatherer, Donald Walters, was chairman of the board of the failed company and that there is clear evidence of poor leadership and mismanagement?

Will the Secretary of State join me in unequivocally appealing to the three training and enterprise councils of Mid Glamorgan, South Glamorgan and Gwent to transfer the existing contracts with CITS to the new company, which was established this morning? That will create an opportunity for a fresh enterprise, with a vigorous and competitive approach, to safeguard jobs and training opportunities.

Mr. Redwood: Of course, I share the hon. Gentleman's aims of protecting jobs and ensuring that proper training is available. I have not yet conducted a proper review of the proposal that he has just put to me, but I will do so and see whether his method is the right way to approach the problem. He can rest assured that I will do what I can to protect training and jobs.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Charter Marks

23. **Mr. Bates:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many charter marks have been awarded since the inception of the scheme.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. William Waldegrave): In 1992, the first year of the scheme, 36 charter marks were awarded to a wide range of public sector organisations which had demonstrated the highest standard of service to their customers. This year, the charter unit has received 411 applications, over 100 more than last year. Up to 100 awards will be made.

Mr. Bates: I am grateful for that answer, but does my right hon. Friend agree that the quality of charter mark applications is every bit as important as the quantity? Therefore, will he tell us whether the quality of applications has increased over the past year and, if so, whether first-class applications, such as that made by the South Tees Benefits Agency in my constituency, have contributed to that welcome fact?

Mr. Waldegrave: I happen to know that that application is before my colleagues in the Department and it will be judged along with the rest. My hon. Friend is right. As the scheme has become better understood, there has been an increase in the quality of applications and I welcome that and congratulate those involved.

Ms Mowlam: In a week that I believe marks the second anniversary of the citizens charter, will the Minister comment on the validity of the charter marks, as well as his ability to deliver openness in central Government machinery—a subject on which he produced a White paper last week—given that his integrity as a Minister has been seriously put in question by the evidence produced last week that he misled the House over the Matrix Churchill affair?

Madam Speaker: Order. I ask the hon. Lady to withdraw what she has said. No Minister misled the House.

Ms Mowlam: I will withdraw the question on the Minister's integrity. However, I would like him to explain——

Madam Speaker: Order. I have asked the hon. Lady to withdraw her statement that the Minister has misled the House.

Ms Mowlam: I will withdraw the statement that the Minister misled the House.

May I ask the Minister instead whether he considers the evidence that came to light last week a contradiction to his job as Minister with responsibility for open government?

Mr. Waldegrave: The hon. Lady asked about charter marks and I am happy to answer that question. Charter marks are welcomed widely in the public sector and are helping to represent the congratulations of the House and the British people on the high standards that are found in much of the public sector. On her latter point, I hope that the hon. Lady, who I am sure is a fair-minded person, will wait for the full evidence before making political capital out of important matters.

Science and Engineering

24. **Mr. Coe:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what representations he has received from the British Association for the Advancement of Science since the publication of the science and engineering White Paper.

Mr. Waldegrave: I have been in regular touch with the British Association. I recently addressed a conference on science, technology and wealth creation, organised by the association's science and industry committee, and I was glad to hear the chairman of that committee, Sir Denis Rooke, give the White Paper a warm welcome.

Mr. Coe: I welcome my hon. Friend's answer. I know that he is keen to enhance the public's understanding of science and technology, a process which is central to re-establishing in the British psyche the importance of our manufacturing industries. Can I urge him to attend his summer's science festival, organised by the British Association?

Mr. Waldegrave: The summer festival of the British Association is one of the major shop windows for science and technology, and has been very successful for a number of years. I look forward to addressing the festival on 2 September and I hope to attend every year.

Mr. Miller: Does the Chancellor share my concern that the City has yet to take on board the impact of the White Paper? Is it correct that only nine City representatives turned up at the conference referred to by the hon. Member for Falmouth and Camborne (Mr. Coe)? Does he think that more work has to be done to persuade the City of the importance of science and technology?

Mr. Waldegrave: I share the hon. Gentleman's disappointment. The British Association took the trouble to hold the conference in the heart of the City geographically and it was dissapointing that more people did not attend. It is essential that those who have power and investment in the country understand that long-term investment will best be protected in companies that carry out research and development properly.

Sir Giles Shaw: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the British Association was one of many representational bodies to comment on his White Paper and does he agree that the vast majority of comments have been favourable? Equally, does he agree that many such bodies look forward to a distribution between defence research and development and civil research and development? Has he any comment to make about the prospects on that front?

Mr. Waldegrave: I am grateful to my hon. Friend and believe that he is right that the White Paper has been broadly welcomed and accepted as a starting point. That is how I would answer my hon. Friend's second question. The White Paper must be seen as a starting point for further work. There is much more to do, and if the transformation that we need in our industry and society is to be achieved it will not be done overnight.

Citizens Charter

25. **Mr. Hain:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what plans he has to extend the citizens charter to the regulatory authorities.

The Parliamentary Secretary, Office of Public Service and Science (Mr. David Davis): Public regulatory authorities, like all areas of the public sector, are covered by the citizens charter.

Mr. Hain: Is the Minister aware that there is increasing concern about the fact that the regulators of the privatised utilities are acting like tin gods, whose decisions are not accountable to Parliament or challengeable by ordinary citizens except by cumbersome legal proceedings? The Ofgas decision to break up British Gas will mean higher transportation costs to areas such as Wales compared with the north-east of England near the North sea gas shelf. In other decisions, competitive access has been given a higher priority than the interests of consumers and indeed the strategic national interest. Surely a review of the role of regulators is needed. Should not they be covered by the citizens charter and be answerable to Parliament?

Mr. Davis: Before I address the nub of the hon. Gentleman's question, may I say that opening up industries to competition is in the interests of the consumer and has been the best guarantee of those interests. First, the regulators must operate within the regulatory framework laid down by Parliament. Secondly, the director-generals' performance of their statutory duties is subject to judicial review—I think the hon. Gentleman referred to that. Thirdly, the legislation requires utilities to have a licence and authorisation from the Secretary of State or a director before they can operate as utilities. Fourthly, directors are appointed by and are answerable, in broad terms, to the Secretary of State. If a director does not carry out his duties satisfactorily he can be replaced. Finally, those director-generals can also be called before a Select Committee of the House.

Mr. Congdon: Does my hon. Friend agree that the regulators have done an excellent job in applying charter principles to the privatised utilities? Furthermore, does he recall that those industries have performed much better since they have been privatised and that the Labour party opposed privatisation, which has brought so many benefits to the people of this country?

Mr. Davis: My hon. Friend is entirely right and I shall give a couple of examples. British Telecom's prices have fallen by one third since 1984 and 96 per cent. of call boxes work, compared with 75 per cent. previously. British Gas prices for domestic users have fallen 13 per cent.—[HON. MEMBERS: "Water!"] There are calls of "Water" from Opposition Members—the same people who would complain if the pollution levels of our beaches and rivers were not dealt with. The money for dealing with those problems must come from somewhere and it comes from the profits and capital of the water companies.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: The Minister must be aware that the real issue involves accountability for the former public utilities and the watchdogs of the utilities. Some parts of the country have been severely disadvantaged by the differential impact of the clean-up programmes, but it is not possible to request an Adjournment debate in the House on the issue because it is no longer deemed to be the responsibility of any Minister. As citizens charter Minister, will he try to find a way around that problem?

Mr. Davis: It is a matter for Madam Speaker rather than me, but I imagine that it would be perfectly possible to have an Adjournment debate about the regulators' behaviour, which is precisely the hon. Gentleman's point. Ofwat comments in the past few days on the effect of the clean-up on costs are an example of Ofwat exercising its powers and responsibilities properly.

Mr. Fisher: Does not the Minister understand that the problem with Ofwat and other regulatory organisations is that they have no teeth? I and hon. Members from both sides of the House have taken cases to Ofwat, which has eventually found in favour of our constituents, and then the board—in my case Severn Trent—has said, "So what, Ofwat—nothing will happen and nothing will change." The problem is that the regulators have no teeth.

Mr. Davis: I recommend that the hon. Gentleman speak to the hon. Member for Neath (Mr. Hain), who said that the regulators had too many teeth and too much power. The regulators can change the rules under which the licence works. If they cannot come to an agreement with the utilities, the matter can be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to provide back-up support.

Mr. Riddick: Have not the regulators been just a component part of what has proved to be one of the Government's greatest successes: the privatisation of state-owned industries? Have not new private sector management and entrepreneurial skills been introduced to old, monolithic industries? Is not the flotation of further British Telecom shares on the stock market the most recent example of one of the Government's greatest successes, privatisation?

Mr. Davis: My hon. Friend makes his case very well. Popular capitalism continues to be popular in this country and will be for the rest of the decade.

Market Testing

26. **Mr. Fabricant:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what proportion of market-testing exercises has led to a reduction in costs.

Mr. Waldegrave: Information collected from Departments over the five years to 1990-91 suggests that more than 80 per cent. of market tests resulted in savings. Savings have typically been around 25 per cent. of the original cost of the activity. Even if a market test fails to bring about savings, it is likely to lead to an improvement in the quality of the service being provided.

Mr. Fabricant: I am grateful to my right hon. Friend and I wonder whether he has seen this month's edition of the *Local Government Chronicle*—a newspaper which I read avidly every time I go to sleep. It mentions that competitive tendering in local government has brought greater savings in the second round of competitive tendering. Does my right hon. Friend agree that similar savings could accrue from market testing in central Government?

Mr. Waldegrave: I am sorry that the *Local Government Chronicle* has such a soporific effect on my hon. Friend. The report was accurate and was also carried in the *Financial Times*. It also accords with evidence from Berkshire county council, which revealed that, in many cases, the savings on the second placement of a contract were greater than those on the first placement. I believe

that, in future, contractors for central Government services will also bring more savings the second time the contract goes out to tender.

Dr. Howells: Has the Chancellor had a chance to read any of the recent Public Accounts Committee reports about some of the problems that the Government are confronting over managerial consultancies when it comes to market testing? Does he agree that the latter offers an unparalleled opportunity for a descent into graft and corruption on the Italian scale?

Mr. Waldegrave: Any report by the PAC must be very carefully examined and there must be a proper response to it, but the most recent one was about a service run in-house, Forward Civil Service Catering, showing that problems can arise both in the public sector and outside it.

Mr. Ian Bruce: What advice is the Department giving organisations going through market testing on dealing with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations, which seem to be causing us some problems?

Mr. Waldegrave: After consultation with other Departments, my Department issued guidance on that. As a matter of fact, after a period of delay early in the process, central Government Departments are now finding that TUPE is much less of a bar to the market-testing programme. Indeed, several successful market tests have been carried out in cases in which TUPE has covered the staff and they have worked perfectly well.

27. **Mr. McAllion:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what progress has been made on the Government's market-testing programme.

Mr. Waldegrave: Market-testing programmes for the period to September 1993 are making good progress. I shall report on the outcome of these as soon as possible after the period.

Mr. McAllion: The Minister has again made claims for cost savings of about 25 per cent. for market testing. Is he aware that independent research carried out by the Audit Commission and by the university of Birmingham on behalf of the Department of the Environment—research into market testing in local government—has shown cost savings of between 6 and 7 per cent., or about one quarter of what he claims for the civil service? Will he therefore tell the House on what independent research his claim is based; or, if there is no such independent research, and the claim is unreliable, will he assure the House that he will authorise independent research into the impact of market testing in the civil service—before he opens his big mouth again and makes far-fetched claims that cannot be substantiated?

Mr. Waldegrave: The figure of 25 per cent. is an assessment of the relatively small programme in central Government to date and it simply reports the facts. I am well aware of the Inlogov report, which showed 6 or 7 per cent. savings in compulsory competitive tendering for local government. The hon. Gentleman will recall that one such local government body was Bristol city council in my constituency, where there was a good deal of trouble with its CCT and there had to be re-tendering. Many Labour local authorities resisted the process and wasted a lot of money; they did not enter into the exercise with the spirit and loyalty that the central Government civil service has shown. The hon. Gentleman would be ill-advised to use those local government figures for CCT when assessing the central Government programme.

Mr. Dickens: Is not it a fact that market testing is extremely effective in the private sector and that it is a running cost, not an expense? All these myths about the inability of market testing to benefit companies or the civil service are ridiculous. We have to produce products and services that people want, at a competitive price and with the right quality, and we have to provide after-sales service. If we got all those things right, would not we beat the world?

Mr. Waldegrave: My hon. Friend is perfectly right. What is more, as the best of the public sector can beat the private sector, it should not be frightened of the process. There have been plenty of winning in-house bids. Instead of trying to resist the whole process, through Opposition spokesmen, the public sector unions should show more confidence in their members by recognising that they will win many of the bids.

Mr. Winnick: On market testing, will not the real test come on Thursday when the Government face almost inevitable defeat? Perhaps the Chancellor should direct his mind to that top priority for the Cabinet.

Mr. Waldegrave: That seems to go a little wide of my responsibilities, but I congratulate the hon. Gentleman on his characteristic ingenuity.

Public Services

28. **Mrs. Lait:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what plans his Department has to encourage more public services to introduce a purchaser-provider split.

Mr. David Davis: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for her support for extending the purchaser-provider split. It is this concept, the identification of the needs and wishes of the customer and clarity about the role and responsibility of the contractor, which underpins all our public service reforms. My Department remains committed to building on the progress made in Government agencies, the national health service, our schools and local authorities, and it is delivering better results.

Mrs. Lait: Is my hon. Friend aware that left-of-centre commentators, including Professor John Stewart of the *Municipal Journal* of recent mention, have endorsed the purchaser-provider split as a means of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our public services? Does he agree that it is about time that the Labour party came off the fence and endorsed it, too?

Mr. Davis: My hon. Friend is absolutely right. I have not seen that entry in the *Municipal Journal*. Like my hon. Friend the Member for Mid-Staffordshire (Mr. Fabricant), perhaps I sleep too well. The best example of such acceptance by thoughtful commentators of the left is by John Willman. Writing in the "Fabian Review" he identified three virtuous consequences of the purchaser-provider split. He said:

"First, it allows the purchaser . . . to become the advocate of the consumer rather than the defender of the producer . . . Second, it forces both sides to define the nature of the service and the quality standards which are to be provided. This focus

on standards and outcomes is essential if the quality of public services is to be improved . . . Third and most important, it allows the purchaser to buy in services from the private sector."

I recommend that Opposition Front-Bench spokesmen learn from their colleagues.

Points of Order

3.30 pm

Mr. Tam Dalyell (Linlithgow): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Have you had any request from Ministers in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to report to the House on the delicate negotiations being conducted by Mr. Rolf Ekeus on behalf of the United Nations in Baghdad?

Madam Speaker: No, I have not been informed that any Minister wishes to make a statement.

Mr. Ray Powell (Ogmore): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I hope that you will be able to help. On the first page of today's Order Paper there are 13 Welsh Office questions. Seven of them are from Conservative Members and six are from Labour Members. There are 38 Welsh Members.

Mr. Michael Fabricant (Mid-Staffordshire): My mother is Welsh. *[Interruption.]*

Mr. Powell: On numerous occasions, I have been reminded that this is a United Kingdom Parliament. One of your predecessors, Viscount Tonypandy, used his influence to inform the House that Welsh Members have only rare opportunities to put questions to the Secretary of State for Wales, usually on a Monday and usually once a month.

Surely you could use your influence, Madam Speaker, either to change the computer to a Welsh one or to persuade Members who do not represent Welsh constituencies not to ask questions. Today, five Conservative Members and three Labour Members were called in the 35 minutes. However, 11 Welsh Members who were in their places did not have an opportunity to put their questions to the Minister. Will you use your ingenuity to devise a different system, so that Welsh Members have at least an opportunity to present their constituency problems?

Madam Speaker: I make it quite clear that I am not prepared to tamper with the ballot or with the computers in the House to see that some Members rather than others receive priority.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. I have not finished.

On today's Order Paper, only 22 questions were tabled for the Secretary of State for Wales. Usually, 30 questions are printed. Insufficient questions were handed in to the Table Office.

Hon. Members: Oh.

Mr. Dafydd Wigley (Caernarfon): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. A substantive point has arisen. The Secretary of State for Wales has umbrella responsibilities for subjects such as education, roads, housing, local government and the Welsh Development Agency, which is of considerable importance. He is responsible for a whole gamut of subjects. Because Conservative Members with English constituencies put down questions, they dictate the subjects that are to be answered. Notwithstanding the fact that we can put supplementaries, that limits the areas that can be discussed. That limits the oversight of the functions of the Welsh Office and its democratic answerability.

Is there any way in addition to Question Time—which clearly English Members want to get in on—such as additional time for questions in the Welsh Grand Committee in Cardiff, in which Welsh Members can get answerability from the Welsh Office?

Madam Speaker: I can answer the hon. Gentleman only by saying that he did not table a question today—[HON. MEMBERS: "Oh!"] Order. Indeed, 50 per cent. of his parliamentary party were called to put supplementaries.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Who is next? I am now crossing the Chamber and I call Mr. Bruce.

Mr. Ian Bruce (South Dorset): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. Can we have some form of clocking on and off, as the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) has often suggested? Two weeks ago, very few Welsh Labour Members turned up for social security questions, despite their being of interest to their constituents. They were thus not here to table Welsh questions for today and have only themselves to blame.

Madam Speaker: Whether or not we clock on, I can tell the hon. Gentleman that I am not going to be the convenor.

Mr. Tony Banks (Newham, North-West): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. During Welsh questions, you ruled as unparliamentary the expression "stool pigeon", as it is your right to do. The matter can be confusing at times. I refer hon. Members to pages 381-2 of "Erskine May" so tht they can decide what is an unparliamentary expression.

"Erskine May" used to contain a list of unparliamentary words such as "blackguard", "curmudgeon", "dog", "rotter", "cad" and the and all the other words that we could apply collectively to Conservative Members. That list has now been removed, but it would help the House —I hope that this is a helpful point of order—if that list were reinstated. I have a number of words that I should like to run by you, and it would be helpful if they could appear in "Erskine May".

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman has often used picturesque language. However, I feel that certain expressions are wholly unacceptable in a House of grown-up individuals who should be able to express themselves without using mediocre language.

Mr. Ron Davies (Caerphilly): Further to the point of order raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Ogmore (Mr. Powell), Madam Speaker. There is a genuine sense of anger about what has happened today. The views expressed by my hon. Friend reflect the views of many Labour Members when English Members of Parliament come here, not to pursue matters of concern to them, but to shield the Secretary of State from questions put by Welsh Members.

I very much endorse the view expressed by my hon. Friend Ogmore because of the first five questions on today's Order Paper were tabled by English Members with no constituency interest in Wales. Six of the top 10 questions were tabled by English Conservative Members.

[Mr. Ron Davies]

Only three Welsh Members, during Welsh Question Time, had the opportunity to raise matters with the Secretary of State relating to questions that they had tabled.

I ask you, Madam Speaker, to give careful consideration to the suggestion by the hon. Member for Caernarfon (Mr. Wigley) and others. I believe that there is now a case either for extending Welsh questions—perhaps transferring the forum in which we can ask them—or using your good offices with the usual channels to get the Government to accept that, unless they are prepared to ask English Members voluntarily to desist from disrupting Welsh Question Time, the only conclusion must be that the Secretary of State is not prepared to face questions from Welsh Members.

Madam Speaker: If the hon. Gentleman wants to extend Welsh questions, that is a matter for the usual channels, and he must take up the matter there. He also raised a point about the ballot. If the ballot system is to be changed, that must be agreed upon by the whole House. He knows that questions are not selected by me or by the Minister; they are selected by ballot.

I remind the hon. Gentleman that, however many hon. Members representing English constituencies tabled questions, during the whole of Welsh Question Time only one Member from the Opposition Benches was called who did not represent a Welsh constituency. The remainder of supplementary questions were from Welsh Members.

Mr. Ted Rowlands (Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. I tabled a question, which became Question No. 9. I was only the third Welsh Member in the top 10, but we did not reach even Question No. 9. I did not seek to be called to ask a supplementary question on an earlier question, because I assumed that we would at least reach Question No. 9. In view of the imbalance, may I suggest that you should have endeavoured to move on, so that Members representing Welsh constituencies were called?

Madam Speaker: If the hon. Gentleman reflects and reads the *Official Report* tomorrow, he will see that that is precisely what I did. If hon. Members take a long time to ask questions and Ministers take a long time to answer them, we shall not get through the Order Paper.

Mr. Geoffrey Dickens (Littleborough and Saddleworth): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. We should not mince words. As millions and millions of pounds of United Kingdom taxpayers' money goes to Wales for regeneration—and Wales is doing awfully well—we are entitled to a say——

Madam Speaker: Order. That is not a point of order for me. I remind hon. Members that they are taking precious guillotine time.

Mr. Allan Rogers (Rhondda): Further to the point of order raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Newham, North-West (Mr. Banks). I was the person who called the hon. Member for South Dorset (Mr. Bruce) a "stool pigeon" but, on your instructions, I withdrew my comment unequivocally. There is a feeling, however, that, because of his inadequacies, the Secretary of State for Wales is being protected, and that his Parliamentary Private Secretary or someone else is running around looking for a person consumed with ambition to table questions in order to protect the right hon. Gentleman, the chairman of the Welsh Development Agency and all the others——

Madam Speaker: Order. That is not a point of order for me. I do my best to protect the hon. Gentleman to ensure that he does not get into difficulties, and I asked him to withdraw. I am very much the hon. Gentleman's protector, and I shall take care of him in future, too.

Mr. Roy Hughes (Newport, East): You will be aware, Madam Speaker, that I have spent some years in the House and, indeed, that I am a member of your Chairmen's Panel. It seems to me that Welsh questions have become rather farcical. I remind you that my hon. Friend the Member for Ogmore (Mr. Powell) said that, when in your Chair, Mr. Speaker Thomas, now Viscount Tonypandy, told English Conservative Members that he was reluctant to call them, and that Welsh questions had been instituted so that Welsh Members could question the respective Welsh Ministers, which I thought perfectly good advice.

Madam Speaker: As I said earlier in answer to a point of order, if the hon. Gentleman reflects and reads the *Official Report* tomorrow, he will see that that is what has happened. I can understand his disappointment. He had tabled Question No. 12; if hon. Members and Ministers did not take so long over their questions and answers, we might proceed much more quickly through the Order Paper.

Mr. Alan W. Williams (Carmarthen): I was one of the victims of this afternoon's Question Time. I drew Question No. 11 but, unfortunately, six of the first 10 questions were from English Conservative Members. My question was highly topical, being about the Welsh Development Agency, and other hon. Members would have liked to contribute.

May I draw your attention, Madam Speaker, to comments by the former Secretary of State for Wales, the right hon. Member for The Wirral (Mr. Hunt), at a sitting of the Welsh Grand Committee in Cardiff on 8 March this year? He also acknowledged that there was a democratic deficit in Wales, and envisaged a larger role for the Welsh Grand Committee. Simultaneously, the Secretary of State for Scotland was talking about an enlarged role for Scottish Question Time. Would you please look into these possibilities?

Madam Speaker: These are not matters for me. They are matters for the Procedure Committee, and the hon. Gentleman might like to take his points there.

Mr. Simon Coombs (Swindon): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. May I assure you that my question on the Order Paper was not planted by anyone else? It reflected my interest in heart disease. If Opposition Members are not interested in the state of the health of the Welsh nation, they should be.

Mr. Ian Bruce: Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker——

Madam Speaker: Order. We will now make some progress. I have a statement to make which I am sure will be of interest to hon. Members.

Adjournment Motions

Madam Speaker: I remind the House that, on the motion for the Adjournment of the House on Tuesday 27 July, up to nine hon. Members may raise with Ministers subjects of their own choice. Applications should reach my office by 10 pm on Wednesday. A ballot will be held on Thursday morning, and the result made known as soon as possible thereafter.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS, &c.

Motion made, and Question put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 101(3) (Standing Committees on Statutory Instruments, &c.).

DISEASES OF ANIMALS

That the Diseases of Animals (Therapeutic Substances) (Revocation) Order 1993 (S.I., 1993, 1331) be referred to a Standing Committee on Statutory Instruments, &c.—*[Mr. Lightbown.]*

Question agreed to.

Education Bill (Allocation of Time)

3.45 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Mr. Eric Forth): I beg to move,

That the Order of the House [15th December] be supplemented as follows:

Lords Amendments

1.—(1) The proceedings on Consideration of Lords Amendments shall be completed at this day's sitting and, if not previously brought to a conclusion, shall be brought to a conclusion at midnight.

(2) Subject to the provisions of the Order [15th December], each part of those proceedings shall, if not previously brought to a conclusion, be brought to a conclusion at the time specified in the second column of the Table set out below.

TABLE
Proceedings

Lords amendments	*Time for conclusion*
Nos. 1 to 6	6.00 p.m.
Nos. 7 to 24	7.00 p.m.
Nos. 25 to 177	8.00 p.m.
Nos. 178 to 253	9.30 p.m.
Nos. 254 to 333	10.30 p.m.
Remaining amendments	midnight

2.—(1) For the purposes of bringing any proceedings to a conclusion in accordance with paragraph 1 above—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided and, if that Question is for the amendment of a Lords Amendment, shall then put forthwith the Question on any further Amendment of the said Lords Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown and on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in the said Lords Amendment or, as the case may be, in the said Lords Amendment, as amended;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining Lords Amendments as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and, subject to sub-paragraph (2), shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown to a Lords Amendment and then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in their Amendment, or as the case may be, in their Amendment, as amended;

(ii) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in a Lords Amendment;

(iii) put forthwith with respect to each Amendment designated by the Speaker which has not been disposed of the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in their Amendment; and

(iv) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Amendments;

(c) as soon as the House has agreed or disagreed with the Lords in any of their Amendments the Speaker shall put forthwith a separate Question on any other Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown relevant to that Lords Amendment.

(2) In the case of proceedings which are to be brought to a conclusion at midnight the Speaker shall, instead of putting any Question required by sub-paragraph (1)(b)(iii) above, put

[Mr. Eric Forth]

forthwith with respect to all of the designated Amendments which have not been disposed of the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in those Amendments.

(3) Proceedings under this paragraph shall not be interrupted under any Standing Order relating to the sittings of the House.

Extra time

3. Paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business) shall apply to proceedings on the Bill at this day's sitting for two hours after Ten o'clock.

Stages subsequent to first Consideration of Lords Amendments

4.—(1) The proceedings on any further message from the Lords on the Bill shall be brought to a conclusion one hour after their commencement.

(2) For the purpose of bringing those proceedings to a conclusion—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided, and shall then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown which is related to the Question already proposed from the Chair;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining items in the Lords Message as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown on any item;

(ii) in the case of each remaining item designated by the Speaker, put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in their Proposal; and

(iii) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Proposals.

Supplemental provisions with respect to certain proceedings

5.—(1) In this paragraph "the proceedings" means proceedings on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill, on the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons and the Report of such a Committee.

(2) The Speaker shall put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown for the consideration forthwith of the Message or for the appointment and quorum of the Committee.

(3) A Committee appointed to draw up Reasons shall report before the conclusion of the sitting at which it is appointed.

(4) Paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business) shall apply to the proceedings.

(5) No dilatory Motion with respect to, or in the course of, the proceedings shall be made except by a Minister of the Crown, and the Question on any such Motion shall be put forthwith.

(6) If the proceedings are interrupted by a Motion for the Adjournment of the House under Standing Order No. 20 (Adjournment on specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration) a period equal to the duration of the proceedings on the Motion shall be added to the period at the end of which the proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion.

(7) If the House is adjourned, or the sitting is suspended, before the expiry of the period at the end of which any proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion under this paragraph, no notice shall be required of a Motion made at the next sitting by a Minister of the Crown for varying or supplementing the provisions of this Order.

I start by apologising to the House on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for his absence from this debate. I am sure that all hon. Members will be aware that my right hon. Friend is indisposed and is unable to be here, as he would very much have wished.

I do not want to spend a great deal of time introducing this supplemental order. Even those hon. Members who enjoy the occasional wrangle over procedural matters will agree that our time would be much better spent by discussing the substance of the amendments made to the Bill in another place.

We have already spent an enormous amount of time on this vital Bill, and we are about to spend another eight hours or more on it this evening. A timetable is an essential tool if the business of the House is to be conducted efficiently, not least if we are to ensure that there is no delay in implementing important aspects of the Bill for the next educational term. To that end, we will be seeking Royal Assent before the end of the month—provided, of course, that the House accepts this order, and provided that we complete all the parliamentary stages in time.

We have already spent 150 hours discussing the Bill —including, at the Opposition's request, two days on the Floor of the House on Second Reading and a further two days on Report. In addition, the other place has given the Bill 114 hours of close scrutiny, including an additional day in Committee, which was again requested by the Opposition. That is a not insignificant amount of parliamentary time, especially when we consider that parts II and IV of the Bill are largely re-enactments, with a little tidying up, of earlier education legislation.

To help the House, I should take a few moments to categorise the 570 or so Government amendments made to the Bill in another place, which we will consider today. I can deal with rather more than half the lords amendments in one fell swoop. More than 300 of the Government amendments approved by the other place are purely technical consequential, drafting or tidying-up changes flowing directly from the Bill as it left this House. Such changes are inevitable in a Bill of this size and importance. I will give some examples to set that in context.

Amendment No. 395 revises the index to the Bill. That is an important element, but I very much doubt whether it is worthy of debate. Amendment No. 515 updates the definition of "school" in the Value Added Tax Act 1983 to take account of the definition in the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.

We also have 16 purely technical amendments on middle schools; 23 amendments to ensure that local education authorities and the Funding Agency for Schools, as appropriate, can pay for the provision of places at boarding and independent schools, so as to secure continuity with LEAs' existing ability to make such arrangements; 34 technical amendments to provide for the transfer of schools to new sites; and 40 amendments to provide for the detailed arrangements for grant-maintained school premises, covering the conveying of interest to trustees, the conditions of grant for premises and the details to be included in proposals.

I can already hear some hon. Members—I cannot, actually, but that is what it says in my notes—saying, "What about the rest?" As for the rest, they flow from three sources—first, the White Paper. That included, as I am sure all hon. Members will recall, proposed new

arrangements for education, as the jargon goes, otherwise than at school. That of course, caters for the most vulnerable pupils on our schools.

We wanted to make sure that the proposals were absolutely right and took full account of an extended consultation period. That is why the introduction of these vital proposals took place in the other place, where indeed they received thorough scrutiny, as we would expect. Secondly, we made commitments in this House to amend the Bill in a number of respects. We promised amendments on grant-maintained acquisition, to shorten the ballot period, and on religious education and collective worship.

Thirdly, we have drafted many amendments as a result of points raised in the other place. For example, we have extended the range of options available to schools willing to enter into grouped arrangements. We have brought forward amendments to ensure that head teachers are properly informed about matters relating to their schools —amendments that are supported by the National Association of Head Teachers—amendments relating to securing value for money in grant-maintained schools, and, of course, amendments to clause 1.

Many amendments are the product of fruitful negotiations between my Department and the Churches. They reaffirm the importance of a continuing partnership between Church and state in the provision of public education. All those amendments are before us for consideration.

It is important that we have a timetable motion. I need hardly remind hon. Members who were unfortunate enough to have to endure the snail's pace of progress in Committee before Christmas of the lengths to which some hon. Members—I will not mention any names, of course —will go to avoid serious debate about education, and even evade careful scrutiny of the Bill. But that is in the past.

We have much to do in implementing the Bill, and there are reforms in it which we must not delay. For too long, too many schools have simply shrugged their shoulders at the problems which are clearly besetting them, and are causing them to fail to give their pupils an acceptable standard of education. We cannot allow that to continue.

Part V allows for a range of new measures to be taken when an inspection reveals that a school is at risk. The first inspections will take place this autumn, and we are determined that rapid and effective action should be taken as soon as possible thereafter. That is why we shall seek Royal Assent before the end of the month, provided that the House agrees the timetable motion and dispatches the business in the motion this evening.

The order is essential if we are to complete our proceedings on the legislation in a sensible and effective manner. The Bill puts in place a new framework for the organisation of our education system. It offers a new start to our most vulnerable children—those in failing schools, those with special educational needs and those whose needs cannot be met in school. I look forward to the proceedings following the motion, and I commend it to the House.

3.51 pm

Mrs. Ann Taylor (Dewsbury): The Opposition object very strongly to the guillotine motion. The Minister is acknowledging that the Government are trying to rush through many amendments without proper consideration —without any consideration at all, in some respects. The Government are making a farce of parliamentary procedures by asking the House to debate more than 580 amendments in eight and half hours. That works out at 53 seconds per amendment. How on earth can the House of Commons be expected to carry out its responsiblities with such a time scale? Of course, that is assuming that we will have no votes on any of the amendments. That is not proper parliamentary scrutiny; that is not what our constituents sent us here to do; it reduces our proceedings to a farce.

That is typical of the way in which the Government have behaved throughout the passage of the Education Bill. The Bill is based on a White Paper which was published on 28 July. That White Paper was supposed to be the basis for consultation. The consultation period opened during the parliamentary recess when schools were on holiday, and it finished at the end of September. In other words, the consultation was a total sham, and, since that time, the Government have proved that they have not responded to the submissions that were made in that tight time scale. Indeed, the Government have not even published those responses, despite requests to do so.

The junior Minister said that this was a vital Bill. He acknowledged that the Opposition had been keen to press for as much time as possible to debate its vital provisions. We take legislation seriously. We take our responsibilities to scrutinise legislation seriously. That is why it is totally outrageous and unacceptable for such a time scale to be imposed at this stage.

The Bill was introduced in glowing terms by the Secretary of State for Education, who claimed that he had written it almost by himself. But he then failed to go on the Committee considering the Bill, which shows that he was treating the House with contempt and not treating the legislation as it deserved and required.

The contempt for parliamentary scrutiny went deep. This is the longest Education Bill ever to be presented to the House, yet it had the shortest debate in Committee. When the guillotine was imposed, it was the tightest ever imposed on any Education Bill. It allowed only two days for Report and is allowing us only one day—today—to debate 580 Lords amendments.

The timetable is especially outrageous because many of the issues on which the House has been asked to come to a conclusion this afternoon have been debated only in the House of Lords—they have never been debated in the House or in Committee. It may well be that some amendments will be accepted and some measures will become law without one word being spoken about them in the House. That is why the guillotine is a contempt of our procedures and of parliamentary scrutiny. However, it is typical of the arrogance and the attitude of Education Ministers.

The amendments that concern us are numerous. It is impossible to list all the areas where substantial changes have been made in another place, but the junior Minister mentioned some of them. There are some issues on which we hope to have a limited debate—because of the guillotine—later this evening. However, many issues may not be debated at all. I want to remind the Minister of some of the issues which have not been debated in the House or in Committee but which have been introduced by the House of Lords and should get significant time.

Amendments have been tabled on corporal punishment, the making of new curriculum orders, the imposition

[Mrs. Ann Taylor]

of a ballot if there is a tied result, the reduction in the time scale for opting out and the new measures introduced by the Government to tip the scales even more in favour of pushing schools in the direction of opting out. I was interested to read in the 16 July edition of *Education:*

"The Department for Education is abandoning its 1,500 attainment target for GM schools".

In the future, the Department will not put pressure on schools. That is an admission on the part of the Government that it has not been as easy as they thought to persuade schools to take the GM route.

Mr. Forth: The truth is that that was always a projected figure—a target has never been mentioned. We are still confident that the projected figure will be reached at about the same time, so there will be no change whatever in that.

Mrs. Taylor: The Government are so confident that their projection will be reached that they have manoeuvred and put constraints on everyone who opposed a school becoming grant-maintained, and put everything in favour of those who advocated grant-maintained status. The amendment that limits the amount of spending of those who are opposed to GM status, while not limiting the spending of those who are promoting GM status, is a clear example of what has been happening.

There are other serious issues that should not become a matter of political debate but should be a matter of constructive consideration by the House. However, they could well be squeezed in our debates this evening. I am thinking of the suggestions on pupil referral units, the abolition of indefinite exclusions and other matters of genuine concern to hon. Members on both sides of the House, where improvements could well be made to the Bill if parliamentary procedures allowed it and if we were not so short of time.

Mr. Nigel Spearing (Newham, South): As my hon. Friend knows, unfortunately I was not involved in the Committee or substantially involved in the Report stage. Will she confirm that the first intimation that Members of Parliament or, indeed, the education public had of the Government's intention to disagree with some of the amendments made in another place was at the weekend or even this very morning? If that is so, does it not show the contempt in which the Government hold the education processes which are the responsibility of government?

Mrs. Taylor: I am glad that my hon. Friend was able to make that point. Significant amendments were made in another place which affect the rights of pupils with special needs, acknowledge the need for local authorities to have significant planning responsibilities and acknowledge the importance of nursery education. I hope that there will be full time to debate all of those issues, but there cannot be full time for all the issues in the timetable proposed by the Government. It would be difficult for us even to vote on all the issues which received so much time and consideration in another place and on which such constructive decisions were made. That is a clear example of the problems that arise with a timetable such as that proposed, covering issues which are so vital.

The House will also face difficulties later this evening with the Lords amendments on sex education. Many of us will have received letters from a wide range of organisations which are alarmed at the Government's proposals for changes in the law on sex education. I have with me a collection of matters from the National Children's Bureau, the National Association of Governors and Managers, the British Medical Association, Norwich health authority and the Royal College of Nursing. Many of those organisations feel not only that they have not been consulted about the changes, but that they have a real interest in the proposals and could cast some light and give the benefit of their experience in establishing the way forward.

It seems that a minority in another place made a fuss about sex education. The Minister there, possibly without consulting other Ministers in the Department and certainly, I suspect, without consulting Ministers in the Department of Health, tabled amendments on sex education which simply have not been widely discussed with parents, teachers, governors or the medical profession. That is a clear example of the wrong way to go about making decisions on vital matters, but it is typical of what the Government have done with the Bill.

We are short of time even to discuss the guillotine motion. If the Bill is as vital as the Minister suggests, we should not discuss it on a time scale which allows us only 53 seconds for each amendment. Such an approach and a motion such as that which the Government have tabled today show the Government's contempt for parents, teachers, governors and everyone involved in education who expect better scrutiny of legislation than the Government are prepared to allow.

4.2 pm

Mr. Alan Howarth (Stratford-on-Avon): I wish to speak on the allocation of time motion, because it is particularly unsatisfactory in respect of sex education, on which the hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor) has just touched.

It seems inevitable that this evening we shall not have a debate or vote on the amendments on sex education. The amendments have been placed at the end of a series of groups that are due to be debated between 9.30 and 10.30 pm. There are four groups of amendments in that series. The opening amendments may be technical, but there are three subjects for debate, and it is inevitable that we shall not have an opportunity to debate and vote separately on the extremely important issue of sex education. I regard that as extraordinary, because the Government have proposed immensely important changes in national policy on sex education.

The Government said in the other place—where it was approved by a vote—that teaching about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases will be taken out of the national curriculum and transferred to sex education outside the national curriculum. Sex education will become compulsory for schools, but parents will be able to withdraw their children from sex education. Those are important changes. They were introduced at a late stage in the legislative process. They should be debated in the House today.

Mr. Forth: I remind my hon. Friend that such motions are tabled broadly in agreement with the Opposition, and we have adhered to such a convention. Therefore, there has been no conspiracy or fix, in terms of the motion's shape, that may lead to what my hon. Friend has described.

Mr. Howarth: I note what my hon. Friend says, and shall return to it later,

Mrs. Ann Taylor: The Opposition are totally opposed to a guillotine motion limiting debate of the Bill to one day. We believe that a range of issues need discussing, and that has been our case all along.

Mr. Howarth: Again, I note what the hon. Lady says. Many people have strong views on sex education. Some think that a Mephistophelean group whom they refer to as "the sex educators" are systematically eroding family values. Some think—it is a view that I respect—that sex education is such a sensitive and private matter that they should be entitled to deal with it within the family, and that teachers should not deal with it for their children. Some feel that sex education in schools is an affront to their sincerely held Christian values. Others disagree with that view, and stongly believe that good-quality sex education in our schools is vital. They care every bit as much about family values, and they too would be concerned about so-called "value-free" education.

I hold strong views on the matter, and the strongest is that it is our responsibility, as far as we can possibly fulfil it, to ensure that no one dies of ignorance. "Don't die of ignorance" has been the theme of the Department of Health's important, valuable and, in many ways, effective public education campaign.

When I was a Minister in the then Department of Education and Science, I happened to have responsibility for sex education, and worked closely with my colleagues in the Department of Health. But I wonder whether my successors are now working as closely with their colleagues in the Department of Health. It is incredible that Ministers responsible for health should have connived at a policy that takes education about HIV and AIDS out of the national curriculum.

The Department of Health's document, "The Health of the Nation", suggested that HIV was the greatest public health challenge of this century. One of the pillars of the Department of Health's strategy in relation to HIV and AIDS is sex education. The Department is due to report on the progress of the policies of "The Health of the Nation" this September, and I fancy that officials will now be working hard during August to rewrite their report before it is published in September.

The Education (No. 2) Act 1986 set in place the essential lineaments of our sex education policy hitherto. It was amplified and clarified in circular 11/87, and further developed in the Education Reform Act 1988.

In November 1991, the then Secretary of State for Education, my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke), made a speech at a conference organised by the National Aids Trust in London, where he rightly said:

"The challenge presented by HIV and AIDS is one that everyone must share. So far there is no cure and no prospect of a cure."

He went on to stress that the education service clearly has a significant part to play in achieving what must be our overall aim—to ensure that everyone is fully informed about the nature of HIV and AIDS, the risks that they present and what they can do to prevent their spread. He added:

"Education about HIV and AIDS will be effective only if all those who work in or with the education service accept their share of the responsibility and are sending out the same messages."

As a consequence, in August 1992—less than a year ago—the science orders of the national curriculum were amended to ensure that they incorporated the physical and emotional changes that take place in adolescence, and that the moral responsibilities that should accompany growing sexual maturity formed part of a young person's education within the national curriculum.

The Government's policy was again amplified in a draft circular issued in April 1993. The covering letter to that draft circular emphasised the need for effective sex education within a clear moral framework. I shall not quote at length from the document, Madam Speaker, because time is short, but it seems to me that the contents of the circular should satisfy those—surely including every hon. Member—who believe that there should be sex education, and that it should be in a moral context, promoting the values of family life and a sense of moral responsibility. That is, of course, already stipulated in section 46 of the Education Act 1986 and reinforced in section 1 of the Education Reform Act 1988.

Mr. Peter Thurnham (Bolton, North-East): I agree with my hon. Friend, but does he agree that sex education and education about HIV and Aids cannot be compartmentalised and taken out of the teaching in a school? Does my hon. Friend agree that they must be part of the ethos and teaching of the school, and should go through the school's curriculum?

Mr. Howarth *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. I am reluctant to intervene during hon. Members' speeches, but I must remind the House that this is a motion dealing with the allocation of time. Hon. Members should be debating whether they agree or disagree with the allocation of time, and should not become involved in a Second Reading debate.

Mr. Howarth: I will heed your warning, Madam Speaker. I am trying to explain why I consider that it is singularly unfortunate that the motion will most likely deny us the opportunity of debating the subject. I am trying to explain the importance of the subject.

Between 1986 and the spring of this year, there was a consistent development of policy in what I believe to be the right direction. More has been needed in terms of guidance, training and support for teachers and in terms of evening up local education authority standards, but it was right that every child should have the opportunity to be taught the facts and should be enabled, through his or her educational experience, to reflect upon the responsibilities associated with those facts. That was at the heart of the Government's policy, and that seemed proper.

Then an extraordinary thing happened. At the end of June and the beginning of July, the Government changed their policy. On 6 July—10 days before the consultation period on the draft circular was due to be completed—we were told that the policy was to be quite different. During the Third Reading debate in the House of Lords on 6 July, my noble Friend the Minister of State said that she believed that it was a "strange phenomenon" and "extraordinary" that education about HIV and AIDS had been, as she put it, "slipped into" the national curriculum in 1992.

[Mr. Howarth]

My noble Friend also referred to "deviant behaviour". She went on to say that there had been a moral decline, and asked whether that was possibly because of some of the sex education in schools.

In that spirit, the Government have introduced three changes which are of the utmost importance and should be debated today. I believe that one of the changes is good, while the other two are bad. It is good that the Government propose that all schools should now be required to teach sex education. That builds on the provisions of the Education Reform Act 1988. However, I believe that it is bad for the Government to propose that parents should have the right to withdraw their children from sex education.

I believe that it is bad also that sex education which goes beyond the biological aspects of human reproduction —particularly education about HIV and AIDS—should be removed from the national curriculum. I note also that, since April 1 this year, the Government have discontinued the funding of health education co-ordinators.

Why is it so bad to deprive children of the right to be educated about HIV and AIDS? It is bad because AIDS kills. It ineluctably kills any individual who contracts the virus. That is why there is a quite exceptional and heavy responsibility upon us in relation to educating young people about AIDS. It is vital that every young person is informed and thinks about the peril. Otherwise, some young people, and their partners, and the partners of their partners, may die from ignorance. That is an unpleasant reality, but it is reality that ought to be faced.

I have every sympathy with those who wish to preserve childhood innocence for as long as possible, and I have no quarrel with the Government's policy in relation to primary education—that in that case the decision whether to provide sex education should be a matter for the governors, and that parents should have a right to withdraw their children.

But by the age of 11 the innocence of a great many children is sadly already fairly frayed; they hear a great deal in the media, and they hear their elders talk. The chances are that they will become confused and even alarmed by the smattering of understanding that they have gained of HIV and AIDS. They are on the threshold of adolescence and of sexual independence.

The statistics that we ought to consider in this context are quite grim, and are certainly food for thought: 35 per cent. of under-16-year-olds and 50 per cent. of 18-year-olds have had full sexual intercourse. A third do not use contraceptives in a sexual encounter with a new partner. Some 20 per cent. of HIV infections in Britain are in the 15 to 25-year-old age group.

The proportion of HIV infection derived from heterosexual activity, setting aside infection associated with drug abuse, has risen——

Madam Speaker: Order. I have not yet heard from the hon. Gentleman why he feels that the allocation of time motion should be accepted. I need to hear reasons.

Mr. Howarth: I think that you will agree, Madam Speaker, that the facts that I am briefly stating are of the greatest importance in our national life and for the future of our children. We are debating an Education Bill——

Madam Speaker: Order. They may well be important, but we are dealing with a technical motion concerning the allocation of time. I want to hear from hon. Members why the allocation of time motion should be accepted.

Mr. Howarth: I am seeking to argue that there should not be an allocation of time, Madam Speaker—and certainly not an allocation of time that precludes our debating this extremely important subject. In emphasising the importance of the subject, I shall also be explaining why I am making the case.

The incidence of heterosexually derived HIV infections has risen, from 2 per cent. in 1985 to 28 per cent. now. That is why it is so important that our children and young people should be taught about the disease. Britain also has an exceptionally high proportion of teenage pregnancies: 8,500 under-16-year-old girls become pregnant each year.

Parents may avert their gaze from those realities, but they are facts and they ought to be faced. Notwithstanding the statistics that I have just mentioned, in consequence of the very positive health education policy that we have had in Britain we have so far had a relatively low rate of HIV infection compared with that in other European countries. But that serves only to underline the importance of sex education and the importance of our debating it today.

To provide sex education is not to condone promiscuous behaviour, let alone to encourage it. In support of that assertion, I should like to offer the House some figures from the 19 studies recently reviewed by the World Health Organisation in connection with its global programme on AIDS in Geneva. The 19 studies indicate a clear trend.

No study found evidence of sex education leading to earlier or increased sexual activity among the young people exposed to it. Six studies found that sex education led either to a delay in the onset of sexual activity or to a decrease in sexual activity overall. Ten studies found that sex education increased the adoption of safer practices by sexually active youths. It is very important, Madam Speaker, that time should be made available today to enable the House to absorb those important realities.

Moreover, on the basis of its systematic international comparative studies, the World Health Organisation tells us that school-based sex education programmes are more effective when they are given before young people become sexually active and when they emphasise skills and social norms rather than knowledge.

If the state has a duty to educate at all, it cannot now duck responsibilty in this matter. The Government have already legislated to provide a moral context for sex education. If we are dissatisfied, the answer is to improve the nature and quality of sex education, and to match the standards that are already set forth as aspirations in policy.

I do not believe that the rights of parents in these matters outweigh the rights of children or the rights of society. A study by the Policy Studies Institute a few years ago suggested that 96 per cent. of parents wanted their children to receive sex education at school. The other 4 per cent.—this might be debated later today if we have the opportunity to defeat the guillotine motion—do not have the right to risk an increase in the spread of a lethal virus.

I do not believe—as my hon. Friend the Minister of State suggested in another place—that those who withdraw their children from sex education will always be discerning. Some will be highly conscientious people, but

some will be prejudiced, some will be ignorant and some, I fear, will be those who abuse their children. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children has put that case to us. I do not wish to be melodramatic or alarmist, but I respect the views and fears of the NSPCC.

The 4 per cent. also do not have the right to undermine the education of the children of the 96 per cent. of parents. I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Bolton, North-East (Mr. Thurnham), who stressed the importance of sex education being integrated across the curriculum as a whole. It is meaningless to contemplate that it should not be so.

When being taught English literature, children are studying relationships; when being taught geography, they are considering the realities of life in modern Africa. It is totally absurd to suggest that their national curriculum studies should exclude them from awareness of HIV and AIDS.

The rights of children need to be considered, as distinct from the rights of the parents. That principle was upheld by the House of Lords in the judgment on the Gillick case, and it is also set out in chapter 41, part I(3)(a) of the Children Act 1989, as well as in the United Nations convention on the rights of the child, to which we are a signatory.

Society has the right to be protected from the spread of a lethal virus, just as it has the right to be protected from lethal driving or any other homicidal activity. Nor is it appropriate to draw an analogy—it would be important to debate the issue later this evening if the guillotine motion allowed us to do so—with religious education, as the Government used to recognise, and as Ministers argued in the context of the Education Act 1986. I am angry about the amendment and about the guillotine motion. This is no proper way in which to legislate.

My hon. Friend the Minister of State suggested that teaching about HIV and AIDS had been slipped into the national curriculum. I submit that the amendment was slipped into the Bill in the House of Lords. With the greatest respect to their Lordships, they have no constituents. The proposed change goes way beyond their proper responsibility as a revising Chamber—it is a major change.

On 6 July, my right hon. and noble Friend Baroness Blatch said that the House of Commons would have the opportunity to consider and debate the subject. She said:

"That is the democratic process".—[*Official Report, House of Lords*, 6 July 1993; Vol. 547, c. 1320.].

However, 580 amendments have been tabled, and we shall be lucky if many more than six are debated and voted on. Under the terms of the motion, the rest will receive a blanket approval.

The amendment to which I refer deals with whether young people may live or die. The national curriculum is the most cost-effective and far-reaching method of sex education we have: it is wrong that crucial aspects of sex education should be taken out of it, and wrong that the House should not have the opportunity to debate it.

Why are we to have no vote? Let me return to the intervention of my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State and of the hon. Member for Dewsbury. In my time in government, it was the custom of Ministers to offer those on the Opposition Front Bench a choice of the key subjects that were to be debated under the terms of the motion. The motion was negotiated between the two Front Benches. The House should be told who is responsible for preventing us from debating and voting on the issue of sex education this evening.

I will give way again to the hon. Member for Dewsbury if she will tell me whether my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary offered her the opportunity of a debate at the beginning of one of the blocks of amendments, under the timetable motion. If she was offered a choice, did she choose to decline that opportunity, and if so, why?

Mrs. Ann Taylor: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for giving way. No offer or suggestion was made that arrangements for that debate should be changed. If the Government were not to disagree with the Lords amendment in the previous section, there could be time for that debate.

Mr. Howarth: I should be grateful if my hon. Friend the Minister would confirm what has been said.

Mr. Forth: I do not think that we should become involved in an undignified wrangle. To clarify the matter, however, let me say that I—in the normal way, and as I have done throughout the Commons proceedings on the Bill—offered the Opposition a draft timetable, and welcomed their suggestions for change. No alterations were suggested, apart from some minor changes at the beginning.

Mr. Howarth: I shall say no more, except that I believe the Government have made a grievous mistake in introducing the amendment, and that it was wrong to introduce it in the House of Lords. I consider that we should be able to debate it here today. Surely that is the responsibility of those on both Front Benches. I am very disappointed that the Labour party has not taken the opportunity—which I believe was there—to ensure that we could debate and vote on the amendment.

4.24 pm

Mr. Edward O'Hara (Knowsley, South): Despite your valiant endeavours, Madam Speaker, the speech of the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon (Mr. Howarth) could not be described as "excursus interruptus".

I want to concentrate on why our debate should not be interrupted by the guillotine. The justification for my argument comes from none other than the Secretary of State, who has attributed some importance to the Bill. It was to have been the blueprint or coping stone for the legislation of the 21st century—an injudicious claim at the best of times, which probably should not be taken seriously.

What we have heard from the Government today is in keeping with their whole approach to this disreputable piece of legislation. The Secretary of State was in purdah for a matter of weeks before coming out with his White Paper "Choice and Diversity", for which he made such extravagant claims. When it was published on 28 July, it was subjected to the charade of consultation to which we have become accustomed under the present Government —which happened to coincide almost exactly with the period during which the whole education system was on holiday.

Finally, as a result of that inadequate process, a Bill was presented, containing 200 pages, 252 clauses and 17 schedules. It was guillotined on Second Reading and in Committee. It is no wonder that it hit the buffers when it

[Mr. Edward O'Hara]

reached the House of Lords, returning ultimately with 580 amendments. We should be grateful to their Lordships for slowing down a headlong, almost indecent, rush into legislation, and for reminding us of the deficiencies in the Bill.

I mean the word "deficiencies" in two senses. First, it contains shortcomings: things have been done that ought not to have been done. Secondly, it contains omissions. The result is a labyrinthine catalogue of amendments, rivalled in recent history only by the amendments tabled to the European Communities (Amendment) Bill.

The House recently debated the estimates of the Department for Education. Much was made of the misdirection of Government investment, and the absence of the investment that was needed. The same criticisms apply to the Bill. It is not, in fact, about the choice and diversity that feature in the title of the White Paper on which it is based; it is all about enforcing one type of provision—the grant-maintained system. It might more accurately be called the Grant-Maintained Schools (By Hook or By Crook) Bill, with the emphasis on the word "crook".

The Bill involves a scandalous rigging of the rules to take responsibility for educational provision away from local authorities, and to draw schools from them one by one, like teeth. The main instrument of the process is the manipulation of funds, reinforced in the recently published DFE estimates that we debated not long ago. Important issues of accountability for funding are embedded in many of the amendments to the Bill.

The Bill misses the point; there is no logical connection between the administrative arrangements it sets out and the delivery of the quality that is properly referred to in its foreword. Rather than producing a Bill that is irrelevant to the educational needs of the country, it would have been better if the Government had spent money on teachers and resources for all the nation's schools. Instead, the Bill will ensure that money is spent on bribery and bureaucracy.

Clause 1, which refers to the responsibilities of the Secretary of State, has a glaring omission, because it does not refer to nursery education. With the honourable exceptions of some local education authorities—mainly Labour ones, such as my own local authority of Knowsley—our national reputation for pre-school provision should make us hang our heads in shame. Because of the guillotine, there will not be enough time for that important issue to be adequately debated.

Important amendments have been tabled on special educational needs—a desperately important subject, given the evident inadequacies in the implementation of the Education Act 1981, which were exhaustively investigated by the Select Committee on Education. Those inadequacies have been compounded by the devil-take-the-hindmost market philosophy that characterises the Bill and much of the Government's other legislation on education. The guillotine would by no means provide adequate time to do justice to such important matters.

Other examples of missed opportunities, which are the hallmark of the Bill, will not be subject to adequate debate if the guillotine is imposed.

The debate is important, but not in the sense intended by the Secretary of State. It is important not for its purpose of cementing in place the structure of education to take us deep into the 21st century but in order adequately to demonstrate the dangers to which the nation's children are exposed. They are being used as guinea pigs in half-baked quack experiments in miseducation.

For those reasons, I strongly oppose the imposition of the guillotine.

4.33 pm

Mr. James Pawsey (Rugby and Kenilworth): I am sure that hon. Members on both sides of the House will join me in expressing the hope that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State shortly returns to the House and once more takes his place on the Front Bench.

The Bill has been already debated at great length. It had a two-day Second Reading debate; in Standing Committee E, it received a total of 122 hours consideration, and on Report it was considered for a further two days. It underwent a similar process in the other place: 62 hours were spent on Second Reading, with a further number of hours on Report and Third Reading. As a result, the Bill has already been debated for more than 275 hours.

Additionally, it has been discussed in schools and homes, by parents and teachers and by governors and councillors. It has been debated for months and by thousands of people. Only the Maastricht Bill has had more time devoted to it. But this Bill is fundamentally different, in that it is worth while and of benefit to the people of the United Kingdom.

We listened to the hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor) with some interest. She opposed the timetable motion, but I suspect that her principal reason was doctrinal: a fundamental dislike of grant-maintained status, the belief that the only good education is local authority education, and that only local education authorities can provide state education in a form suitable for the nation's children.

I believe that the Opposition are wrong. Grant-maintained status is popular; it is popular with parents, because it gives them the type of education that they want for their children. I need hardly remind hon. Members that it is necessary for a school to ballot its parents and receive a majority in favour before it gets grant-maintained status. That is democracy in action.

On the subject of democracy, it is worth while remembering that it was that great democrat, Michael Foot, who set the record for the number of guillotine motions, when he guillotined five separate Bills in one day, on 20 July 1976. Therefore, I believe that we should take no lessons from the Opposition when they talk about the use of the timetable motion.

We want this measure on the statute book in time for the next school year. If the Opposition have their way, they will delay matters until it is too late. Those who believe that I exaggerate the position should remember the debates that we had in Standing Committee E.

Time goes on and, although I should like to speak longer on this issue, I must leave time for the winding-up speeches.

Mr. Spearing: Before the hon. Gentleman sits down, he has mentioned——

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): Order. I think that the hon. Gentleman had already concluded.

4.36 pm

Mrs Ann Taylor: With the leave of the House, I shall make a few comments following the remarks of the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon (Mr. Howarth), and draw his attention to a letter from Ministers that has gone out today. It says that Ministers hope that the key relevant issues will secure debate. It also says, not that they were willing to give the Opposition carte blanche to determine the timetable, but that they should discuss their proposals with us.

We have seen the Government's proposals, but do not think that there is enough time to discuss the sex education amendment, and many others. If the Government seriously consider those issues to be important, as we believe that they should, they would not table a motion that gives us only 53 seconds to debate each amendment.

The Labour party's position on the amendment that concerns the hon. Gentleman is clear. It is the only amendment on which we have tabled our own proposal, That this House doth disagree with the other place.

Mr. Alan Howarth: Did the hon. Lady, or did she not, receive from my hon. Friend the Member for Mid-Worcestershire (Mr. Forth) a draft guillotine motion which would have put the debate on sex education at the head of that block of time?

Mrs. Taylor: No, I did not. As far as I know, nor did anyone else on the Opposition Front Bench. There is still a possibility of reaching the debate that concerns and us, because we think that the Lords' proposals on sex education are damaging and wrong.

The block of amendments before the one that concerns us includes amendment Nos. 17 on special needs; 188 on the need for local authorities to review special needs provision; 189, which gives powers for local authorities to plan and review all special needs provision, including grant-maintained schools; 190 on the issue of access audits for access to schools for handicapped pupils; 191 on strategic planning; 192 on planning for nursery provision, especially for special needs children; 193, which concerns the need to have more attention for non-statemented special needs children; 196 on LEA services and the rights of special schools to buy them; and 199 on the relationship between grant-maintained schools and the LEA.

All those issues, which were debated at length in another place, are issues about which we feel that appropriate decisions were made. The Government intend to take the time of the House by insisting on reversing every one of those amendments.

Mr. George Walden (Buckingham): Will the hon. Lady give way?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor) has ended her speech.

4.39pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Further and Higher Education (Mr. Tim Boswell): Once again, those of us who served on the Committee—I admit that I spent only half of that time in the Committee——

Mr. Forth: It seemed longer.

Mr. Boswell: I am conscious that my hon. Friend had to carry most of the burden of the Committee. However, most hon. Members who served on it had to endure the Opposition complaining, whingeing, grumbling—grizzling would perhaps be an appropriate word—about the lack of time for consideration.

I know that there is always an element of ritual in guillotine debates, but it has been ritual with knobs on this afternoon. The Opposition case has no merit, and they have not advanced it with conviction. They have not carried the House with them.

The underlying problem for the Opposition is the deliberate confusion, which they have had to cover, between their synthetic indignation at the alleged curtailment—or orderly management—of debate on lines that, as my hon. Friend the Member for Rugby and Kenilworth (Mr. Pawsey) said, are well precedented by the actions of the last Labour Government, and their inability to prioritise the subjects for the debate.

Mr. Andrew Miller (Ellesmere Port and Neston): Does the Minister think that people and groups such as the Cheshire dyslexia association are making synthetic arguments when they write to me expressing serious concern that issues that have come up in the Lords will not be dealt with here in proper time?

Mr. Boswell: We have provided a great deal of time for debate on the Bill. All the substantive issues have already been well rehearsed, and all the issues that have been debated this afternoon, save one, on which I shall touch —sex education—have been debated in Committee. I am satisfied that the Bill has been given full consideration.

Mr. Don Foster (Bath): How many of the amendments that we shall be debating today does the Minister believe to be important and substantive?

Mr. Boswell: That is an absurd question, which is consistent with what we have heard before. Most of the amendments are purely technical and reflect consultation.

I shall now answer the debate. We face the usual dilemma for Governments, which is played on every time by the Opposition.

Mr. Walden: Does my hon. Friend agree that there is an extremely strong case for the guillotining of all Bills—a measure that has been discussed elsewhere, and with which both Labour and Conservative Members agree? What matters is what the time is used for. If the Opposition were not engaged in a Brezhnevite retreat against the whole concept of variety in our schools in the form of grant-maintained schools, we could have a wider and better debate, including a debate on sex. In the case of nursery education, I should be on the side of the hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor). The problem of time, which has led to the guillotining of the Bill, is the result of the stubborn Brezhnevite tactics of the Opposition.

Mr. Boswell: As ever, I agree with much of what my hon. Friend and neighbour has said. Let me take up his point about an early guillotine. I take issue with the hon. Member for Knowsley, South (Mr. O'Hara), who seemed to be under the misapprehension that the Bill had been guillotined from Second Reading on. On behalf of my hon. Friends and those who served on the Committee, I can say only that many of us wished to God it had been. We went through the initial procedure and saw the long delays and waste of time.

[Mr. Boswell]

The guts of the debate is simple. We are bent on the task of saving the Opposition from themselves. They are unable to prioritise their concerns or manage their time effectively or deploy their arguments. We must impose order on the structure of the debate. We are anxious to proceed with the debate and get on with the substantive issues—— *[Interruption.]*

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. The behaviour of hon. Members at this point is not particularly good. It is certainly not an object lesson to any schoolchildren who may be watching.

Mr. Boswell: I hope that the House will note those strictures.

We wish to consider the issues. Only one new one—sex education—has been deployed this afternoon. The sooner that we get on the debate and stop continuing with the ritual, the better.

Question put:—

The House divided: Ayes 288, Noes 222.

Division No. 338] **[4.44 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Horam, John
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter

Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Wolfson, Mark
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. David Lightbown and
Mr. Tim Wood.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newh'm NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Bdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N Warks)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Reid, Dr John
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Spearing, Nigel
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. John Spellar and
Mr. Peter Kilfoyle.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Resolved,

That the Order of the House [15th December] be supplemented as follows:

Lords Amendments

1.—(1) The proceedings on Consideration of Lords Amendments shall be completed at this day's sitting and, if not previously brought to a conclusion, shall be brought to a conclusion at midnight.

(2) Subject to the provisions of the Order [15th December], each part of those proceedings shall, if not previously brought to a conclusion, be brought to a conclusion at the time specified in the second column of the Table set out below.

TABLE

Proceedings

Lords amendments	*Time for conclusion*
Nos. 1 to 6	6.00 p.m.
Nos. 7 to 24	7.00 p.m.
Nos. 25 to 177	8.00 p.m.
Nos. 178 to 253	9.30 p.m.
Nos. 254 to 333	10.30 p.m.
Remaining amendments	midnight

2.—(1) For the purposes of bringing any proceedings to a conclusion in accordance with paragraph 1 above—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided and, if that Question is for the amendment of a Lords Amendment, shall then put forthwith the Question on any further Amendment of the said Lords Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown and on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in the said Lords Amendment or, as the case may be, in the said Lords Amendment, as amended;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining Lords Amendments as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and, subject to sub-paragraph (2), shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown to a Lords Amendment and then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth agree or disagree with the Lords in their Amendment, or as the case may be, in their Amendment, as amended;

(ii) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in a Lords Amendment;

(iii) put forthwith with respect to each Amendment designated by the Speaker which has not been disposed of the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in their Amendment; and

(iv) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Amendments;

(c) as soon as the House has agreed or disagreed with the Lords in any of their Amendments the Speaker shall put forthwith a separate Question on any other Amendment moved by a Minister of the Crown relevant to that Lords Amendment.

(2) In the case of proceedings which are to be brought to a conclusion at midnight the Speaker shall, instead of putting any Question required by sub-paragraph (1)(b)(iii) above, put forthwith with respect to all of the designated Amendments which have not been disposed of the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in those Amendments.

(3) Proceedings under this paragraph shall not be interrupted under any Standing Order relating to the sittings of the House.

Extra time

3. Paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business) shall apply to proceedings on the Bill at this day's sitting for two hours after Ten o'clock.

Stages subsequent to first Consideration of Lords Amendments

4.—(1) The proceedings on any further message from the Lords on the Bill shall be brought to a conclusion one hour after their commencement.

(2) For the purpose of bringing those proceedings to a conclusion—

(a) the Speaker shall first put forthwith any Question which has already been proposed from the Chair and not yet decided, and shall then put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown which is related to the Question already proposed from the Chair;

(b) the Speaker shall then designate such of the remaining items in the Lords Message as appear to the Speaker to involve questions of Privilege and shall—

(i) put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown on any item;

(ii) in the case of each remaining item designated by the Speaker, put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in their Proposal; and

(iii) put forthwith the Question, That this House doth agree with the Lords in all the remaining Lords Proposals.

Supplemental provisions with respect to certain proceedings

5.—(1) In this paragraph "the proceedings" means proceedings on any further Message from the Lords on the Bill, on the appointment and quorum of a Committee to draw up Reasons and the Report of such a Committee.

(2) The Speaker shall put forthwith the Question on any Motion made by a Minister of the Crown for the consideration forthwith of the Message or for the appointment and quorum of the Committee.

(3) A Committee appointed to draw up Reasons shall report before the conclusion of the sitting at which it is appointed.

(4) Paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business) shall apply to the proceedings.

(5) No dilatory Motion with respect to, or in the course of, the proceedings shall be made except by a Minister of the Crown, and the Question on any such Motion shall be put forthwith.

(6) If the proceedings are interrupted by a Motion for the Adjournment of the House under Standing Order No. 20 (Adjournment on specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration) a period equal to the duration of the proceedings on the Motion shall be added to the period at the end of which the proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion.

(7) If the House is adjourned, or the sitting is suspended, before the expiry of the period at the end of which any proceedings are to be brought to a conclusion under this paragraph, no notice shall be required of a Motion made at the next sitting by a Minister of the Crown for varying or supplementing the provisions of this Order.

Orders of the Day

Education Bill

Lords amendments considered.

Clause 1

GENERAL DUTY OF SECRETARY OF STATE

Lords amendment: No. 1, in page 1, line 12, leave out from beginning to ("his") and insert

("The Secretary of State shall exercise")

4.37 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Mr. Eric Forth): I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): With this it will be convenient to consider Lords amendments Nos. 2 to 6.

Mr. Forth: In speaking to these amendments, it would help if I reminded the House briefly of the background to the clause. It seems a long time ago, but, if my memory serves me right, the hon. Member for Hemsworth (Mr. Enright) first identified in Standing Committee the fact that the essence of the Bill, which has been before the House and another place for such a long time, was somewhat at odds with the principles and contents of the Education Act 1944. My hon. Friend the Member for Rugby and Kenilworth (Mr. Pawsey) took up the matter and reinforced what the hon. Gentleman said. Both asked whether the Government would consider what could be done to resolve any differences or divergences that were beginning to emerge between the principles of the Bill and those of the 1944 Act.

Mr. Derek Enright (Hemsworth): Will the Minister make it clear that I made the comments on the matter in a disapproving manner, unlike the hon. Member for Rugby and Kenilworth (Mr. Pawsey)?

Mr. Forth: That may be so. I cannot remember specifically the disapproval of the hon. Member for Hemsworth (Mr. Enright), but of course I accept what he says. The great service that he did to the Committee and the House—it is not overstating the case to put it that way—is that he was the first to put his finger on the difference. We came increasingly to the view that it was essential to correct and to deal with the matter. The group of amendments from another place is a direct result of that process.

In particular, there was a recognition—these are my words, and I shall no longer seek to associate the hon. Gentleman with my remarks—that education is no longer primarily the monopoly of the local education authority. Conservative Members are convinced that the best way to secure improved standards in education is to give individual institutions responsibility for deciding how best they can meet the needs of the people they serve—we have already made considerable progress on that. Those institutions are covered by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, in which we were happy to give the former polytechnics, now universities, their independence. They have responded to that in full measure and with vigour, and have used that independence in the most positive way.

The Act also took further education sixth form colleges out of local education authority control. Those institutions are using their independence to benefit the students whom they serve. The local and business communities also benefit from the work of those institutions and from the improved attainment levels of their students. The same process is taking place in our school system. We and, most importantly, parents and pupils are experiencing an increase in the benefits that that process brings.

The Education Reform Act 1988 introduced local management of schools into the maintained school sector. Its introduction was much maligned by backward-looking Members, mainly Opposition Members. The policy of local management of schools has been grasped with enthusiasm by schools up and down the country. They have relished the opportunity that it has given them to take greater responsibility for managing their affairs in the interests of pupils.

More importantly, the Education Reform Act also gave schools the opportunity to opt out completely of local education authority control. It should be no surprise that Opposition Members also opposed that measure, but we now have a flourishing grant-maintained, self-governing school sector, which will continue to grow in response to parental demand. Nearly 500 self-governing schools are already operating and another 140 or so have received approval from the Department of Education and the Secretary of State. In a further 260, parents have voted to approve applications or proposals for grant-maintained status. More than one in five secondary schools has now balloted on grant-maintained status. Those figures clearly demonstrate the continuing popularity of the reform.

Mr. Nick Hawkins (Blackpool, South): My hon. Friend has made the important point that most of the great educational advances, which have been widely welcomed by teachers, parents, governors and pupils, have been opposed tooth and nail by the Opposition. Those initiatives include the technical and vocational education initiative and the local management of schools policy that my hon. Friend mentioned. Does he agree that the Opposition will oppose the current legislation tooth and nail in the House today, but, in a few years' time, their policy will be stood on its head and they will support the Bill?

Mr. Forth: My hon. Friend makes a valid point. That is a problem for Opposition Members. They have to decide how long they can hold out against the tide of parental opinion and the strongly expressed views of parents. If Opposition Members persist in seeking to deny parents the freedoms that we provide—the elements of choice, the ability to ballot on grant-maintained status and the like—the Opposition will be the losers and we will be the beneficiaries.

Mrs. Alice Mahon (Halifax): What does the Minister have to say to the ex-mayor of Calderdale, Tory Councillor Carpenter, who recently said that the education department in Calderdale had been placed in a financially perilous position by the opt-out? Councillor Carpenter warns that it will be the end of the local

[Mrs. Alice Mahon]

education authority, if not the local authority, because of the double funding and the way in which finances are skewed towards the opted-out sector.

Mr. Forth: In the friendliest possible way, I would tell that councillor to look closely at the way in which his local authority operates and uses its funds. He should seek the advice of some of his colleagues throughout local education authorities, many of whom have responded imaginatively and positively to the challenge of grant-maintained status. Some of them have encouraged schools to become grant-maintained; others have welcomed the competition and others have sought, hopelessly, to resist the trend. It would help him if he discussed the matter with his colleagues in other authorities and found out the secret to responding successfully and positively to the challenge. I am disappointed by his negative attitude, but he will be able to find succour and advice from many who have found the secret which has eluded him until now.

In the grant-maintained schools, self-governing status has helped to release enormous, previously untapped potential. The parents, who have chosen and balloted for the freedom of grant-maintained status because they want the best for their children, recognise that. The Bill maintains the momentum. In particular, it establishes a coherent and stable framework which will allow self-governing schools, and prospective self-governing schools, to plan confidently for the future. While guaranteeing that the route to self-governing status will remain, via the parental ballot, the Bill rightly makes the transition simpler.

Education law needs to be brought up to date to reflect the fundamental changes that have already taken place. Like the 1944 Act, it needs to be able to accommodate the changes still to come. That is precisely what clause 1 achieves. It places a duty on the Secretary of State to promote the education of people in England and Wales. It encompasses all the key organisations which have, and will continue to have, important roles to play in the delivery of the highest-quality education—local education authorities, the Funding Agency for Schools, the Further and Higher Education Funding Councils and, most importantly, the individual schools, colleges and universities—without cluttering the clause with a long, unwieldy list.

The clause establishes the key objectives of the Government: to improve standards, to increase opportunities for choice and to encourage diversity. The Bill will take us well into the next century. I have no doubt that, in the years to come, its praises will be sung throughout the House. Even Opposition Members may, on reflection, recognise the Bill's aims.

I will now turn to the amendments brought from another place. A number of peers were concerned that the clause in some way extended the power of the Secretary of State over institutions in the higher education sector beyond those powers already given to him in existing statute. That was never the intention behind the clause the genesis of which I have described. We did not believe that that was the effect of the clause. However, we recognised the force of the concerns expressed and were happy to table amendments which sought to allay those concerns.

The amendments brought from another place make it clear that the Secretary of State should have a general duty to promote the education of people in England and Wales, regardless of whether that education is provided in schools, colleges or universities. That aim is set out in new clause 1 which is entirely free standing. In turn, new clause 2, which is concerned with the use of the Secretary of State's powers, clearly applies only to schools and further education institutions and to primary, secondary and further education.

I have set out the intentions of clause 1, which is important, but it goes no further than I have described. I hope that the House will agree to the amendments.

Mr. Jeff Rooker (Birmingham, Perry Barr): I wish to take up some of the issues raised by the Minister. In the last 30 seconds of his speech—which was obviously truncated by the guillotine motion—the Minister referred to amendments Nos. 1 to 6. He did not refer to them in the rest of his speech, but I shall concentrate on the amendments, as I wish to probe the Government's intentions when the clause was brought before the House and when it came before the other place. We have never had a satisfactory explanation about that.

Just to ensure that the idea does not enter folklore, we must continually remind the Government that the Opposition do not oppose local management of schools and did not oppose it when it was introduced, but we rightly objected to the formula on which it was originally based. It is common ground between us that subsidiarity should apply and that decisions should be taken down to the level at which they can best be made. It is, however, a myth to claim that the Opposition opposed the principle. We merely opposed the formula and we were entitled to —we do not have to accept everything rammed down our throats by the Government.

I remind the House that the 1944 Act was our Act. The Conservative party has no proprietorial rights over it. So let us all use language that we can understand and not perpetrate central office mythology.

On report, on 2 March at column 161, the Secretary of State made it abundantly clear that this part of the Bill was intended to apply to the Higher Education Funding Council and the universities. Indeed, he went out of his way to specify that it was intended to cover higher education. That intention clearly showed through the drafting of both the clause and the right hon. Gentleman's speech.

It was not until the Bill left this House and went to another place that the issue was debated in detail. There was hardly any debate here, because the 6 pm guillotine fell during the second sentence spoken by the hon. Member for Buckingham (Mr. Walden), as I know from having read the debate. There was no debate here about the effects on higher education and the Secretary of State's intention that universities be covered.

Following the debates in the House of Lords and today's remarks by the Minister, we have still had no explanation of why Ministers intended to extend these powers into higher education. It would help us to guard against such moves in the future and be able to bring the Government to account if we were given an explanatory statement. Although the Government have backtracked in the meantime, it would still be useful to know their thinking on the matter.

This is our first opportunity to discuss the issue. Although we agree with the Lords amendments, we make it crystal clear that the Opposition do not see threats to university autonomy or academic freedom in the promotion of policies in respect of quality education, wider access to higher education and equity of treatment as between full or part-time students in further or higher education. We will not be dictated to; nor will we accept criticism from the university sector simply because we want to raise these issues, as they were raised in the Lords. They can be properly debated in a mature fashion, surely, without such accusations being tossed around the Chamber.

For the avoidance of doubt, I should point out that it is quite legitimate to raise these issues in debates, here and in another place. No one is levelling charges at anyone about a diminution of academic freedom or autonomy. Higher education itself is about inquiry and change, phenomena which can be uncomfortable bedfellows for those in politics and higher education.

We do not yet have the benefit of seeing a consolidated clause, although I have one with me drawn up by the Library. Nevertheless, the Lords amendments construct a composite clause. I have already declared an interest—not pecuniary—as a serving member of an FE college corporation, a post in which I served for 20 years before coming to the House. Neither I nor my hon. Friends know of any FE corporation that wants to return to the status quo ante—that is not in dispute. I have seen at first hand the changes that have occurred and the problems both before and after incorporation. It has not all been plain sailing.

The borders between these sectors of education are becoming ever more blurred, the more so since further education is still included in the clause. We know that the Higher Education Funding Council for England directly funds no fewer than 77 FE colleges' higher education courses. Given that the HE arrangements in further education colleges are either franchise-based or based on 3 plus 1 or 2 plus 2 degrees, we want to know how the Secretary of State will exercise his power in the FE sector without impinging on the commitments given in another place to the effect that he will not do so in the higher education sector. Almost a quarter of FE colleges use this arrangement—higher education takes place, in fact, in far more than 77 of them, although only 77 are directly funded for it. As some of these colleges work in partnership with the universities, we need to know the Secretary of State's intentions.

5.15 pm

As the summer will show, cuts in university places will become apparent when the brown envelopes do not drop through doors, but that is to be compensated for in part by the proposed expansion—of 25 per cent. over the next three years—in the number of further education places. Some of that number will clearly be in higher education —so much has emerged from the colleges and from ministerial statements. The clause will thus have an effect on the HE sector.

I appreciate that the university lobby and its representatives in the House of Lords did not discuss this aspect. I was in the other place, in the Gallery, on 20 April, watching the kebabing of Baroness Blatch as she proposed the original clause. The vice-chancellors and their representatives rightly concentrated on their own institutions, because there had been no consultation or debate in this place, nor had there been any warning that the Government intended, as it appeared, to take further powers over the higher education sector.

I have been to the other place only a few times and I found it illuminating to see the House of Lords chock-a-block, with every speaker from every quarter attacking the Government. Even after the Minister had given way to their demands, they carried on for another hour pressing their case. Anyone waiting to speak on any other aspect of the Bill would have found himself trampled at the end of that debate, because so many people were leaving.

I do not want to fall foul of anyone in the higher education sector, but I suggest that the next batch of working peers should be drawn exclusively from the further education sector, the better to represent its views —especially in view of the blurring of the two sectors. It would be useful to have more practitioners, heads of departments and principals from FE, and more heads of nursery schools, in the second Chamber, while it remains in its present form.

That makes the debates more rounded, and it would allow those of us who tend to concentrate on higher education to understand that the lower tiers of education provide the seedcorn. It is wrong to compartmentalise each sector of education. I make this point for all party leaders as they draw up their lists of working peerages. Our higher education sector deserves a statement in greater detail than the Minister has been able to give so far about why they were included in the original clause.

In principle we do not disagree with the new wider powers, but on behalf of those who will be on the receiving end of them we are entitled to ask how the Minister will exercise them. Will representatives of parents, teachers, students and pupils be consulted before these wide general powers are exercised? In the spirit in which the Government should conduct education policy, they should be prepared to say that there will be meaningful consultation because sometimes consultation is merely symbolic. More thought by the Government before presenting the new clause would have been helpful for all concerned.

We do not oppose the amendments. We would have raised the same issues if we had had the opportunity when the Bill was going through this place. However, we did not have the opportunity to do that because the Government were not willing to allow time to debate the Bill in the detail that it deserves.

Mr. James Pawsey (Rugby and Kenilworth): One of the Bill's principal objects is to make it easier for schools to apply for grant-maintained status. That was said in an earlier debate by the hon. Member for Knowsley, South (Mr. O'Hara). I welcome grant-maintained status, although the hon. Gentleman did not. Opposition Members have made no secret of their hostility to grant-maintained status. The hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor), who is in her customary place on the Opposition Front Bench, has said that, if Labour ever wins a general election, it will abolish grant-maintained status and put schools back under local education authorities.

Parental opinion expressed through a free and secret ballot apparently means nothing to the hon. Member for Dewsbury. It is odd that she is so far out of step with her right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monklands,

[Mr. James Pawsey]

East (Mr. Smith) and with her hon. Friends the Members for Sedgefield (Mr. Blair) and for Dunfermline, East (Mr. Brown), who are steadily moving away from the old clause 4 mentality that only state ownership and the LEA are right. The hon. Lady is in something of a time warp. Most believe that she will have to change her mind on this issue in precisely the way that she changed it on the sale of council houses.

Does the hon. Member for Dewsbury seriously tell the House and the nation that, at a time when hundreds of schools have become grant-maintained and hundreds of thousands of the nation's children are being educated in them, she will abolish their status and return them to the control of local education authorities? Does she think that parents will stand for that? Does not she understand the magnitude of the upheaval and the damage that the change will do to innumerable children in the state sector? The hon. Lady is unwise, and it may be significant that already there are rumours that some of her hon. Friends think that she is wrong and will seek to change her mind before it becomes set in its customary concrete.

Mr. Gerry Steinberg (City of Durham): Who?

Mr. Pawsey: The hon. Gentleman asks, "Who?" It is up to him to take soundings in his party. If he does not know who they are, it is not for me to tell him.

Mr. Steinberg: The hon. Gentleman is misleading the House, as he usually does. When my party forms the Government in three years' time, it will return opted-out schools to the state sector.

Mr. Pawsey: I wonder whether the House noted the silence with which the hon. Gentleman's intervention was received by his hon. Friends. Does he realise how isolated he is becoming in his party?

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Pawsey: Now they are queuing up.

Mr. Enright: We are getting close to the end of the hon. Gentleman's second speech and I have not yet heard one iota about his philosophy on education or anything about his aims or dreams or what he intends to do and what education is about. All that he can do is grub in the dirt.

Mr. Pawsey: The hon. Gentleman obviously did not listen to the debates in Standing Committee E. If he can remember that far back, he will recall that I spelled out in substantial detail my philosophy on education. The House will be relieved to know that I do not intend to take up more time by repeating purely for the hon. Gentleman's benefit what I said at length some time ago.

Grant-maintained schools are successful because they are popular with parents and more parents want them; their wishes are expressed through a free and secret ballot. For such schools to be sacrificed to a political vision that is becoming increasingly abandoned by the more progressive thinkers in the Labour party would be a mistake on a par with Labour's expectations during the last general election.

Mr. Rooker: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Pawsey: I should like to make progress, but I shall give way to the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Rooker: The hon. Gentleman is obviously wound up on this issue. Will he give a commitment that the promises given to parents during the ballots on grant-maintained schools will be kept and that the funding of future grant-maintained schools will be on the same basis as the funding of those schools to which that status has already been granted?

Mr. Pawsey: I acknowledge that funding will become increasingly tight. Conservative Members certainly accept that, because we understand the substantial deficit between Government revenue and expenditure. We appreciate what has to be done to rectify that deficit, but that does not damage the fundamental principle of grant-maintained schools. People vote for those schools, and they come into existence not because of the extra funding that they receive but because parents believe in them and appreciate the greater freedom and the greater choice that go with them. The hon. Gentleman should understand that.

When the hon. Member for Dewsbury was shadow spokesman on the environment, she took a long time to accept the sale of council houses and accepted it only after several thousand had been sold. Given time and several thousand grant-maintained schools, I am certain that she will again see the light—perhaps not in a brilliant flash as on the road to Dewsbury, but rather sullenly and reluctantly—and she will be motivated by the knowledge that the abolition of grant-maintained status would be unpopular and a real vote loser.

There is nothing like four lost general elections to concentrate even the most recalcitrant mind. Parents want grant-maintained schools and they will get them, but only from a Conservative Government. The hon. Lady and her hon. Friends listen only to the trade unions and to the views and needs of their friends and comrades in local authorities. They must understand that grant-maintained schools offer genuine choice and genuine diversity to the nation's parents.

One of our more interesting debates took place on 21 January; it was on specialisation. I make no secret of the fact that I support specialisation and believe that where governing bodies, parents and teachers want to specialise in technology, science or music, they should be allowed to do so. Specialisation adds additional choice, concentrates resources and challenges pupils, and it should be welcomed.

As my hon. Friend the Minister said, about 640 schools have been approved for grant-maintained status, and a further 260 applications are in the pipeline. The vast majority of those are secondary schools. Currently, about 20 per cent. of secondary schools have applied for grant-maintained status and more than 350,000 of the nation's children are now taught in grant-maintained schools. That is a clear sign of the magnitude of the revolution taking place. For the first time in almost 100 years, the apron strings that secured schools to LEAs are being cut.

I have long held the view that those who believe that the only acceptable form of state education is local authority education are mistaken. There is a place for the local education authority, but it is unwise to assume that only one form of education is right. It is also unwise to accept that all the nation's children should be educated in a single type of school, run by a single form of authority.

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Lancaster): Hear, hear.

5.30 pm

Mr. Pawsey: I am delighted to have my hon. Friend's assent.

No one person and no single system has a monopoly on virtue. The old monolithic structure of the LEAs, which has survived for the best part of 100 years, is now under challenge—and rightly so. Parents are becoming more knowledgeable as a result of the Government's reforms and they are becoming more interested in their children's education. They have the right to exercise their opinions and their choice. We have made it possible for the educational establishment to be challenged and most parents are taking advantage of that.

The Bill makes it easier for primary schools to emerge through the introduction of clustering. That will be of particular benefit to schools in rural areas. The concept of clustering will also assist denominational schools—for example, a Catholic secondary school will be able to apply for grant-maintained status with its feeder primary schools.

I think it appropriate to quote from a letter that I received from the Catholic Education Service, dated 22 January. In that letter, the deputy director told me:

"In Sheffield, where I learn this morning that three of our primary schools are about to embark upon the GM route, there is no doubt that the authority has consistently sold Catholic schools short when comparisons are made with the LEA funding with county schools of similar size. I am told that examples of the same can also be found in Derbyshire. Similar observation has been made in Staffordshire and Liverpool and, I regret, could be demonstrated elsewhere. Such disparities in provision, long suspected, became apparent with delegated budget provision."

I am not especially surprised that some LEAs have consistently sold Catholic schools short. That may or may not have been deliberate policy, but, whatever the reason, it will be put right when such schools receive grant-maintained status. They will then receive their fair share of resources, with greater freedom added for good measure.

Mr. Enright: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Pawsey: I shall give way to the hon. Gentleman for a second time.

Mr. Enright: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman, especially as he has spoken for a second time. Could he explain why the Archbishop's spokesman, Bishop David Konstant, is opposed to grant-maintained schools and advises Catholic schools not to go down that route? For the hon. Gentleman's information, I have taught in Catholic schools under both Conservative and Labour authorities, both of which have always given excellent back-up to Catholic schools. I pay tribute to them for that.

Mr. Pawsey: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for that intervention because he did not challenge the extracts that I quoted from the letter from the Catholic Education Service; clearly, he rightly accepts them as correct. On the question of Bishop Konstant, it may be that his opinion has more to do with his political beliefs than with anything else. I merely put that point to the hon. Gentleman for good measure. I certainly hope that more Catholic schools take the plunge and are reborn or rebaptised as grant-maintained schools.

Throughout the passage of the Bill, Labour Members have ridiculed grant-maintained status and have tried to reduce the significance of the numbers. I ask them again today, as I asked them in Committee: if grant-maintained status is as unsuccessful as they claim, why do they make such a fuss about it? The fact is that grant-maintained status is a substantial benefit.

I want to discuss my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's admirable initiative in tackling failing schools. Education associations will take over where LEAs leave off. It is not always easy for an LEA to get to grips with a failing inner-city school, where the headmaster may be old or tired or nearing retirement. My right hon. Friend's solution will be of substantial benefit, so I hope that the amendment will receive the support of Labour Members.

Education associations will be a longstop, rarely called into existence and then only when an LEA has failed, despite being given the appropriate time and opportunity to take remedial action. Membership of the education associations will be small and committed, and I believe that their attitude will be positive and substantial. They will be of great importance to a considerable number of children who otherwise might be let down by a particular school.

The Bill continues the thrust of the Government's reforms. It picks up where the Education Reform Act 1988 left off. It builds on the independent schools inspectorate, and it confirms the national curriculum and testing. The aim of the Government's reforms is ambitious: it is no less than a genuine attempt to improve the quality and standard of state education where the majority of the nation's children are educated. I believe that to be a truly laudable objective.

Mr. Don Foster (Bath): The hon. Member for Rugby and Kenilworth (Mr. Pawsey) spoke about the damage that the plans and policies of the hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor) might do to children. If only he would, to use his own words, take soundings throughout the country, he would find that many people, including governors, parents and teachers, would tell him that the Government's current policies are already causing a great deal of damage to the education service.

The hon. Gentleman spoke about sacrificing the education service for political ideology. The ideology that he and his party support has already led to strife rather than consensus in the education service. The ideology that the hon. Gentleman, his party and his Government support has led to competition throughout the service, rather than the partnership that was such an important element of the 1944 Education Act, about which Conservative Members boasted so proudly only a few moments ago. They have had 14 years in office and have brought in 17 major education Bills, yet they still fail to get it right.

I ask the hon. Gentleman to tell us whether he truly believes that, if all schools opted out, 23,000 quasi-independent schools would add up to what he and I both understand to be an education service.

Mr. Pawsey: I am delighted to respond to the hon. Gentleman's question. The difference between us is not that I would drive 23,000 schools into one form of education or another—very simply, I want to give them the choice. Freedom to choose is what it is all about. It is what parents want and it is what they will get from the

[Mr. Pawsey]

Government. It would be helpful to know what the hon. Gentleman's party would do with grant-maintained schools. Are you going to go down the same route——

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. Gentleman has forgotten the rule that all remarks must be addressed to the Chair. I do not think that he intended to put that question to me.

Mr. Pawsey: Certainly not. I am obliged to you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I intended to direct my remarks entirely to the hon. Gentleman who speaks on behalf of the Liberal Democrats. Incidentally, it is significant that he is alone, enjoying no support from other members of his party. Perhaps that is a clue to what they think about their party's policies. Nevertheless, let me hear what the hon. Gentleman has to say about grant-maintained schools and whether his party would keep them or abolish them.

Mr. Foster: My Liberal Democrat colleagues have full confidence in all the remarks that I am likely to make. Hon. Members will, of course, note that there is a greater proportion of Liberal Democrats present than of Conservatives.

The hon. Member for Rugby and Kenilworth did not answer the question. Will 23,000 quasi-independent schools provide an adequate education service? The crucial issue is surely whether we believe that schools can take all the decisions affecting the education service or whether some issues should be decided by a body at a higher level than individual schools. The Liberal Democrats believe that we should continue to move towards giving more power and autonomy to individual schools but that schools should still be contained within a local and democratically accountable strategic planning framework. The proposals by the hon. Gentleman and his party would lose that framework to the detriment of education as a whole.

I do not dissent from the amendments, but it is nevertheless important to reflect on the fact that the Under-Secretary of State said that it was the hon. Member for Hemsworth (Mr. Enright) who had put his finger on a particular problem which it was "essential to correct". The Government's failure to recognise the problems identified by the hon. Gentleman shows all too clearly the haste with which the legislation was cobbled together. The need for amendment after amendment to be tabled in the House and in another place shows that the Government have introduced legislation that has not been thought through properly.

It is important to remember how many amendments the Government have had to table. From the figures that I have been given, I understand that the Government had to table 278 amendments in Committee, 78 on Report, a further 258 in another place, 296 on Report in another place and a further 71 on Third Reading in another place. Today, the Government have tabled still more amendments. That works out at an average of three amendments per clause on a Bill that is already one of the longest ever to come before the House. It is clearly proof of the incompetence with which the legislation was put together.

On our debate on the timetable motion, we heard about not only the incompetence with which the Bill was put together but the incompetent way in which it has proceeded through both Houses. It is therefore no wonder that a report in *The Guardian* last week stated:

"What is—or certainly should be—quite indisputable is that the process which has carried this bill thus far has been a disgrace to Parliament."

I entirely concur with that sentiment.

The clause and the amendments draw the attention of the House to the Secretary of State's increasing powers. Many members of the Opposition parties are extemely worried about those powers. The Secretary of State received 500 additional powers under the Education Reform Act 1988. The Secretary of State now has powers to open and close schools; powers over what should be taught in those schools and over the information that should be published about them; powers in respect of their funding and admission arrangements; and, indeed, powers over whether specialisation—often a euphemism for selection—can be introduced into those schools.

Those powers are greater than those given to a comparable Minister in any other European country and mean that the Secretary of State for Education has more powers than any Minister with the exception of the Prime Minister. The Secretary of State's powers are being used to diminish the co-operation and partnership between local education authorities, governors, individual schools and teachers, which were developed as part of the Education Act 1944. The Secretary of State's increasing powers prove that the Government care more for their dogma than for the well-being of children.

5.45 pm

The amendments draw to our attention the way in which education is increasingly being run by quangos. Recent figures have revealed that about one fifth of all public expenditure is now controlled by quangos. In recent years, the Further Education Funding Council and the Higher Education Funding Council have been created, and the Bill will create new funding authorities for grant-maintained schools. It must be a matter of great concern to many hon. Members that the quangos have as members people who are not democratically elected but appointed by the Secretary of State. They can hold meetings in private at which they can take decisions for which there is no democratic accountability. More important, the quangos have no base in the local communities. The clause and the amendments signal the break-up of the co-operation and partnership created under the 1944 Act.

The Under-Secretary said that he believed that many of us would come to welcome the Bill in retrospect. I must tell him that he is sadly mistaken, because, as I have said many times—this will cause a look of great pain to appear on the Under-Secretary's face—I truly believe that the Bill will bring chaos and division to our education service. I knew that he was wondering when that phrase would occur. Equally important, the Bill fails to deal with many of the important issues facing our education service, not least the underfunding of our schools and the crucial need to increase the availability of nursery education.

The Bill, as reflected in the increased powers given to the Secretary of State, not only will be a short-term disappointment to us all but will certainly be a long-term disaster for the education service. H. G. Wells said:

"Human activity becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe".

But, if the Bill is passed, education and catastrophe will be running neck and neck.

Mr. George Walden (Buckingham): The hon. Member for Bath (Mr. Foster) referred to the extension of the Government's powers. That extension is undeniable, but it has become necessary because the co-operation and partnership of which he spoke so warmly sadly turned out to be a co-operation for mediocrity and a partnership in low expectations. That was the record of education during all the decades when the localities were in charge and when the centre—Governments of both parties—had very few powers. I believe that it has therefore become a regrettable necessity for the Government to take greater powers. That is obviously reflected——

Mr. Don Foster: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Walden: No. I may give way later, but we are approaching the time limit on this debate.

Clause 1 refers to the Secretary of State exercising his powers

"with a view, among other things, to improving standards, encouraging diversity and increasing opportunities for choice."

In the short time left to me, I want to address my remarks specifically to the problem of girls and women in education and how clause 1 affects them.

I happen to be a feminist—of the most high-minded sort. One of the things that has seriously disturbed me in this country, in contrast to the achievements of other countries, is the appalling under-achievement and under-expectation of girls and women at every level of the education system. That is why I share the view of Opposition Members, and of some Conservative Members, that nursery education, which does not feature in the Bill and which is not mentioned specifically in clause 1, is a primary necessity, not just because of its general and social advantages, but specifically to make an early start to improve the expectations of girls from the age of two and a half upwards. I have seen that happen in other countries, most notably in France in the maternelles, which a daughter of mine attended.

From the age of two and half, girls are treated intellectually—if one can use such a big word—and practically on the same level as boys. We all know that old-fashioned traditionalist practices pertain when girls are left in the home. In those early years, perhaps less is required of a little girl who is sent away with her dolls and such like and perhaps more is required of a boy. Removing a girl from that kind of background, particularly in traditionalist British society, is a positive good, quite apart from the other general arguments for nursery education. That is the first stage where we go wrong in this country and where girls begin to lose.

I am in favour of the provisions for grant-maintained schools because they will enhance quality and expectations for all, and particularly for girls. Those who de facto have been in control of our education system for decades—not the Government, but the education establishment and local authorities—have failed to raise expectations for all and specifically for girls.

Dr. Robert Spink (Castle Point): I am indebted to my hon. Friend for giving way. Does he acknowledge that the majority of chief education officers in this country are men? In so far as the Bill promotes GM schools, those schools will be controlled by parents and governors. Many parents and governors will be women. Indeed, at least half the parents will be women. Therefore, women will be able to take an active role in promoting the cause of education and equality for women in schools.

Mr. Walden: My hon. Friend has made a good point, which supports the flow of my argument and which is yet another reason for being in favour of such schools.

The national curriculum will help because girls, who traditionally tended to drop science or mathematics and were not encouraged to develop their talents in that area, will no longer be able to drop those subjects. I believe that we will gain benefits economically and as a society from that.

However, if, despite our efforts, the intrinsic drive towards mediocrity which is so culturally deep seated in the education establishment of this country persists, we will have a system in which schools will fail girls relatively. That failure will continue. Indeed, I believe that we are seeing that already in higher education.

With regard to higher education, there is still a huge disproportion in the number of girls studying what are broadly categorised as arts subjects—or "soft" subjects as they are sometimes called—as opposed to the harder subjects like physics. If the education system does not succeed in increasing diversity, to which clause 1 refers, particularly for women; an horrific prospect will loom before us.

In respect of the historically vast and sudden expansion of higher education and the enormous and overdue expansion of the proportion of women in higher education —I believe that women now comprise about 50 per cent. of those in higher education—there is a general danger of standards being lowered if schools do not prepare pupils to maintain those standards. We run the risk of producing from our higher education establishments an enormous number of women graduates who will have been sold a pup.

The standards required in those establishments, particularly in the arts subjects, are falling. Indeed, the slippage can already be noted with regard to A-levels. Some English papers are very slipshod. One can get by with just a few 20th-century authors and possibly one Shakespeare work. One need know nothing more about the history of English literature.

Mr. Enright: Where is the evidence for that?

Mr. Walden: In such circumstances, women will be very bitter, because they will emerge from higher education with a rather mediocre degree—*[Interruption.]* The hon. Member for Hemsworth (Mr. Enright) has made a most pathetic and unthinking intervention which, in a way, I rather expected from him. He said that what I am saying is sexist. What I am saying is pro-feminist. I am glad to see Members on the Opposition Front Bench nodding.

Mr. Enright: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Walden: No. I will not give way until I have finished.

I do not want to see the women of this country sold a pup in terms of higher education. I want them to have the highest possible standards and the highest possible expectations based on what is expected in schools so that they do not go through higher education, posssibly from a poor background and possibly the first generation in the family to do that, emerge with a crummy degree and end

[Mr. Walden]

up behind a typewriter or word processor. That would be a bitter disappointment for them and an extremely expensive way of producing people to work on word processors.

Right from the word go, from the age of two and a half, we must change the culture of expectations, and of girls in particular, so that we do not sell them a pup progressively through the education system to the higher levels.

Mr. Forth: With the leave of the House, I would like to reply to this brief debate as quickly as I can. I am tempted to take up the points raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Buckingham (Mr. Walden) although perhaps I will have a word with him afterwards.

With regard to the key point made by the hon. Member for Birmingham, Perry Barr (Mr. Rooker), it was never the Government's or the Secretary of State's intention to take the opportunity provided by the hon. Member for Hemsworth (Mr. Enright) somehow to extend the Secretary of State's powers in some mystical way over higher education. Like the hon. Member for Perry Barr, I well recall the strength and violence of the debate in another place on this issue where those most directly concerned with higher education took the opportunity to re-emphasise their independence.

I hope that the hon. Member for Perry Barr will accept that, while clause 1 states, as it should, the general responsibility on the Secretary of State for Education to promote education in its widest sense, clause 2 makes it explicit that that general responsibility will be expressed in the use of the powers of the Secretary of State solely in schools and in further education. That was our response to the concerns that were expressed in another place, in an effort to make that distinction as clear as possible.

The hon. Member for Perry Barr made a good point about how the distinction would be carried through on the ground to the higher and further education sectors. The further and higher education funding councils are developing an understanding of the different roles of their sectors. They are beginning to identify, in that overlapping partnership, ways in which different institutions can make their best contribution. The developing role of the Secretary of State, which is outlined in clause 2, will sit well with that, led and guided by the role of the funding councils in order to make sure that we make the best possible use of that partnership which hon. Members welcome in the developing role of further education, working ever more closely with higher education.

Clauses 1 and 2 are not threatening; they are a positive development. I pay tribute to the hon. Gentleman's hon. Friend for the role that he played in this——

It being Six o'clock, MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER, *pursuant to the Order this day, put the Question already proposed from the Chair*, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment agreed to.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER *put forthwith the Question necessary for the disposal of business to be concluded at that hour.*

Lords amendments Nos 2 to 6 agreed to.

Mr. John Morris (Aberavon): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I seek clarification on the issue of sub judice. It arises from current litigation in the High Court this morning—the Queen *v.* the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, ex parte the right hon. Lord Rees-Mogg. One is concerned with the view that the Government are taking of the issue of sub judice. It is reported that a Government spokesman has said:

"The Government did not oppose the application. We will of course oppose the substance. Now that leave has been granted, the matter is sub judice."

If that view were to prevail, and were it to be interpreted in the broad sense, it could inhibit the whole discussion in this honourable House on a matter of great public controversy. If it were a narrow interpretation of the minutiae of the litigation, our concern would be less. But if any litigant can go along to the High Court and seek for judicial review, which of course is a comparatively recent innovation, on a matter which is a current major political controversy, it would mean that this High Court of Parliament would be muzzled.

Therefore, I ask that the Government immediately, in the person of the Attorney-General, clarify the matter and say whether it is the correct view that the Government regard the matter as sub judice.

The whole House will be interested, whatever view is taken by No. 10 Downing street and its spokesmen of sub judice, to know what view would be taken by the Chair on the general position which might inhibit the whole discussion on Thursday and indeed possibly—I hope not —call it in question?

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): The House will be aware that the House has its own clear rules on the question of matters sub judice. This matter must be considered by Madam Speaker. It is not for me to prejudge the issue. I will of course ensure, if she does not know already, that Madam Speaker is made aware of this exchange. I do not think that the matter can be taken further at this moment.

Mr. Morris: I am most grateful, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is not my intention, I can assure you, to continue with the matter at this very moment. It has only recently been brought to our attention, and I am grateful for the indication that you have given. But two matters arise. I would hope to clear the air, lest some unfortunate and wrong conception be given to the world at large that a view is given in the course of the evening before we adjourn tonight. The Government should seek an opportunity to make a statement. I hope that Madam Speaker will also clarify what the Chair's view would be in the somewhat strange, novel and uncharted ground tonight.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have no doubt that the Treasury Front Bench will have heard the right hon. and learned Gentleman's words. No doubt Madam Speaker will shortly be aware of them, too. I cannot take the matter further now. I am also very conscious that we are working to a guillotine and that other important business is before us.

Mr. Tony Marlow (Northampton, North): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am not prepared to take a further point of order on this matter.

Mr. Marlow: It is a different point or order.

Madam Deputy Speaker: If it is different.

Mr. Marlow: It is a different point of order. Briefly, we are scheduled to have a debate on Thursday. That debate arises from clause 7 of what will be an Act of Parliament only if it receives Royal Assent. At the moment, that Bill is subject to legal doubts. Is it proper for a Bill which is subject to legal doubts to be put before Her Majesty for Royal Assent?

Madam Deputy Speaker: That is not a matter for me in the Chair at this moment. We must now consider the next group of amendments.

Clause 2

Funding Agency for Schools

Lords amendment: No. 7, in page 2, line 7, at end insert —

("( ) persons who appear to him to have experience of, and to have shown capacity in, the provision of education in voluntary schools, or in grant-maintained schools having foundation governors")

Mr. Forth: I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Madam Deputy Speaker: With this, it will be convenient to consider the following Lords amendments: Nos. 8 to 10, 23 and 175.

No. 177, Government motion to disagree and Government amendment (a) in lieu.

No. 180 and Government amendments (a), (b), (c) and (d).

No. 181 and Government motion to disagree.

Nos. 397 to 399, No. 401 and No. 403.

Mr. Forth: This group of amendments concerns the funding authorities; many of them are either technical or deal with minor omissions and tidying up. The main issues covered by the amendments are membership of the funding authorities and a new function for the Funding Agency for Schools in respect of 'value of money'.

Let me deal first with the amendments on membership. In response to concerns expressed in the other place by representatives of the voluntary sector, the Secretary of State will now be under a duty to consult both the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church before making any appointments to the Funding Agency for Schools. In reality, those organisations will be the Church of England General Synod Board of Education and the Catholic Education Service. In addition, the Secretary of State will be required to consider the desirability of appointing as a member of the funding agency for schools an individual representative of the voluntary sector.

By virtue of amendment No. 8, the Secretary of State will have to consider the desirability of appointing as a member of both the FAS and the Schools Funding Council for Wales an individual with experience in providing for pupils with special educational needs.

The hon. Member for Bath (Mr. Foster) has tabled two amendments which would tie the LEAs into the Funding Agency for Schools. I hope and expect—I have said this many times in Committee and in the House—that the FAS and LEAs will work together in close co-operation, but it would not be appropriate to place a requirement on the face of the Bill that the Secretary of State should consult representatives of local education authorities before making appointments to the FAS. That agency has a role in relation to grant-maintained schools, not to LEA-maintained schools.

I refer now to amendment No. 177, which I cannot commend to the House. Of course the Government are wholly committed to ensuring that public funds are used with economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the growing grant-maintained sector. My noble Friend agreed in the other place that there should be a clear requirement on the face of the legislation for value-for-money studies to that end, but right hon. and hon. Members will realise that there are technicalities which need to be got right, which include safeguarding the valued independence of the National Audit Office.

The fundamental problem with amendment No. 177, although I support its thrust, is that it places a duty on the Secretary of State to make regulations which could be regarded as biting on the independent role of the Comptroller and Auditor General. I know that that would be of concern not only to hon. Members in general but to the Public Accounts Committee in particular.

To rectify that defect, the Government propose a new clause in lieu of Lords amendment No. 177 in part 1, as set out on the Paper. That would place an explicit duty on the funding authorities to ensure value-for-money studies of grant-maintained schools. That duty is already implicit in the monitoring roles proposed for the FAS and its Welsh counterpart, but the amendment will place beyond all possible doubt both the duty on the funding authorities and the importance that the Government place on accountability and the proper stewardship of taxpayers' money. The amendment would not trespass on the responsibilities and independence of the National Audit Office, whose recent report on financial controls in the grant-maintained sector I am sure hon. Members will have read with interest, as I did.

Indeed, the NAO's responsibilities and independence of action in this matter are properly enshrined in Lords amendment No. 180, which I fully support. That places on the face of the legislation the Comptroller and Auditor General's right of access to the accounts of each and every grant-maintained school. That right is presently secured only through secondary legislation. The amendment also provides for the Comptroller and Auditor General to report to this House each Session on whether he has carried out any value-for-money studies of GM schools, and if so, what are their results. In determining the programme of studies of the National Audit Office, he will also be required to take account of any relevant report published by the Audit Commission.

That provision will have a dual effect. It will ensure that there is no unnecessary double banking. However, if the findings of the Audit Commission indicate that further investigations are warranted, the Comptroller and Auditor General may build on what has already been made public. I am sure that the increase in transparency—through the annual reports to Parliament and the encouragement for more professional scrutiny in a co-ordinated way—will be welcomed by hon. Members.

Amendment No. 181 and the Government's amendment to amendment No. 180 are technical ones relating to definitions. Parliamentary counsel has advised that the approach in amendment No. 180 is preferable. Amendments (b), (c) and (d) to amendment No. 180 would

[Mr. Forth]

require grant-maintained schools to send their accounts to the Comptroller and Auditor General and for him to make them available for public inspection.

I want to make two comments on that. First, the amendments are defective, unless the hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor) intended to place on schools the onerous burden of sending to the Comptroller and Auditor General not simply the audited accounts but all the supporting documentation of financial transactions during the year. Secondly, the amendments are unnecessary, because grant-maintained schools are already required to make their audited accounts available for inspection by any member of the public.

Mrs. Ann Taylor (Dewsbury): We are discussing a wide group of amendments, but that is part of the difficulty with the time constraint under which we are operating this evening. The amendments to which the Minister referred initially—those relating to membership of the funding agency—are generally welcomed, not least because we made suggestions along similar lines in Committee and, indeed, along the lines suggested by the hon. Member for Bath (Mr. Foster).

In Committee, the Minister told us that it would be inappropriate to prescribe who should be on the funding agency and it should not be a "ragbag of individual interests". I am glad that he has changed his approach and is willing to accept that there should be some guidance with regard to the membership of the Committee.

The Minister did not mention the amendment dealing with section 11 funding and the distribution of section 11 funds through the funding agency. I wish that he had said something about section 11 funding because many of us are waiting for Ministers to recognise the problems that the cuts in section 11 money are causing schools at present. The fact that the Government have reneged on their initial deal on section 11 funding is causing great and real hardship. I wish that we had more time to explore that fully and that the Minister had spoken about that aspect as well.

The amendments that I want to concentrate on are those that the Minister dealt with at the end of his contribution—amendment No. 177 and the Government's amendments to the Lords suggestions. Clearly, there is a need for greater accountability for grant-maintained schools. After all, we are talking about public money. The recent debate, abeit a brief one, on the Select Committee report on education expenditure threw up many interesting items. One of the most significant items was the extent of double funding of grant-maintained schools and, indeed, the bias with regard to capital for grant-maintained schools.

6.15 pm

It is clear that GM schools had an unfair share of the cake in the past. The fact that there has been insufficient scrutiny of the distribution of funds is a cause for great concern and alarm. I remind the Minister that more than half the present 492 GM schools are double-funded with regard to their annual maintenance grant. Many of them gain considerable amounts of money at the expense of local education authority schools in that area—the budgets of local education authority schools are robbed to give grant-maintained schools extra provision.

It is a fact that the first schools to seek grant-maintained status got a higher degree of double funding and that advantage may be drying up. When the hon. Member for Rugby and Kenilworth (Mr. Pawsey) talked about funds for GM schools, he said that funding would become increasingly tight. That is the case. However, there is still a great deal of double payment, and the Government have done nothing whatever to redress that problem. The Government have acknowledged that that happens, yet they continue to pour money in that direction. When the civil servants appeared before the Select Committee recently to discuss the problem, they said that there had been a deliberate political decision by Ministers to double-fund GM schools because that was their political preference and they wanted to reward schools that went in that direction.

The extent of the double-funding on an annual grant basis is £13·6 million. The highest beneficiary is St. Bartholomew's school in Newbury, which benefited to the extent of more than £200,000. Obviously, that did not pay off in terms of the by-election result in that area. I have not had an opportunity to find out whether any schools in the Christchurch area have had the advantage of double funding—perhaps the Government have already given up on Christchurch.

There has been a stunning silence from the Government as to why grant-maintained schools are being double-funded at a time when public expenditure is so tight. It is clear from paragraph 22 of the Select Committee report that

> "The Government's plans for capital spending on schools appear to us to favour the GM sector rather than the LEA sector".

The Minister is nodding. That is an admission that education funding is determined by political and ideological soundness, not by education need. That is a disgraceful situation, and Ministers should be ashamed of it. If they had any real interest in the educational development of children, they would not tolerate it for one moment.

I return to the main point—the need for further scrutiny of grant-maintained schools with regard to both the money they receive and the way in which they spend it. Recently, the Audit Commission reported on some of the problems that LMS has created for many schools. The report detailed the way in which schools operate under LMS at present. We know from previous debates that all hon. Members support the principle of LMS.

We must all acknowledge that there are many problems in terms of the formulae that have been created and the many difficulties that have arisen as a result. The report shows that there has been an increase in the pupil-staff ratio. Since LMS was introduced, class sizes have increased. That is partly a problem of the formulae and partly a problem of the arrangement that was imposed by Ministers with regard to the payment of staff salaries. Nevertheless, it is a significant problem that should be addressed in the future. It is right that the Audit Commission should be able to identify such problems with regard to local authority schools. It is also right for the Audit Commission to examine GM schools, identify such problems and warn us that those problems are arising.

The Audit Commission report highlighted many of the anomalies, difficulties and problems that have arisen from LMS in terms of the tendering process and letting contracts. The press picked on the more sensational

aspects of the report, such as the odd occasions when head teachers let contracts to relatives and improprieties of that sort. Obviously, such matters should be brought into the open.

There is a clear need for such constraints and scrutiny to apply to grant-maintained schools as well as schools in the local authority sector. Therefore, we do not accept that the amendment tabled by the Minister is an adequate substitute for amendment No. 177, which was passed in another place. The advantage of amendment No. 177 is that its intention and wording are clear, and it provides for a proper basis for scrutiny. The Minister's amendments fudge the real issue. They do not ensure the level of scrutiny that we require. Given all that has been said recently by the Prime Minister, Ministers in the Cabinet and junior Ministers about the need to remove secrecy from all levels of Government, it is about time that Ministers sought to remove secrecy from quangos and those who benefit from the money distributed by quangos.

The Funding Agency for Schools will have a great deal of power and money at its disposal. It already has. It is essential that every aspect of public funding is open to the fullest scrutiny. We do not believe that the Minister's amendments will achieve that aim. We believe that Lords amendment No. 177 in particular should become part of the Bill because it will ensure a higher level of public accountability and we should be responsible for ensuring that that is achieved.

Mrs. Mahon: I shall speak to amendment No. 177, which deals with value for money, and touch on some of the points made by my hon. Friend the Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor) on double funding.

Two years after the Government introduced changes to allow schools to opt out, we face a potential crisis in Calderdale local authority. The entire council structure is being undermined by the Government's changes. So alarmed are councillors from all parties that, as I mentioned in an intervention on the Minister, Calderdale council is to spearhead a national campaign to highlight the unfairness of the funding of grant-maintained schools. I may add that scrutiny and accountability come into that campaign.

Tory-led Calderdale council claims that the current formula pumps thousands of pounds a year into grant-maintained schools at the expense of schools that remain under local authority control. From the way in which the Minister nodded, I suppose that he thinks that that is all right. It is worth emphasising that the campaign has all-party support and that the council is at present run by the Conservatives.

I have already told the Minister the position of the ex-mayor on the matter. The ex-mayor said:

"The education department had been placed in a financially perilous position by the opting-out legislation. A third of all secondary schools are now grant maintained in Calderdale and the proportion could rise to almost half by April next year."

He also said:

"If we do not do something about it, we could be committing our schools to a potentially disastrous situation."

It is vital that we achieve the scrutiny and accountability that Lords amendment No. 177 would provide. The truth about the current unfairness in the financing of grant-maintained schools is that it takes place at the expense of local authority schools. I see the Minister nod in approval again. Grant-maintained schools are also receiving extra capital. They receive a far more generous allocation of resources than the equivalent local education authority schools. Other LEA services are being deprived of resources to provide the additional funding for schools which have received grant-maintained status. Opposition Members believe that that is simply unfair.

My hon. Friend the Member for Dewsbury referred to capital grants. Earlier this year in Calderdale, we saw the real face of the Government's ideological commitment to one type of education, when they granted three grant-maintained schools in Calderdale over £400,000 in capital grants while the other 109 LEA schools received thousands of pounds less. One grant-maintained school received £225,000, which was £20,000 more than the other 109 schools put together. That is wrong.

What does the Minister have against children in LEA schools? Why do the Government discriminate in that way? Why did that one school receive £225,000 more than all the other 109 put together? It is simply unfair. I submit that it was simply a crude bribe to encourage the other schools to opt out as they became desperate for funding.

Mr. Don Foster: In November 1992, the Secretary of State categorically stated:

"Grant-maintained schools and local education authority schools must operate on equal terms."—[*Official Report*, 9 November 1992; Vol. 213, c. 651.]

Is the hon. Lady surprised to hear that, in view of what she has been saying?

Mrs. Mahon: We have clear evidence that the Government do not intend all schools to operate on equal terms.

Mr. Steinberg: What the hon. Member for Bath (Mr. Foster) has said seems remarkable. I am a member of the Education Select Committee. We wrote to the Secretary of State asking him what was the policy on capital expenditure in opted out schools. He categorically said that it was the Government's policy to ensure that opted-out schools received more money for capital expenditure than LEA schools. That was in a letter which he wrote to all members of the Select Committee. So he appears to say one thing at one time and something else at another time.

Mrs. Mahon: That shows that the Government are willing to use children and their education as political footballs.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the teachers, governors and parents of the excellent Ryeburn comprehensive school in Calderdale in my constituency who resisted the bribe. They voted two to one against opting out. The school was built for 600 pupils and now has more than 1,150. It is bursting at the seams. If there was accountability in distributing capital grants, the school would have more than qualified for the extra money that the Minister gave out so liberally to the other schools.

I ask the Minister now whether he will treat Ryeburn school as generously as he treated Crossley Heath school, which received more grant than the rest of the schools put together and, if not, why not? He must answer that question because the children at those schools are all his responsibility.

I have with me a report which I intend to send to the Minister after tonight's debate on the Lords amendments. It was produced by the financial department of Calderdale council and it deals with the financial implications for the

[Mrs. Mahon]

local education authority of grant-maintained schools. I ask the Minister to consider it carefully. It exposes the double standards—it is factually correct—if what is happening in Calderdale.

The report expresses doubt about double funding. The extra money that goes to grant-maintained schools comes from an already grossly underfunded local education authority budget. It is a shrinking budget, thanks to the Government's cuts. Since 1979, we have lost about £160 million in grant from the Government. We were also unfairly poll tax-capped. But the inadequate budget for LEA schools has to provide for school meals, special needs and a host of other essential services for all LEA schools. It provides no luxuries.

I submit that the Government are deliberately creating a two-tier system of funding. I can only conclude that their aim is to produce a segregated schools system. That will damage children's education. If Calderdale becomes the pilot for the funding agency, I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Dewsbury that parents will have to deal with Government appointees to a remote, unaccountable, secret quango. What will parents do when they want to appeal about which school their children attend or to complain about something?

Next year, the LEA schools in Calderdale will face the possibility that their delegated budgets will be cut to fund grant-maintained schools. That would be an absolute outrage. It would be grossly unfair to children, teachers, parents and governors.

I shall support the local authority's campaign, which will be led by a Tory education spokesman, to warn other authorities about exactly what is happening on the ground in terms of unfair, unaccountable funding and the creation of a two-tier system. If even a Tory council such as Calderdale recognises the iniquity of the system, there is something seriously wrong. Will the Government use the Bill's powers to end a potential disaster for children in Calderdale?

6.30 pm

Mr. Andrew Miller (Ellesmere Port and Neston): Several hon. Members have spoken about the Government's double standards in refusing to accept amendment No. 177. This is a fundamental issue and the principle seems to emerge in two areas. I suppose that we should be grateful that the Government are at least doing something consistent, but it is distasteful.

Like schools in the constituency of my hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mrs. Mahon), none of the schools in my constituency has yet been persuaded, despite enormous bribes, to accept grant-maintained status. Indeed, Whitby high school recently voted firmly against grant-maintained status. Many parents and teachers have started to worry about the Government's double standards.

The Minister referred to the problems created by cutting across the role of the Audit Commission or the Public Accounts Committee. So what? Is not the essence of openness that those at the sharp end—the parents of the pupils and the teachers—should be entitled to the fullest information on what is happening in the school in question?

My hon. Friend the Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor) commented on the Government's claim that they seek to open society. Just last week, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster—who, a moment ago, fortuitously popped in, heard 30 seconds of this debate and left—introduced a White Paper on openness in government. Do the Government intend to provide access to information just in Whitehall? Are we to learn only about who was spying for whom 50 years ago, or will the Government get down to openness in current issues that affect real people, such as children in our society?

The position can be compared to what is happening in the health service. I was recently berated by a Government employee—the chairman of a hospital trust—for having the temerity to publish a policy document from that hospital trust showing how £1·7 million-worth of cuts would be imposed. The public are entitled to such information.

In another area of the Government's dogmatic approach—the creation of grant-maintained schools—are not the public entitled to know precisely what is happening? The only conclusion that one can draw from those two examples in the education service and hospitals is that the Government have a particular form of double standards. They will happily tell the public about certain pieces of information but, when it comes to the cost of implementing policies based on sheer dogma, they will not tell the public what is happening.

I challenge the Minister to get his feet off the Dispatch Box and come clean. Is he simply saying that the only reason for keeping information about grant-maintained schools from the public domain is that it hides part of the Government's dogma and it would suit the Government not to tell? Everyone knows that that is so. If the Government were sincere, they would accept amendment No. 177.

Mr. Don Foster: The hon. Member for Ellesmere Port and Neston (Mr. Miller) referred to national health service trusts. May I draw his attention and, more important, that of the Minister to the importance, when applying for NHS trust status, of combining operational and financial details? As I said in Committee, if the governors were required, when applying for grant-maintained status, to provide full details of their financial projections for the next two or three years, that would go a long way towards resolving some of the concerns in schools.

I rise to speak because of the Minister's comments in introducing this string of amendments. Amendments Nos. 7 to 10 extend the Secretary of State's responsibility not only to consider, as members of the funding authorities, those with experience of voluntary and grant-maintained schools and special educational needs, but to consult the Church of Engand and the Roman Catholic Church before appointing members of the funding authorities. The Minister said that he did not believe that it was necessary to consult local education authorities in the same way as the amendment would require the Secretary of State to consult those other bodies. He explained the rationale behind that as being that the funding authorities were set up to deal with grant-maintained schools.

Will the Minister reflect not on anything that I may say on the issue but on what he said at various stages during the Bill's passage? For example, at the Committee's third sitting, on 19 November 1992, he said:

"In other words, the duty of the FAS to secure sufficient school places need not, and should not, operate where it is

economically more sensible for an LEA to make provision in that way."—[*Official Report, Standing Committee E*, 19 November 1992; c. 82.]

The Minister accepted the important liaison between the two bodies. At the eighth sitting, on 1 December 1992, he said:

"Both bodies will be able to bring forward statutory proposals only in respect of their own sector. But, when considering the needs of their particular sectors, both bodies will have to take account of the provision that exists in the other sector."

Again at the eighth sitting, the Minister said:

"LEAs will need to carry out a more strategic planning role in partnership with funding authorities, if we are to ensure that there are sufficient school places."

He went on to say:

"An essential aspect of the activities of the funding agency for schools and of clause 7 is to provide a strategic planning framework for the grant-maintained sector alongside that of the LEA."—[*Official Report, Standing Committee E*, 1 December 1992; c. 337-39.]

At the 10th sitting, the Minister said:

"I expected the funding agency for schools to work in close harmony with LEAs".—[*Official Report, Standing Committee E*, 3 December 1992; c. 443.]

Mr. Forth *indicated assent.*

Mr. Foster: Given that the Minister nods his head and acknowledges his earlier comments, it is difficult to understand why he is willing to accept that it is important and relevant to consult the Churches, but not the local education authorities, when appointing members to the funding authorities. Although none of us fully understands how it will work, he seemed to be saying that there will be a close working relationship between those two bodies at a local level. It therefore makes sense, if not to accept our proposal, which would allow people with experience of LEAs to work in the funding authorities, at least to agree to the detailed consultation.

Dr. Spink: The hon. Member for Dewsbury (Mrs. Taylor) referred in her opening remarks to section 11 funding. That is a Home Office grant directed towards the teaching of English—largely on a one-to-one basis—to pupils who may not have English as their first language. That grant will cut in 1994-95 and 1995-96. Does the hon. Lady realise that those areas that typically receive that grant get a higher level of standard spending assessment, and they are free to redirect part of that SSA to teaching those children?

Mrs. Ann Taylor: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman, both for asking that question and for allowing me to respond.

The pressures on schools that require assistance from section 11 funding are significant. I hope that the hon. Gentleman recognises that, when the Home Office and the Department of Education boasted about increasing section 11 money, they could do so because they said that the money would contribute to the education of children who needed help at a critical stage in their learning of English as a second language. I hope that he agrees that removing section 11 funding will cause more problems for the eduation service. If the Government are to give money for reading recovery schemes, the money that will be required for those schemes will be far greater if section 11 funding is reduced.

Dr. Spink: I accept that section 11 funding is directed in a good area and is used effectively, as was reported by the Audit Commission a couple of years ago.

Does the hon. Lady agree with me on two points? First, LEAs have it within their powers to redirect part of their funds towards continuing the teaching to which she refers if that teaching is so important. Secondly, a large number of children are being presented to school without a word of English because, after they are born in this country, they are sent abroad to live until they are of school age; their parents then bring them back to this country to attend school. Does the hon. Lady think that that is a responsible way for parents in this country to treat their children? Are not the parents giving their children a disadvantage? Should the British taxpayer be footing the bill?

Mrs. Taylor: The hon. Gentleman is talking nonsense. First, local authorities do not have spare cash floating around that they can devote to replacing cuts in section 11 money, any more than they have spare cash for other reasons. I hope that the hon. Gentleman is aware of the pressures that capping of local authorities is causing in many areas.

Secondly, the hon. Gentleman made a point about children from ethnic minority backgrounds who were sent abroad before the age of five. My constituency has a large ethnic minority population and children are not sent away in the way that is suggested by the hon. Gentleman. That is not the reason the children have problems with the English language. The problem is that their home language is not English. If there were investment in nursery education and pre-school provision, there would be far fewer language problems. What the hon. Gentleman is suggesting, and what the Minister is doing in cutting section 11 funding, will cost the education service more in the long run.

Dr. Spink: The Minister is doing nothing of the sort. The grant to which the hon. Lady refers comes from the Home Office, not the Department for Education. No doubt the hon. Lady will look that up later.

I am indebted to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for allowing us to have this very important micro-debate within the general debate. The general debate is about driving up standards of education. *[Interruption.]* The hon. Member for Dewsbury may laugh at me for saying that, but my constituents are not laughing. They want standards to be improved. They are fed up with a situation where three in 10 of this country's children leave school unable to read and write properly.

The debate focuses on the standards of education. The hon. Member for Dewsbury will know that grant-maintained schools deliver 30 per cent. more children with five or more graded GCSE passes and 30 per cent. better results on average than all other schools. The Government are promoting grant-maintained schools because they give choice, opportunity and diversity in education. That is the way to drive up standards, and that is why my constituents welcome grant-maintained schools.

In fact, my constituents have welcomed grant-maintained schools so much that every secondary school in my constituency and many of the primary schools are grant-maintained. South Benfleet primary school has just received a letter from the Minister, giving it permission to become grant-maintained from 1 September, and the school is delighted with that.

Mr. Oliver Heald (Hertfordshire, North): On the basis of my hon. Friend's experience with the many grant-maintained schools in his constituency, what advice would he give to schools that are considering whether to do so?

6.45 pm

Dr. Spink: My advice is unequivocal—the schools should become grant-maintained as quickly as possible. It gives schools choice and the freedom to make decisions at a point where those decisions matter. It gives parents control over the education of their children. It brings real local democracy into schools, because grant-maintained schools are accountable every year to parent groups.

Lady Olga Maitland (Sutton and Cheam): Does my hon. Friend agree that it can be difficult to get the good news about the advantages of grant-maintained schools to parents when LEAs use every possible obstacle? Does he further agree that the truth should go out? The benefits are undeniable and the three schools in my constituency that have become grant-maintained have not regretted the move. They are telling the good news to other parents, and the parents are listening.

Dr. Spink: I am indebted to my hon. Friend for her remarks, with which I agree. Grant-maintained schools are so successful that, by April 1994, the trend shows that there will be 1,500 grant-maintained schools. At that point, the Government will need help to perform the functions that are needed to care for the public funds and to ensure that there is intense scrutiny and audit in the schools. The system would become increasingly inefficient and inappropriate if all executive tasks were carried out by the Department for Education. As the diversity of the provision spreads, LEAs will find it difficult to accomplish those tasks. I therefore welcome the establishment of a new statutory body, the Funding Agency for Schools.

Mr. Forth: With the leave of the House, I should like to reply to a debate that has covered a wide range of subjects.

For me, the highlight of the brief debate came when the hon. Member for Halifax (Mrs. Mahon) referred to the Funding Agency for Schools as a "remote body"—I think that was the term she used. She is obviously unaware that the funding agency is based in York. It strikes me that for her of all hon. Members to make that reference is charmingly eccentric, and I shall put it no higher than that—I shall leave the hon. Lady to account for her remark.

The hon. Member for Halifax also made a lot about the differences in the Government's approach to funding the grant-maintained school sector and funding the LEA sector. Those of her hon. Friends who heard me speak in Committee will know that the Government have never made a secret of the fact that, in both capital and revenue terms, we have always sought to acknowledge the different role, nature and responsibilities of grant-maintained schools in their funding arrangements.

We have made no secret of the fact that the capital funding regime will recognise that. We have always sought to ensure that, in revenue terms, through the annual maintenance grant, grant-maintained schools receive more money than their LEA counterparts; they have to, because they carry greater responsibilities.

The cash protection provision—I think that that is what is causing such excitement among Opposition Members—rightly provides an element of protection during schools' transition from their LEA incarnation to grant-maintained status. It is somewhat similar to the transitional arrangements that are rightly allowed for in local education authority local management of schools schemes, in respect of which provision is made to afford a degree of protection against violent oscillations or variations in the amount of money available to schools from year to year.

Mrs. Mahon: May we get this clear? Is the Minister saying that it is all right if local education authority schools have their delegated budgets cut next year to fund the handful of grant-maintained schools? Does he believe that that is right?

Mr. Forth: As I told the hon. Lady earlier, I am saying that it is for local education authorities to assess their own priorities and make their own arrangements, through their LMS formulae and through the funding for education in their areas, in respect of which they have a great deal of flexibility. That continues to be the case.

Mr. Don Foster: The House deserves greater clarification than the Minister has given the hon. Member for Halifax (Mrs. Mahon). The hon. Lady has teased out of the Minister his acceptance that, during the undefined transitional period, grant-maintained schools get additional money to protect them. As the Minister well knows, that money comes from the local education authority. That means that an LEA's remaining schools suffer as a result of the additional transitional costs, which the Minister has now accepted exist.

I have another question. Does the Minister accept that, in revenue terms, grant-maintained schools should receive only such additional money as is commensurate with their additional responsibilities—or will they receive money in addition to that extra money?

Mr. Forth: We have always said that the additional money available on a revenue basis to grant-maintained schools was designed to reflect their additional responsibilities. I make no secret of that. It does not have to be teased or forced out of me; I say it gladly.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: The Minister said previously that that is what the additional income should be for. How, then, can he justify the many variations and the clear duplications in funding that have been thrown up by many surveys? Does he think it right that grant-maintained schools should be not only compensated for extra administrative costs but double-funded?

Mr. Forth: I glory in variation. The fact that our White Paper was entitled "Choice and Diversity" and that, as has been said, we welcome specialisation means that I can readily accept what the hon. Lady says. I would go further: we have always welcomed the enormous variation in local management of schools schemes and formulae up and down the country. I think that I am right in saying that no two local education authorities in the land have identical LMS schemes. I do not shrink from—indeed, I positively welcome—the fact that there is a variety and diversity of provision in different authorities and different grant-maintained schools. Given that grant-maintained school funding is closely tied to the LEA funding—and will continue to be so, even under the common funding formula—that degree of variation will continue.

Dr. Spink: Does my hon. Friend acknowledge that, since 1979-80, funding per pupil in primary and secondary schools has increased by 45 per cent. in real terms? Does he agree that LEA schools have received their fair share of that real terms increase and that education has benefited while pupil-teacher ratios have fallen?

Mr. Forth: My hon. Friend makes a fair point. The only gloss that I would put on it, following my previous point, is that there are rightly variations between LEAs, some of which choose to fund way below their education SSA—which I know is only an indicative figure—and others of which choose to fund above it. That variation exists throughout the country. We can all have our own thoughts about it and, from time to time, one is tempted to draw attention to individual authorities that behave rather peculiarly in that respect. Nevertheless, the variations remain.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Forth: I shall give way once more; then I want to reply to other hon. Members.

Mrs. Taylor: Will the Minister now answer my question? Will he defend the £13·6 million in double funding that has been proved to take place? Does he think that that is a wise use of taxpayers' money?

Mr. Forth: Yes.

The hon. Member for Ellesmere Port and Neston (Mr. Miller) made much play of the need for openness. Had he sat through the long dark hours of the proceedings of the Standing Committee that considered the Bill, he would have heard me speak at some length about non-departmental public bodies. I debated with people in my office whether I should bring with me today the document that I had at my disposal then. I thought that I would not need it on this occasion. I wish that I had brought it, because I could have displayed it proudly, as I did then.

That document sets out in great detail the responsibilities of the NDPBs, of which the Funding Agency for Schools is one. Those Opposition Members who suffered with me—I am sorry, who enjoyed with me—the long proceedings of that Committee will be able to tell the hon. Member for Ellesmere Port and Neston the extraordinary extent to which those bodies are obliged to report and to make public their financial affairs and many of their other activities.

That ties in with the openness that now exists in relation to grant-maintained schools—in some respect, much greater openness that occurs with LEA schools. Grant-maintained schools have to hold annual general meetings and produce annual reports. They have to produce annual accounts, which have to be audited and be available for public scrutiny. I would argue that the openness of the regime is there for all to see—at the level of schools and the funding agency, which will be constrained by the rules referring to NDPBs. There is great openness in the scheme, and the hon. Member for Ellesmere Port and Neston should welcome it.

Mr. Stephen Byers (Wallsend): In that spirit of openness, will the Minister agree to place in the Library a copy of the internal report of his own chief accountant on the abuse of public money by the Grant Maintained Schools Centre?

Mr. Forth: If I am not mistaken, that document has been made available to the Public Accounts Committee in commercial confidence. [HON. MEMBERS: "Ah."] No, no, no. As my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said the other day, distinctions are rightly made between matters that are properly in the public domain and matters that need not be in that domain. I make no apology for that. I wholly agree with the distinction that my right hon. Friend made.

The hon. Member for Bath (Mr. Foster) was kind enough to quote me in extenso. Like many hon. Members, I suspect, I always enjoy hearing my own words—especially pearls of wisdom of the kind uttered by me at many different sittings of the Committee. The hon. Gentleman made much play of the fact that the Funding Agency for Schools would be expected to co-operate with local education authorities and to exchange information with them as required in the Bill.

I do not know whether we ever sorted out the difference between shared and parallel duties, although in the end I think that we understood very well what they meant. All that is right. However, I do not agree with the hon. Gentleman that simply because different bodies have duties and obligations to work together, they should be cross-represented—that it is necessary for members of one body to serve on the other to achieve that degree of co-operation and that exchange of information.

I believe that the degree of co-operation to which we referred in Committee should be achievable on the basis that we have identified. I think that we were right to make the concession that is contained in the Lords amendment—with which I hope the House will agree—which is designed to ensure that there is proper representation from the Churches, which are an important element, albeit a distinct element, very different from local education authorities and grant-maintained schools. That much I believe, but we cannot go as far as the hon. Member for Bath wanted us to go.

I hope that, in the brief time available, I have answered the substantive points made by Opposition Members and that, in so doing, I have brought out the important distinctions, made across different areas, referred to in the amendments. I felt, if I may say so, that the hon. Member for Ellesmere Port and Neston brushed aside the point that I made earlier about value for money and the concern that I expressed about possible infringement of the role of the Comptroller and Auditor General. The hon. Gentleman was almost cavalier about it. We must surely pay attention to the role, as defined and understood, of the Comptroller and Auditor General, as we must of the role of our own Public Accounts Committee.

I believe that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's amendment honours that important——

It being Seven o'clock, MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, *pursuant to the Order this day, put the Question already proposed from the Chair,* That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment agreed to.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *then put forthwith the Question necessary for the disposal of business to be concluded at that hour.*

Lords amendments Nos. 8 to 24 agreed to.

Clause 19

"GRANT-MAINTAINED SCHOOLS"

Lords amendment: No. 25, in page 9, line 11, leave out ("new").

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education (Mr. Robin Squire): I beg to move, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: With this, we may consider also Lords amendments Nos. 39, plus the Opposition motion to disagree, and Nos. 40 to 42, 45, 166, 371, 409, 422 to 425, 541 and 547.

Mr. Squire: I noted that in an earlier debate my fellow Under-Secretary, the hon. Member for Daventry (Mr. Boswell), felt that he must apologise for joining the proceedings of the Education Bill halfway through. If he felt that he needed to apologise for turning up at the eleven-and-a-halfth-hour, I must make more apologies—but I do so with enthusiasm.

I shall be brief, because I suspect that several hon. Members may wish to speak. The Government believe that the other place was right to remove the threshold of the 10 per cent. trigger point so that promoters could present their own proposals to set up a new grant-maintained school anywhere in the country. That will promote choice and diversity for parents and pupils—one of the key elements of our educational reform.

The other place decided, and we agree, that the Bill as originally drafted was unfair on those who wish to propose the establishment of new grant-maintained schools in areas where there is currently few or indeed no grant-maintained schools. I hope that hon. Members will not support the Opposition's motion to disagree, to which we obviously look forward. We cannot agree with the view that some promoters should be prevented from putting forward their own proposals simply because they happen to be in areas where it is unlikely that there would be any GM schools in the foreseeable future.

My right hon. Friend will look closely at all applications for new GM schools, and in doing so will continue to apply broadly similar criteria to those that apply when promoters wish to establish a new voluntary school. In line with our policy of tackling the problem of surplus places, my right hon. Friend will look carefully at the need for additional school places in the area, as well as denominational need where appropriate. Promoters will have to demonstrate that there will be a projected shortage of places in the LEA and GM sectors in the near future.

We shall consider whether a school is able to provide the national curriculum and offer equal opportunities to girls and boys. We will need to see that the premises are suitable, and will note whether the funding authority supports the proposals.

Mr. David Jamieson (Plymouth, Devonport): Will the Minister confirm that amendment 397, on which we have just agreed, in effect gives power to the funding agency to obtain compulsory purchase orders to provide land for private promoters of schools? Has he thought of all the ramifications that that could have?

Mr. Squire: With the leave of the House, I will willingly come back to the specific question of the hon. Member for Plymouth, Devonport (Mr. Jamieson) I am sure that the hon. Gentleman knows that there is a significant difference between the role of the promoters and that of the funding agency. The amendment refers to the promoters and not to the funding agency.

I was about to say that amendments Nos. 25, 42, 166, 371, 422, 423, 425, 541 and 547 are all technical, to ensure that promoters are able to propose the establishment of new GM schools, including establishing a new GM school in place of existing independent schools. I commend the amendments to the House.

Mr. Tony Lloyd (Stretford): I wish to carry on where the Minister left off in his response to my hon. Friend the Member for Plymouth, Devonport (Mr. Jamieson). I hope that he will take my hon. Friend's remarks seriously, because he raised an important point in this context. My hon. Friend referred to schedule 1, which says:

> "The Secretary of State may authorise a funding authority to compulsorily purchase any land required for the purpose of implementing any proposals under section 45 or 92 of the Act which are required to be implemented."

Of course, there is a further amendment which extends that power of compulsory purchase to the promoter, to which my hon. Friend referred.

I hope that the Minister understands that one of the promoters, who proposed the group of amendments that we are discussing, expressed the view that failing independent schools—those that cannot make a living in the independent sector—should be allowed to opt into opting out. Those independent schools would be able to ask the Secretary of State for power, in effect, compulsorily to purchase land owned by the local authority. That has serious consequences.

Without casting any aspersions on the Minister's knowledge of the Bill, let me say that he clearly did not know that that was the case. A major power is being given to independent schools. The Minister should seek some guidance from his officials at this stage, because it is ridiculous to propose something with such far-reaching consequences.

For example, an independent school could propose, through the Secretary of State, that it take over a cricket field from the local authority. It could decide that that cricket field was surplus to requirements and then begin to develop part of it for housing developments or whatever, and gain the advantage of those capital receipts. That would be an abuse of the system, but one entirely consistent with the reading that we are able to make of the Bill, as it stands amended at that late stage in the Lords. The Minister ought to respond to the House.

We were told when the Bill was introduced that it was about giving schools back to parents to ensure that parents had control of schools. When the Bill completed Second Reading, Committee and Report, we were assured that the funding agency would begin to have any role only once the 10 per cent. threshold had been reached by those schools that had chosen to opt out of local authority control. The Minister justified that by saying that it was right and proper that parents vote for that change and, in the end, that should bring into being the funding agency.

The Minister has told us tonight, however, that any ideas that the funding agency should come into being because of parental demand have gone out of the window. The Minister said that it would be unfair on promoters, if they were not allowed to develop schools in areas where "it is unlikely there will be grant-maintained schools in the foreseeable future."

In those areas where parents do not want those schools and where parents may vote consistently against such schools, the Minister is saying that he will defer to any little clique in that area with no involvement and no direct interest—it may not even be in that area—who may say that they do not care what the parents think, that they do not care about the local views of the merits or demerits of opt-out schools.

An amendment tabled by Lord Skidelsky led to the tabling of the group that we are now considering. He made his position clear on a number of issues: for instance, in discussing the type of school that should be allowed to come under the aegis of the Bill, he made it clear that what he was considering bore no relation to Ministers' earlier assurances in the House of Commons. He said:

"First, we have in mind existing independent schools which wish to obtain state funding."

It is plain that, in its present form, the Bill allows independent schools to do just that. Many independent schools are dependent on the assisted places scheme, but their financial margins are diminishing. Such schools—which may now be feeling the cold winds of recession as fee-paying pupils become harder to attract—will be thrown a lifeline by the Bill, and by the ideological persuasions of Lord Skidelsky and Conservative Members of the House of Commons. It is outrageous that we should bail out such schools.

Lord Skidelsky went on:

"The second type of school that I have in mind is one that does not exist at the moment but one which could be started and would be started to take advantage of a market opportunity if funding were available."

That is clear language. The noble Lord referred not to the educational needs of young people, or to the need for skills, training and all the other things that most of us used to think schools were for, but to "a market opportunity". He continued:

"What kind of promoters are likely to be attracted to setting up new schools? Some will be religious bodies, some . . . will be groups of parents, while others will be entrepreneurs either as individuals or organised into companies".

That does not even leave us the concept associated with the city technology colleges—the concept of sponsorship by great commercial names such as Dixons, which saw this as simply a marketing opportunity. It is now envisaged that entrepreneurs will move into education. Does that mean that the Government now intend grant-maintained schools to become part of the profit-making enterprise and business system? That, after all, was Lord Skidelsky's instruction to them.

Ms Estelle Morris (Birmingham, Yardley): Did not Lord Skidelsky also contradict the Government's policy on surplus places? He said that, in the spirit of entrepreneurism, he would provide the places that parents wanted. That would run contrary to any notion of rationalising surplus places throughout local education authority areas. In accepting Lord Skidelsky's amendment and advancing a proposal along similar lines, have not the Government adopted a policy that conflicts with their established policy on ridding the system of surplus places?

Mr. Lloyd: My hon. Friend is right; moreover, she has anticipated what I was about to say. I hope that the Minister is paying attention, because this is an important point.

Lord Skidelsky's vision of a brave new world of education featured more than entrepreneurs and failed independent schools drifting into the opted-out sector. He said that, as things stood,

"There will not be any new grant-maintained schools established, or at best just a token few.

There are two main reasons for this. The first was given by the Secretary of State in another place when he said that he would consider applications for new schools to enter the state sector only if there were no surplus places in the area concerned. This is an old departmental orthodoxy. Applications to supply new places will be entertained only if there is a so-called basic need."

Lord Skidelsky said:

"an overall surplus of places is quite consistent with the existence in parts of the country of shortages of schools which parents want their children to attend."

He added, however, that the Government must place emphasis on "demand, not supply". The amendments that he tabled—proposals replicated in the Bill as it now stands—were designed to achieve that end.

We know that the 10 per cent. rule has now been abolished. We know that Lord Skidelsky and others who—like the Minister of State, Baroness Blatch—were sympathetic to the market-oriented view were happy to accept the argument that promoters should be allowed to come in at any stage. The House of Lords was happy—as are the Government tonight—to accept that independent schools should be able to come in. Will the Minister now tell us where in the Bill is a guarantee that, in areas where grant-maintained schools are unlikely to be established otherwise, such schools can be created only if there are no surplus places? As far as I know, no such guarantee exists in writing.

7.15 pm

The Minister may say that the Secretary of State has given such a commitment. The Secretary of State gave a commitment that no promoter would be allowed to introduce a new grant-maintained school below the 10 per cent. threshold; that promise has gone out of the window, as have so many of the promises incorporated in the Bill in Committee and on Report. The Secretary of State's word is worth almost nothing.

Ms Estelle Morris: Less than 10 per cent.

Mr. Lloyd: Indeed—especially in the light of the pressure imposed on the Secretary of State by the House of Lords and the DFE, whose voices, ultimately, are louder than that of the Secretary of State. Normally, he gives way to such pressure.

The Minister must convince us that we have any reason to believe that the Secretary of State is big enough to stand up to those who favour market forces. In the speech that I quoted earlier, Lord Skidelsky said:

"there are the awesome requirements relating to school premises. At present there are independent schools occupying premises which would be called unsatisfactory but which nevertheless achieve very good education for their children. Others may comply fully with fire, safety and health regulations but fail to meet the required square meterage per pupil, or some other provision of the 1991 school premises regulations."—[*Official Report, House of Lords:* 22 April 1993, Vol 544, c. 1812-14.]

I assume that Lord Skidelsky meant that schools now occupying premises that would be deemed unsatisfactory were precisely the schools that did not comply fully with the fire, safety and health regulations. The Government's new approach to accommodation standards suggests that people such as Lord Skidelsky are right. That is why the

[Mr. Lloyd]

Secretary of State is now consulting on a number of aspects of accommodation. Those are what Lord Skidelsky has described as the "hassle costs" of entering education and those are the ideas of a Government who talk of an entrepreneurial view of education and the marketing need of those who wish to enter the system.

The amendments are simply an extension of the confusion already written into the Bill. We know that they are designed to bail out the failing independent schools; we know that they are designed to allow unrepresentative people—perhaps even commercial bodies—to become involved in education. The Minister shakes his head, but he has a long way to go if he is to identify provisions in the Bill that will prevent that.

We know that, basically, the Government are in the business of bowing to those who want market forces to dictate the position and we know that the Minister can give us no guarantees that surplus places will ultimately prevent the existence of grant-maintained schools: he and his colleagues are intent upon producing a grant-maintained revolution. There will be planning confusion between local authorities and the funding agency at a much earlier stage, because the funding agency need not consult a local authority when a promoter puts forward a school below the 10 per cent. barrier.

Nothing in the Bill forces either promoter or funding agency to consult local authorities properly. The confusion in the planning mechanisms on which we insisted in the Bill's early stages—a confusion that Ministers said could not happen—is not being removed, but actively extended. Amendment No. 371 concerns the position where an independent school can no longer make its living in that sector, and comes running for aid from an ideologically sympathetic Government, who will prop up failure in the independent sector at the taxpayer's expense.

The Government have made it clear that, uniquely, when people who are employed by independent schools transfer to schools in the grant-maintained sector—the opted-out schools—the transfer of undertaking provisions will come into force and offer protection to those teachers and other staff. I asked in Committee on a number of occasions why that protection could not be given to teachers in local authority schools who found themselves transferred to grant-maintained schools. We were told at that time that that could not be done and that it was not necessary. Why do we have such an odd contrasting approach? Why will those in the independent sector be given protection and those in the local authority sector denied it?

The Minister will understand why we believe that, in many respects, this is an ideological Bill. Fundamentally, the Bill is not about extending choice to parents. The Under-Secretary of State for Schools has already said that, where parents reject the option of grant-maintained schools, he will allow promoters to put forward plans for those schools. The Under-Secretary of State for Education looks puzzled about that. Perhaps he was not here when his colleague said that it would be unfair to deny promoters an opportunity to establish grant-maintained schools in areas where their establishment was otherwise unlikely.

Parents do not want grant-maintained schools, but the Government say that we have to have them. This is an ideological Bill, and the amendments are ideologically inspired. The Minister and his colleagues have caved in to the lunatic Tory right in the House of Lords; they have given in to those who think that education is like a tin of baked beans, a commodity to be bought and sold. That is not the case.

Many Conservative Members must be squirming in their seats. They know that the Government, following pressure from the right wing in the House of Lords, have now ratted on the promises they made when the Bill was going through its initial stages. The Minister should be ashamed of himself.

Ms Estelle Morris: I support the comments of my hon. Friend the Member for Stretford (Mr. Lloyd).

There was a lot of argument in Committee about whether the funding agency should be responsible for providing schools in an area. We spent many sittings deciding whether the entry point at which the agency should share provision of providing places should be 10 per cent., or more or less. There was general agreement that 10 per cent. was an arbitrary figure.

A study of the *Hansard* report of the Committee stage, however, reveals that the Government always said that 10 per cent. did at least reflect parental wishes within an area. When the point was reached at which 10 per cent. of parents in an area had children in grant-maintained schools, it was stated that the funding authority had the right to provide education in that area. The amendment lessens that democratic accountability, little as it was.

The funding agency will now operate within an area where less than 10 per cent. of parents have expressed a wish for a school to opt for grant-maintained status. We may see a situation where zero per cent. of parents in an area have expressed a wish for their children to be educated in a grant-maintained school, yet they will find that the funding agency still intervenes.

How can the Government equate that scenario with their expressed desire to make parental wishes count in their plans for education in the next decade? That exposes the Government's claim that they are there to reflect parental wishes as the myth that we have always supposed it to be.

It is worrying that the schools set up by promoters in an area will then contribute to an educational provision locally—they will be responsible for 10 per cent. or up to 75 per cent. of pupils—and contribute to the funding agency. They may share the responsibility for securing places in schools or take over that responsibility altogether.

The democratic deficit inherent in the Bill will be worsened, because it now seeks to get the funding agency operating in an area by the back door. One of the most disappointing things for those of us involved in education, in observing the way that the Government have acted over the past few years, is that they have moved from their stated aim of trying to reflect parental wishes and letting people exercise choice about who should run their schools. After a series of decisions, the Government now openly say, "We have every intention, through any means in our power, of making sure that the LEAs have less power, and that the funding agency and central Government become the organisations with responsibility for securing educational provision in an area."

First the Government weighted funding towards grant-maintained schools—to encourage schools to

become grant-maintained—and then the full force of Government propaganda was exercised at parents to encourage them to vote that their school should be grant maintained. Those two actions failed to secure the desired numbers of grant-maintained schools in given areas, so the Government now intend to start grant-maintained schools within an area whether or not parents have expressed a wish for such schools or for the funding agency to operate.

Gone are the heady days when the Bill was about parental choice and reflecting local wishes. The amendment represents the end of a long line of Government changes, because—as we always suspected—the Government have every intention, by whatever means, of removing an LEA's ability to provide schools in an area. The intention is to transfer that task to the hands of an undemocratic, unelected, funding agency and central Government.

New schools can now be established in an area where the responsibility for dealing with surplus places and making sure that education is provided for children, still rests with the LEA, yet the provider of that new school will not have a responsibility to consult with the LEA before deciding to set it up. The LEA will have the legal responsibility for getting rid of surplus places and the statutory responsibility for providing places for children in an area. An individual may come along, however, and set up a grant-maintained school without having any statutory responsibility to consult the LEA about whether that is desirable or whether surplus places need to be taken into account. That represents another means of removing from the LEAs a job that they have done successfully for many years.

As my hon. Friend the Member for Stretford said, Lord Skidelsky made it clear in his comments in the House of Lords that his amendment was concerned with making it possible for existing independent schools to obtain state funding should they wish to do so. He argued against surplus places. He brought into the open the right-wing argument that education is about the marketplace; it is all about schools filling places; if they cannot fill those places, they go to the wall.

It will be seen from the debacle this summer about the marketplace, testing and league tables, that that is not the way forward for our schools, and will not drive standards up. That is not what parents, teachers and communities want. The Government should learn a lesson from that. They should accept our amendment tonight, and not the arguments of their right-wing friends in the other place. They should say that what they want is a rationalisation of surplus places; that they want the LEAs to fulfil properly their role in providing sufficient places in their given areas. They should make it clear that they do not want to pursue marketplace economics and marketplace education, but that they will provide the suitable education for our children in the future.

Mr. Anthony Coombs (Wyre Forest): In Committee, I suggested that the threshold should be done away with, so I welcome the fact that the House of Lords has seen fit to do that. The Government were wrong originally in saying that the variety that can be provided by people who want to set up grant-maintained schools can be achieved only if there is a general expression of interest in grant-maintained schools in an area, thereby denying it to others. That may have been administratively convenient, but it is not a logical way to extend choice and diversity, which is what the Bill is all about. Baroness Blatch and her fellow peers have done a service for choice and diversity in education. I hope that that will be the outcome.

7.30 pm

I was under the impression that, whether we call the process right-wing market forces or not, good education mainly comes about if children are taught in the schools that parents think appropriate for their children. I should like to see, as a result of the Bill, specialisation in individual schools and different types of schools, whether they are in the grant-maintained sector or local authority. I happen to know that quite a few schools, which I regard as extremely rigorous in terms of the kind of education that they provide, would like to move into the grant-maintained sector but would have been barred by that previous 10 per cent. rule.

That is true of some Church schools. It seems illogical that in some parts of the country there are empty spaces in church schools yet there is a huge demand outside the area for such schools. If schools, whether denominational or specialist, are unable, throught the lifting of the threshold, to set up as grant-maintained schools, the parents should have the opportunity to find a place for their children at the school of their choice and, as a result, get the standards of education that they desire.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: It is worrying that the hon. Gentleman does not understand the Bill. Nothing about the lifting of the 10 per cent. rule will allow a school to apply for opted-out status which the unamended Bill would have prevented. For individual schools, the mechanism is the ballot. The 10 per cent. refers to something different. The hon. Gentleman should look at what the Bill says, because he is not supporting the Government on this. Any school can apply to opt out as long as the parents vote on that. the 10 per cent. rule is not involved.

Mr. Coombs: I appreciate that, but it is precisely those parts of the country where 10 per cent. of schools under the previous provision had not opted for grant-maintained status that would be debarred from setting up a grant-maintained school. That was an artificial restriction that has now been removed by the House of Lords.

I would not like to see the amendment as a means of moving into the public sector those independent schools that are not able to attract sufficient parents in order to be successful. That would be wrong, and I am sure that the Government do not intend it to be such. I see the amendment as a means of allowing schools that are successful, but are not able, for financial or other reasons, to move into an area where there would be a demand for their places, and I can think of examples in my constituency. That would extend choice and diversity, and would therefore be good for standards of education.

I caution my hon. Friend on one of the points made earlier by the hon. Member for Plymouth, Devonport (Mr. Jamieson) about the powers provided for compulsory purchase by the funding agency. Like him, I would not like to see that as a licence for property development for new grant-maintained schools. I should like to hear the Minister say that he will insist that if compulsory purchase were allowed—to which I have an ideological aversion—by the funding agency for the new grant-maintained schools, it would be accompanied by conditions that would not allow that abuse to take place in future.

Mr. Jamieson: I was interested to hear the hon. Member for Wyre Forest (Mr. Coombs) tell the House that he is not in favour of the 10 per cent. threshold. He will correct me if I am wrong, but I recall him voting for it in Committee and again in the House later on. I am glad that, although we may disagree on that, we agree on the compulsory purchase of land, particularly in the case on which I will dwell in a moment.

The amendments are about the failed policy for going grant-maintained. The Government have realised that their policy has failed and have brought in measures during the passage of the Bill to try to prop it up and encourage more schools to become grant-maintained. I recall that Baroness Thatcher, when she was Prime Minister, promised that, by April 1992, half the schools in this country would be grant-maintained. We have somewhere near 1,000 schools, which is a long way short of the promised 12,000. That was one of the many broken Government promises about which I am rather pleased.

The policy has failed despite all the bribes that have been given to grant-maintained schools and all the cajoling that has gone on in Tory local authorities—in the days when we had Tory local education authorities. Pressure has been applied in various ways to grant-maintained schools. For example, we have heard the Minister tell us this evening that he is in favour of extra funding going to those schools. In answer to a question, he said that he thought that that was wise.

Amendment No. 39 would bring into the Bill more incremental change to allow grant-maintained schools to come about more easily—in this instance, of course, without any recourse even to parental ballots. We had already abandoned the idea of LEAs or people through their local councillors having a say. Now we are moving down the road of not even having recourse to a ballot of parents with children in those local schools. That will be a recipe for total education anarchy in certain areas. If I may resurrect an expression that both Ministers may have forgotten—one was not with us for part of the Committee proceedings and the other was not there at all—it will create chaos and confusion.

Lady Olga Maitland: I listened with interest to the hon. Gentleman's comments about schools entering a state of chaos and anarchy. Can the hon. Gentleman name a single school that has gone grant-maintained and that has any regrets whatever? As far as I can see it, schools are leaping on board and parents cannot be held back.

Mr. Jamieson: The hon. Lady will remember that in Committee I gave one good example of a school in Dorset that wished that it had not gone grant-maintained. It was one of the first schools to opt out. A parent rang me and asked whether there was any way of going back. There are certainly such schools. If she will allow me to develop the point, she will see that the clause gives promoters of schools the power, through the funding agency and even, through compulsory purchase, to set up their own schools.

I hope that the Minister will take note of that point and in summing up perhaps even mention it. When schools are set up by promoters and have their land compulsorily purchased for them, will he be asking whether they are over-subscribed already in that area and whether there are empty school places? Will it be another recipe for the waste of taxpayers' money?

Mr. Robin Squire: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman in full flow, as I know that it is an impressive sight, but I made that point clear in my opening remarks.

Mr. Jamieson: I am glad that the Minister is impressed by what I am saying. I hope that I shall be equally impressed by what he says when he winds up.

Entrepreneurs—they may be, as my hon. Friends have said, people who have already failed in independent or private schools—will be able to go to the funding agency before even the 10 per cent. point is reached and have land purchased on their behalf so they can set up their own grant-maintained schools.

Will the funding agency necessarily have any local knowledge of what is needed in the area? We know that it is already difficult for some of the larger education authorities, such as county authorities, to keep track of every single need in every area. What will the funding agency do for my part of the country, Cornwall, where there are no opted-out schools, or for Devon, where only 1 per cent. of schools have opted out? What will the funding gency—tucked away in York—know about people's needs and how it can respond sensitively?

The proposal's worst flaw is that it puts into the hands of private entrepreneurs—groups with no local accountability—the power to spend taxpayers' money without having to account to local people. All funding for such grant-maintained schools will come from the aggregate school budget and will not be available for other schools. The taxpayer will have to foot the bill for the right-wing prejudice of the people who put those clauses in the Bill.

Mr. Robin Squire: Let me begin by reiterating as strongly as I can that this is not an ideological Bill—[HON. MEMBERS: "Oh?"] Unless matters of standards and choice are ideology, and if they are, Opposition Members stand condemned by their own words. The debate on this part of the Bill is about a considerable and growing success story—that of the grant-maintained schools. That is the background, and I fear that the debate is underpinned by Opposition Members' inability to accept GM schools. In some areas they are even working against parents' applications to seek GM status. I think the House knows that.

Mrs. Anne Campbell (Cambridge): Is the Minister aware that in my area—the Cambridgeshire local education authority—increasingly large numbers of schools are choosing not to opt out of local authority control? Recently, parents of pupils at Netherhall secondary school in Cambridge voted overwhelmingly to stay within the local education authority. Now that schools have seen through the Government's bribes, especially on funding, it is becoming increasingly transparent that they wish to stay with local authorities.

Mr. Squire: One of the differences between the hon. Lady and myself is that I am relatively relaxed if parents of pupils at a school ultimately vote no when all the facts have been put to them. I think that they are mistaken, but that is their choice. The hon. Lady and her colleagues on the Opposition Benches would deny parents that choice.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Squire: Let me finish the point first.

I have no difficulty in defending a position where that choice should be extended. Even in the short time that I

have been a Minister in this Department, I have spoken to between 100 and 200 head teachers of GM schools. If the hon. Lady believes that the primary reason for schools adopting or proposing grant-maintained status is financial, she is severely mistaken. The people behind such applications are motivated by the greater freedom to determine their priorities.

Mr. Lloyd: The Minister has made a clear statement that he believes that the system should be motivated by parental choice. That debate obviously runs through the Bill, but his position is consistent with the line of rhetoric followed by the Secretary of State on Second Reading. The Minister has to accept that the amendment that he wishes the House to agree to does nothing to encourage parental choice. It will mean that, in an area where parents have chosen consistently in every ballot not to have opted-out schools, the Minister and his colleagues will be able to allow a proposer to open a new school which will be opted out, counter to the wishes of any parent whose views have been assessed. How can he justify that?

7.45 pm

Mr. Squire: Rather easily. Indeed, to echo my hon. Friend the Member for Wyre Forest (Mr. Coombs), that is the distinction between individual ballots at individual schools, which I willingly concede will sometimes lead to no ballots, and the general position within an education authority area, which the hon. Member seems to overlook.

If the hon. Member and the Labour party had their way, they would deny anyone in any education authority that had not opted for their existing school to be grant-maintained in each of those separate ballots, the right to have a new GM school. That is the difference between us. Not for the first time, the hon. Gentleman is denying parents the choice that the Government are prepared to extend to them.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Squire: There seems to be a competition. I shall give way to the hon. Lady first.

Ms Estelle Morris: May I take the Minister back to some comments that he made when I tried to intervene a minute ago? He said that he was fairly relaxed about parents who chose not to opt out after a ballot on grant-maintained status and then stressed that the important thing was that they were given access to information about the choice that they were to make in the ballot. Will he therefore tell the House what the Government have done to tell parents about the benefits of staying with the local education authority before grant-maintained ballots?

Mr. Squire: It is my experience that local education authorities are generally not backward in explaining why they wish to retain schools. Even in provisions that we are not discussing in this block of amendments, there is nothing to prevent the LEA from making a reasonable case, as I am sure the authorities would anyway. The hon. Lady may have been referring to the fact that elsewhere the Bill seeks to prevent an unreasonable abuse of public spending by the LEA.

Lady Olga Maitland: I thank my hon. Friend for giving way. Does he agree that something of a red herring is coming from Opposition Members, who suggest that parents are applying for schools to opt out purely on financial grounds? Does he agree that parents are really looking for the freedom to manage schools as effectively as possible, to direct the most resources to where they should be targeted, so that there are more teachers per pupil, more books and better standards—in other words, less interference from the town hall tyrants?

Mr. Squire: My hon. Friend has spoken to a number of head teachers and governors of GM schools and her wise words will have been heard by the House—at least by Conservative Members—with total support.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

19nt

Mr. Squire: I see that a queue is still forming. I shall allow interventions subject to time. If Opposition Members doubt that that is the view of schools that have gone grant-maintained, they cannot be visiting those schools.

Mr. Greg Pope (Hyndburn): Under the terms of the Bill, governing bodies will be forced to discuss holding a ballot on opting out every year until parents decide to vote yes to opt out, when they will not be allowed to hold a ballot ever again to discuss opting back in. Where is the parental choice in that?

Mr. Squire: The hon. Member himself said that the Bill will provide for a choice by governors once every year and that they may exercise that choice in favour or against. I do not think I can improve on the answer that I gave.

Mr. Don Foster: Will the Minister help to clarify what is beginning to be a confusion, in my mind at least? He agreed, as I understood it, with the comments of the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Lady Olga Maitland), who said that a grant-maintained school could have more books, more equipment, and more teachers. Yet, earlier in our debate, the Minister told us that a grant-maintained school gets additional money only for its additional responsibilities. Will the Minister explain that contradiction?

Mr. Squire: For one moment I thought that that question might be asked in innocence, but if the hon. Gentleman was twirling his cloak in front of me, expecting me to charge, he will be disappointed.

There were two separate elements in the hon. Gentleman's question. My hon. Friend the Member for Sutton and Cheam (Lady Olga Maitland) was rightly talking about what I would describe as better husbandry, which is often, although not exclusively, evident in grant-maintained schools. Our policy allows those schools a greater say over their priorities than schools that are still reliant on the LEAs.

Mr. Don Foster: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Squire: Hold on—if the hon. Gentleman asks a question he should give me the chance to finish answering it.

The second point, which referred to earlier comments, was referring specifically to the fact that, as comparing GM to LEA schools, there are of course continuing functions, even under considerably devolved LMS budgets of LEAs, which are carried out by those LEAs and for

[Mr. Squire]

which, in GM schools, they must be responsible. For those functions, it is right and proper that they should have extra funding; that is the difference between the two.

Dr. Tony Wright (Cannock and Burntwood): I am provoked by two factors. One is the Minister's reference to better husbandry. Every time he uses words like that—sometimes Conservative Members talk about higher standards in grant-maintained schools—does he not realise how profoundly insulting that is to the vast majority of schools?

Only 1 per cent. of the primary sector has opted out. Some 99 per cent. of primary schools in this country are in the maintained sector. Every time the Government and Conservative Members speak in the way they do, they insult by implication all the parents, head teachers, governors and teachers who are involved in those schools. That attitude will not do. It is time that we heard the Government and Conservative Members celebrate excellent schools, wherever they find them. They should end their silly ideological belief that only one type of structure produces results and another type does not.

When the Minister talks about saving money and greater costings, is he aware that vast quantities of public money have been transferred as a result of opting out? Just this week, I found out that £1 million has been transferred to the Electoral Reform Society. The Government pay money to run ballots which nobody wants, but which the Government insist must take place. When the results do not satisfy the Government, they fix the process to try to hold the ballot again. The Government must understand that that is not acceptable.

Mr. Squire: I am not sure that it would assist debate on the group of amendments if I were to go too far into the subject of the hon. Gentleman's questions. As someone who served for many years in a local authority and who was proud to lead that authority, I take no lessons from anybody about praise for local authority actions and the excellence of many local authority schools.

I should not even need to say that and the hon. Member does not assist his argument by raising the matter. He made his comments in the context of a debate which takes place primarily because Opposition Members refuse to accept any variation from LEA schools. I think that the hon. Gentleman said that nobody wants ballots. If my memory is correct, as of this morning, 954 separate schools have voted yes, so we presume that, in those instances, those ballots were welcome.

I shall repeat the assurances that I gave in my opening comments and which have been repeated in the other place about the guidelines that the Secretary of State will follow in considering applications. It has been made clear that surplus places have a prominent role in the guidelines. Even in the time that I have been a Minister, some applications for grant-maintained status have been declined on the grounds of the existing position on surplus places. We do not need to prove our position.

Mr. Win Griffiths (Bridgend): The Minister is making an important point about a change of tack by the Department of Education on the issue of creating grant-maintained schools where there are surplus places. We had a serious problem in Gwent when two out of three applications for grant-maintained schools were allowed in direct opposition to the county's plan to reduce surplus places. Will he give an assurance that, where a sponsor brings forward a plan for a grant-maintained school in an area where a local authority is looking at its surplus place problem, such an application will be dismissed out of hand?

Mr. Squire: I have looked at what I said at the beginning of the debate, which was that, specifically in line with our policy of tackling the problem of surplus places, my right hon. Friend would look carefully at the need for additional school places in the district as well as, where appropriate, denominational need. I said that promoters would have to demonstrate that there would be a projected shortage of places in the local education authority and grant-maintained sectors in the foreseeable future. If the hon. Member for Bridgend (Mr. Griffiths) is a reasonable man, he will accept that as a reasonable position.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: This is a fundamental issue—it is not trivial. The Minister accepts that the issue of surplus places must be addressed. The words that he used are open to two interpretations: first, that the proposer must demonstrate that there is a shortage of places in the local authority and the grant-maintained sector taken together; or secondly, that the proposer has to demonstrate that there is a shortage in either the local authority sector or the grant-maintained sector. My hon. Friend the Member for Bridgend (Mr. Griffiths) asked a straightforward question. If surplus places are available in an area, will the Secretary of State rule out any proposal out of hand? The question demands a yes or no and if the Minister is consistent he should say yes.

Mr. Squire: Most of the issues cannot be dealt with simply by saying yes or no. Without subjecting the House to a third attempt to read what I said, may I say that I specifically stated from the Dispatch Box that the subject of surplus places was important. As the hon. Gentleman well knows, in a prominent speech in recent weeks my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary stressed the importance of tackling the problem of surplus places. He stressed the attention that the Secretary of State would give to that issue when applications were made—that is on record. We can add little to the exchange by pursuing the subject now.

The hon. Member for Stretford (Mr. Lloyd) criticised the impact of the abolition of the 10 per cent. trigger and implied that it would undercut the local education authority's planning role. That will not happen. The removal of that trigger will not mean that the Funding Agency for Schools immediately shares responsibility for providing new school places in every local authority district. That can happen only at the second stage. Most importantly, if it so chooses, the LEA will be a statutory objector to any or all such proposals. My right hon. Friend will consider carefully all statutory objections when considering any proposal from promoters for a new grant-maintained school.

The hon. Member for Stretford also commented on teachers' pay. He specifically asked why amendment No. 371 did not include a counterpart for teachers transferred from LEA schools when a school became grant-maintained. The answer is that clause 36 of the Bill provides for those increasingly common circumstances.

The answer to the question about compulsory purchase is a straightforward yes. The compulsory purchase powers

that we have provided responded specifically to the concerns expressed by the Churches, which wanted to ensure that land could be made available for new Church schools to parallel the position in the LEA sector, where the LEA can compulsorily purchase land. The relevant amendments simply ensure that the Funding Agency for Schools can discharge its statutory functions by having the power compulsorily to purchase, subject to the usual planning procedures and consent from the Secretary of State.

Sadly, our debate has revealed a refusal by the Labour party to recognise the great success of grant-maintained schools. That success is based not on Ministers' words, but on the achievement of those schools.

It is based on an increase in confidence and on the way in which the heads and parents at these schools are responding to the new challenges which the GM regime offers the schools.

What we said today may or may not affect the numbers of schools becoming grant maintained. I hope very much that it will increase the numbers that apply for GM status, because everything that I have seen so far convinces me that that status is the way, in the later part of the 20th century, in which we should arrange state education. The Bill improves our ability to deal with these matters and the ability of parents who want to take this step to do so. That can only help these schools and develop choice and maintain standards in the state system.

The Government are quite clear about this: we stand four square——

It being Eight o'clock, MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, *pursuant to the Order this day, put the Question already proposed from the Chair*, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendments Nos. 26 to 38 agreed to.

Lords amendment No. 39 agreed to. [Special Entry]

Lords amendments Nos. 40 to 176 agreed to.

Lords amendment No. 177 disagreed to.

Government amendment (a), in lieu of Lords amendment No. 177, before clause 145, insert a new clause *—Value-for-money studies of grant-maintained schools—*

'.—(1) Each funding authority shall make arrangements for carrying out such value-for-money studies of grant-maintained schools in England or, as the case may be, Wales as in their opinion are required or as the Secretary of State may direct.

(2) The authority shall, in particular—

(a) in forming an opinion as to whether any value-for-money study is required to be carried out in pursuance of this section, have regard to the desirability of value-for-money studies being carried out at regular intervals, and

(b) in determining the scope of any value-for-money study to be carried out in pursuance of this section otherwise than on the direction of the Secretary of State, have regard to the scope of any value-for-money study which is being or has recently been carried out.

(3) In this section "value-for-money study", in relation to any grant-maintained school, means—

(a) any examination into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the governing body of the school have, in discharging their functions, used grant made by the authority, and

(b) any study designed to improve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the management or operations of the school.'—*[Mr. Forth.]*

Read a Second time, and added to the Bill.

Clause 146

PROVISION OF INFORMATION BY GOVERNING BODY

Lords amendment: No. 178, in page 88, line 38, at end insert—

("() in relation to the planning of special educational provision as provided in section 151 or")

Mr. Forth: I beg to move, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): With this it will be convenient to consider also Lords amendments No. 188 and Government motion to disagree, No. 189 and Government motion to disagree, No. 190 and Government motion to disagree, No. 191 and Government motion to disagree, No. 192 and Government motion to disagree, No. 193 and Government motion to disagree, No. 196 and Government motion to disagree, No. 199 and Government motion to disagree, No. 209 and Government motion to disagree, and Government amendments (a) and (b) in lieu.

Mr. Nigel Spearing (Newham, South): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Although your predecessors in the Chair may have used the form of words that you have just used, when people come to read this debate, will they be able to see the selection sheet, or the list on the amendment paper? My impression is that, although the selection sheet is useful to us in the short term, it is not the sort of document that can just be quoted for the record.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The answer is that we find it useful because it saves time.

Mr. Forth: The amendments move us on to part III of the Bill. The principal aim of part III is to improve the arrangements for all pupils who have special educational needs. The Government are determined that the new SEN regime should benefit all pupils with special needs—those with and those without statements—and that it will be fully compatible with the new arrangements envisaged by the Bill, and as agreed by the House and another place, for the management of schools generally.

Ever since we issued our consultation document "Access to the System" and our White Paper "Choice and Diversity" last summer, we have been at pains to listen carefully and with an open mind to all the views of those involved with children with special needs. My right hon. and noble Friend the Minster of State and I have discussed the issues over many meetings with representatives of the special needs organisations as well as with teachers in schools, mainstream and special, around the country. In particular, the Special Educational Consortium has played a constructive part in that dialogue. The Bill, as it incorporates the Government amendments made in another place, provides for the enhanced SEN regime which we want to see established.

Our principal aim will be to improve the arrangements for pupils who might need assessments and statements and to give additional rights to their parents while also dealing with provision for pupils who have special needs but do not require statements. Our proposals therefore assign important roles to both local education authorities and schools.

I want to make it clear that LEAs will retain substantial responsibilities in this area. They will conduct assessments and make statements. They will arrange appropriate

[Mr. Forth]

provision and ensure that it is closely monitored and reviewed. They may, as a result of a Government amendment, provide support services to all maintained schools. Until stage 3 of the development of the Bill's proposals, they will have important planning responsibilities for the provision of school places. At all stages, LEAs may establish new special schools and they must always keep the arrangements that they make under review.

Schools, too, have vital responsibilities to all pupils with special educational needs. All schools, LEA maintained as well as GM, are increasingly responsible for their own affairs. It is at the school level that parents and pupils have direct contact with those who can most effectively and quickly assess and meet special educational needs. Thus, all maintained schools will henceforth be required to draw up policies for all pupils with special needs and to report annually to parents on the implementation of those policies. Furthermore, their work will be inspected every four years, and inspectors will pay particular attention to the special educational provision that they make. Moreover, by introducing a code of practice, the Bill establishes a new common framework for special educational provision.

Both LEAs and—as a result of a Government Lords amendment—all maintained schools will be required to have regard to that code, which will therefore serve to promote common expectations and co-operation and consistency of practice among all directly concerned with SEN pupils. My right hon. and noble Friend and I have maintained that the code, provisions elsewhere in the Bill and our commitment to provide clear guidance to all interested parties make for a more coherent and comprehensive framework for the effective development and delivery of special educational provision in future.

Mr. Harry Greenway (Ealing, North): How does my hon. Friend envisage local authorities being best able to provide these services? At present, local authorities have teams of educational psychologists with proper back-up. Will that remain in place and under the control of local authorities, or will it float away and turn into some other sort of arrangement?

Mr. Forth: By and large, that sort of provision will continue to be made by the local education authority, because we have ring-fenced this area of specialist provision and made it an exception to the usual trading restrictions that will be placed on LEAs—that is an important feature of what we have done. I am glad that my hon. Friend has given me the chance to stress it.

Some concern remained in another place that responsibility for special educational provision should be concentrated purely on LEAs. That is why the other place passed a number of amendments on the subject. I have no doubt that the intention was good, but I believe that the amendments went too far. Their fundamental effect would be to impose a duty on LEAs to plan all arrangements for special educational needs. That would severely erode the right of schools that have opted to leave their LEAs to run their own affairs. The Government cannot accept that; it cuts across the whole philosophy of GM schools.

Mr. Spearing: Will the Minister assure us that schools that prefer GM status—he said a few moments ago that he hoped that many more schools would choose it—and want to "run their own affairs" will not exclude pupils with special educational needs, thereby imposing an even greater responsibility on LEAs?

Mr. Forth: Not as I understand the question. Our proposals in the Bill, together with the amendments tabled in lieu of the Lords amendments, will make the necessary provision for children with special educational needs, with or without statements, in the GM sector. That will run in parallel with provision in local education authority schools.

I accept the basis for the concern expressed in another place; indeed, my colleagues who take a great interest in these matters left my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and me in no doubt about those concerns. That is why my right hon. Friend tabled amendments in lieu of those agreed in the other place. I hope that they will achieve the objectives that my hon. Friends have in mind and will also deal with the concerns that were expressed in another place. Those concerns gave rise to the Lords amendments, which go too far.

Amendment (a) would require the authority to consult the Funding Agency for Schools and the governing bodies of any maintained schools—local authority or grant maintained, mainstream or special—for the purpose of co-ordinating special educational provision. That duty would be part of the duty to keep their arrangements under review and would impose a clear requirement for the co-operation and consultation that the Bill envisages.

Amendment (b) would place a similar duty on the governors of maintained schools. They would be required to consult other governors, the authority and the funding agency for the purpose of co-ordinating special educational provision for their pupils. The LEA would have a similar duty in respect of nursery schools.

The amendments deal with the broad strategic considerations and with day-to-day issues that affect schools. Thus the authorities' reviews of the arrangements that they would make would be informed by the views of the funding agency and the schools in the area. At the same time, all schools would discuss with each other and with the appropriate authorities the steps that they would take to meet pupils' special educational needs. In each case, the explicit aim is to promote the fullest possible consultation and co-ordination.

Alongside those arrangements, clauses 6 and 18 already require the funding agency and the LEA to provide each other with reports, returns and information. That matter was dealt with at great length in Committee. Hon. Members will recall that we amended clause 18 to require that in making regulations under that clause the Secretary of State must ensure proper provision for information about the education of children with special educational needs.

Clause 146 ensures that the governing bodies of self-governing schools must provide LEAs with whatever relevant information they require in relation to the school or registered pupils at that school. Additionally, our amendments would require the parties to consult each other for the purpose of co-ordinating special educational provision. Therefore, the planning system will ensure proper and sensible coverage of special educational needs in an area between those responsible for making that provision. It will also allow grant-maintained schools the

freedom to participate in considering that provision without intruding on their autonomy, which is their essential characteristic.

I stress that this House and the other place agreed to the Bill's provisions for the overall planning and management of autonomous and self-governing grant-maintained schools. It does pupils with special educational needs no service at all to try to make the arrangements for them separate from the arrangements for those who require mainstream schooling.

Our amendments give the added reassurance that has been sought in another place and by my hon. Friends about the Bill's system for special education needs while maintaining a school's proper autonomy within the management and funding structure for schools generally. I ask the House to agree to the amendments in the name of my right hon. Friend and to disagree with the Lords amendments.

Mr. Win Griffiths: This part of the Bill proved the most fruitful in Committee in terms of getting the Government to make some significant changes in their approach. Part of that was due to the help of the Special Educational Consortium, which pointed out the Government's errors in dealing with special educational needs. All hon. Members were helped by the consortium.

Because he wanted to accentuate the positive, the Minister spoke about some of the welcome concessions that were made in Committee. Despite those concessions, the organisations and the hundreds of people who presented material for the debates to the Special Educational Consortium are still concerned about the gaps in the Bill on special educational needs.

We have just an hour and a half to debate 95 amendments in five groups. Even if we exclude the group containing what are described as technical amendments, there is still a great deal of ground to cover. In the group being considered, there are 11 amendments and 10 of them contain important issues of principle about the way in which special educational needs are delivered. We are debating not only the roughly 2 per cent. of children whose needs are considered so great that they require statements but, the 18 per cent. of children who will need special individual help. That is a considerable part of the school population.

Amendment No. 178 requires governors in grant-maintained schools to provide information in their annual reports on special educational needs. Amendment No. 188 places a duty on local education authorities to plan and to review their provision, and amendment No. 189 makes it clear that they must examine not just what they need to provide, because in some ways that is a narrow definition and we should like to broaden it.

8.15 pm

Amendment No. 190 seeks to make sure that schools carry out audits to show whether their schools are accessible to children with special needs. Amendment No. 191 is an omnibus new clause that would give the LEA an important planning role, especially in terms of special educational needs. Amendment No. 192 focuses on the provision of nursery education for children with special needs and amendment No. 193 introduces an important power for an annual review of the needs of non-statemented children.

Amendment No. 196 places a duty on LEAs to ensure that special educational needs, goods and services are available to the governing bodies of grant-maintained schools. Amendment No. 199 examines the relationship between LEAs and grant-maintained special schools, and amendment No. 209 lays down a duty to direct governing bodies to make provision for special educational needs of children who do not have statemented provision. That means that the LEA can check on that in grant-maintained schools. Amendment No. 220 is technical.

Those are important, fundamental amendments and many of them are supported by the Special Educational Consortium. Its concern is that the special needs of all children and not just the 2 per cent. who require statements should be attended to. It also wants to see special education provision within a sound planning framework. By an amendment in Committee, the Government ensured that all schools will publish their policy on special educational needs. In Committee here, the Under-Secretary of State for Schools and in another place Baroness Blatch made commitments about a code of practice which, if adhered to, will be helpful. The terms of that code are improvements on the Bill's original terms. However, by themselves such improvements are insufficient.

Circular 7/91 currently governs, and provides guidance on, what steps need to be taken to meet special educational needs. As that circular is a few years old and was introduced at a time when there were few grant-maintained schools, it is valid to argue that it covered all children who needed special educational provision.

In Committee, we tried to persuade the Government to accept amendments similar to the Lords amendments, but unfortunately they were rejected. However, in the other place the Government made what is now obviously a tactical retreat, which has no real meaning. They accepted most of the amendments without a vote, but now they want this House to reject them and instead accept their weaker alternatives.

Clause 151 provides only that a local education authority should review its arrangements for special educational provision. That will take in children with statements and other children who have special educational needs, but are not statemented, in local authority schools. Although nationally that is a small minority, in some local education authorities there are a number of such schools, especially at the secondary level. So the local education authority will have virtually no role.

It is important to ensure that within each local authority area there is an overall strategy to meet special educational needs. It is a question of partnership between the LEA and the schools in its area. That does not affect the autonomy of grant-maintained schools, which is what the Minister appeared to fear in his remarks. The GM schools would have a positive role to play in contributing to the development of policy and to any review. The strategy would avoid the duplication of services and effort.

Amendment No. 191 is, in fact, a new clause, under which the strategic plan would include looking at the provision in GM schools; the direction and development of nursery, primary and secondary education in the area; the type and size of schools; and the catchment area of schools. In many ways, all those factors would turn the LEA into an enabling authority, set in a framework in

which the schools, maintained or grant-maintained, would provide the service. There would be consultation with the funding agency, where it had a role.

The approach embodied in the amendments would create a new partnership that would truly set the scene for the rest of the century and the first decade and beyond of the next century, something about which the Government are fond of talking. I remind them that they accepted the amendments in another place. It is the one part of the Bill where the amendments, if accepted, would play an important part in creating a clear and stable framework in which the LEA, the funding agency, the Funding Council for Wales—if it is ever created—and both maintained and grant-maintained schools would all have a role.

Of course, under the proposed new clause the final word would still lie with the Secretary of State. Nothing could be done that he felt was unacceptable. The new clause also provides for very wide consultations with anybody who has the remotest interest in education in his local authority area. Therefore, given the aim behind it, we cannot understand why the Government want to reject it and substitute amendments (a) and (b), which are weaker.

Amendment No. 190 raises a specific issue that lies outside the general thrust of the amendments that aim to provide a coherent planning framework. It deals with access arrangements and would ensure that there was a regular review of them. That is an urgent requirement. The National Union of Teachers and the Spastics Society have commissioned one of the Government's favourite firms, Coopers and Lybrand—on which they relied so much for the development of their LMS provisions—to carry out an access review, which eventually saw the light of day in a report entitled "Within Reach". It highlighted the fact that there is a paucity of information, in both local authorities and the DFE, about school buildings. Local authorities tended to have on file only the original plans of a school. The DFE had little idea of the size of schools, the number of floors or the age profiles of pupils. The same applies to the Welsh Office.

The survey shows that 16 per cent. of primary schools and 17 per cent. of secondary schools felt that they were wholly inaccessible to children with special educational needs, while 46 per cent. of primary schools and 18 per cent. of secondary schools said that three quarters of their space was inaccessible. In the secondary sectors there were, and still are, some glaring access problems, with 41 per cent. of libraries and 30 per cent. of science, art and music rooms being inaccessible. Some 55 per cent. of secondary schools and 65 per cent. of primary schools do not have suitable toilets for children with special educational needs.

There is no doubt that if the duty in the amendment were included in the Bill, it would ensure a regular review. It would enable the Funding Agency for Schools—and the funding council, if it were to be created in Wales—and local education authorities to determine their capital grant allocations. They would be able to see where their priorities lay. It is important that the amendment be sustained because although they try to cover the general planning issues, Government amendments (a) and (b) do not cover the specifics.

Mr. Harry Greenway: The hon. Gentleman's heart is in the right place. He makes an important point in saying that there must be proper access for disabled children and others, but one cannot go the whole distance with him. People will assume that he believes that there should be 100 per cent. access in all schools, which is unachievable.

8.30 pm

Mr. Griffiths: In fact, that is what I did not say, although I might like it to be true. I am not arguing that case, nor does the amendment. The amendment states only that local education authorities should review the accessibility of schools and that the schools themselves should consider their accessibility. If they have the money and deem it appropriate to do so, they should take steps to carry out the necessary changes. It is not only a case of spending money on, for example, fitting ramps or lifts; it is a case of raising the awareness of schools and their governing bodies of how to make their schools more accessible.

Accessibility can often be achieved by constructing the timetable in a way that is more sympathetic to children with special educational needs and who have access problems. Let us not run away with the idea that the amendment aims to ensure that every school has 100 per cent. access in a relatively short time. We may reach that point one day, but for the moment the amendment would ensure that reviews of accessibility are carried out.

Amendment No. 192 deals with the broad provision of nursery education for children with special educational needs. Local education authorities already have a duty to provide nursery education for children over two with such needs. Some local authorities are already examining the broad provision, but there should be a duty on local authorities to carry out that task. It would be of great value in reducing special educational costs later in a pupil's career because the sooner a pupil's special problems are tackled, the better. Amendment No. 192 neatly deals with a problem which is not specifically mentioned in the Government's amendments, other than briefly in paragraph (b) of amendment (b).

Lords amendment No. 196 would give local education authorities the power to ensure that there is a full range of special educational provision available on which grant-maintained schools can draw. The Government have already accepted an amendment allowing local education authorities to sell special educational goods and services to grant-maintained schools, and we are grateful for that.

The amendment underlines that provision, but would give local authorities an additional duty which is to ensure that a full range of services is available on which grant-maintained schools can draw to meet their special educational needs. It will not necessarily mean that they will be goods and services that the local education authority will provide, but there will be a duty to ensure that a full range of services is available—what could be called a safety net. Although the Government have tabled their own amendment, we hope that they may, even at this late stage, have a change of heart and accept the Lords amendment.

The Special Educational Consortium already has evidence that schools are buying cheaper services and that unqualified adults are being used to help to mind children with special educational needs. I hope that it will provide the Department for Education with chapter and verse on those important points. A survey of 40 local education authorities, which was published only last week, revealed that 40 per cent. of them were already cutting spending on

teachers employed to aid children with learning difficulties, and that services such as remedial reading, the educational psychology service and support for children with behavioural difficulties were all threatened and being cut.

The Minister may say that, under the statementing provisions, that should not be possible, because statements mean that needs must be provided for. Staff must be available to meet those needs, either by making the statement or by ensuring that it is adhered to. Many children, however, do not qualify for statements but still have special needs. Clearly, they are suffering because of the existing pressures on the system.

The Lords amendments are to be preferred to the Government's amendments which are weak because they set a limitation which could be the subject of endless litigation. With reference to the co-ordination of services, the same phase appears in Government amendments (a) and (b), both of which mention the extent to which

"it appears necessary or desirable for the purpose of co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs".

We believe that it is desirable to provide the co-ordinating role, with no qualification; there should be a duty in the Bill to do so. We hope that the Government will go a little further along the path that they are already travelling and give all children with special educational needs the high quality service that they should have.

Mr. Tim Rathbone (Lewes): The House has benefited from the erudite and intellectually stimulating speech by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Schools and, equally, from the vigorous and challenging speech by the hon. Member for Bridgend (Mr. Griffiths)—which, I understand from my hon. Friends who served with him on the Committee, he has made before.

As my hon. Friend the Minister knows, I urge the Government to adopt a much more generous attitude to the provision of nursery schooling. Like some colleagues in another place, I believe that there are few things that the Government can do which will have a greater effect on a child's attitude to schooling and which will influence the effect of that schooling on the rest of his life than the funding of nursery schooling. In that regard, I realise that I am not completely in accord with my hon. Friend the Minister. However, in my heart of hearts, I hope that the Government will reconsider this issue.

Amendment No. 191 returns the responsibility for the strategic planning of education to locally elected education authorities. Like the hon. Member for Bridgend, I believe that that would help to plot the future for LEAs as enablers rather than providers. At this late stage, I urge my hon. Friend the Minister to reconsider his decision to disagree with amendment No. 191 and to substitute something which, at the best is more bland, and at the worst, undercuts the principle of the amendment.

My second point is about amendment No. 192, which relates specifically to the provision of nursery services for children between the ages of three and five who have special educational needs. It is not limited to children with statements. The amendment is designed to ensure that, within three years of the Bill becoming an Act, the Secretary of State will review the provision and the desirability of extending nursery provision to all three and five-year-olds and the parents of those children.

Most LEAs prioritise nursery places to children with special educational needs. Therefore, for most LEAs, the new duty would involve no increase in provision. It would make explicit what LEAs are already providing. The few LEAs which do not follow that course would be directed to provide such provision. Even at this late stage, I urge my hon. Friend even after his excellent explanation of the Government's intentions with regard to the Bill, to reconsider that particular point.

Mr. Pope: Having served on the Standing Committee which examined the Bill, I am grateful for this opportunity to make a final brief contribution to the debate. When I spoke on Second Reading last November, I said that the most vulnerable children at school are not the 2 per cent. of children who have statements, but those in the wider group of 18 per cent. of children who have special needs and do not have statements. I expressed concern that the Bill as it was then worded did not protect the needs of those children.

It should come as no surprise to those of us who served on the Committee that, more than eight months after Second Reading, the Government are trying to remove from the Bill amendments Nos. 188 and 189 which seek to protect the children whom I have described. The Minister said that the Government believe that amendments Nos. 188 and 189 impinge on the autonomy of GM schools. However, the people who are running GM schools, the teachers, head teachers, governors and parents, recognise the need for a wider strategic function across the LEA area, especially with regard to children whose special educational needs fall outside the particular expertise of a particular school.

With regard to amendment No. 191, I am all too well aware that including "local education authority" and "plan" in the same sentence is ideological anathema to the Minister. Mentioning LEA in an amendment is bad enough, as we learnt to our cost in Committee. However, to mention planning as well is calculated to cause outrage on the Government Benches.

The Government have not made clear to the House or to the Committee how the relationship between LEAs and the new Funding Agency for Schools will operate. Members of the Committee will recall the rather unconvincing performances of the Minister as he tried to explain how that relationship would work. The Minister began by saying that the functions would be shared. He then said that the funding agency and LEAs would work in parallel. As parallel lines do not meet, that does not seem to be a very sensible way to provide for and plan our children's education.

8.45 pm

At least amendment No. 191 outlines a mechanism under which LEAs and the funding agency could work well together. Without amendment No. 191, the FAS and the Secretary of State would be working in the dark. That is not unusual for the Secretary of State, but I do not see why we should force that on the FAS.

Local education authorities have been a success because the role that was carved out for them by the Education Act 1944 was one of partners with schools. The 1944 Act lasted so long because it commanded consensus. The Government's opposition to amendment No. 191 shows that they are not interested in creating consensus. If they were interested in doing that, this Bill would not be the 18th or 19th piece of legislation to come before the House since 1979. The Government are much more committed to ideology and to seeing LEAs withering on the vine. If the

Government want the Bill to work and to avoid the ideology-driven fiasco that we saw over testing, they should, even at this late stage, reconsider and accept amendment No. 191.

The thrust of amendment No. 192 refers to children with special needs who do not have statements. Under the Education Act 1981, there is already a duty on LEAs to provide appropriate education for pre-school children who have a statement of special needs. Most LEAs—and certainly most Labour-run LEAs—prioritise nursery places for children with special needs who do not have statements.

The crucial point relates to the remaining LEAs which do not provide such nursery places. Amendment No. 192 would force those LEAs to prioritise nursery places to ensure that they are available first to children with special needs who do not require the protection of a statement. There is a great deal of evidence that that would bring wider acknowledged benefits to many children with special needs and provide them with the benefit of nursery education which they would not otherwise receive if the amendment is disagreed to. Amendment No. 192 is a common-sense amendment and I hope that the Government will accept it, at least in principle.

Sir John Hannam (Exeter): I, too, pay tribute to the work of the Special Educational Consortium and Paul Ennals, who has kept us so well informed of the needs of children with special educational problems. I fully support the Bill's aim of giving all children the educational opportunities that they deserve and I congratulate my hon. Friend the Minister on all that he has done to try to meet the needs of a very important group of children—those with special educational needs. We are taking big steps forward in part III and my concern is to ensure that we do not leave any gaps in local provision through which various handicapped groups might fall.

The Lords amendments would strengthen various aspects of provision, for example, for the under-fives and those attending different types of schools. I accept that the amendments might not be exactly right. However, I have been reassured by statements made by the Minister of State in the other place, Baroness Blatch, particularly when she underlined parental choice for special schools. My hon. Friend the Minister will recall my amendments on Report and our discussions at meetings in the Department. I thank him for the steps that have been taken to reassure our excellent special schools that, because of their independent or trust status, they will not be obscured from parental choice.

However, I am concerned about two problems. One has been mainly resolved by Government amendments (a) and (b), which move us some way towards addressing a problem that we identified earlier—the need for a coherent framework for planning and co-ordination of special needs provision throughout a local authority area.

The fear has been widespread that, in pursuing academic excellence, grant-maintained schools would do their best, overtly or covertly, to keep out some children who need more of their attention. Several organisations have made representations to us about that matter and some evidence of that has already been identified by one or two representative organisations. Unless there is a collaborative overview of local provision, such gaps could develop still further.

I welcome most warmly the Government amendments: first, requiring a local education authority, when reviewing its own provision for children with special educational needs, to consult other bodies in the area; and, secondly, requiring governing bodies to consult LEAs and other bodies in carrying out their duties towards children with special educational needs. However, it would help if my hon. Friend the Minister spelt out one or two practical implications of the amendments.

For instance, will there be guidance outlining the decisions that a governing body would be required to consult on? One example is of a grant-maintained school which, for some reason, is gradually running down its specialist facility for children with special educational needs in order to improve its examination results, and in so doing would not be proposing a change of character of the school and therefore would not have to publish its proposals. Would the guidance ensure that such an intention would require consultation? If such a proposal was discussed with the funding authority or the local education authority and was objected to, what would happen? Would it go to the Secretary of State for his decision, or would the governing body still be able to carry out its original proposal?

Under the Office of Standards in Education four-yearly school inspection programme, will it also be required to consider the degree to which the special educational needs policy is being undertaken in accord with the local authority's review? It would be extremely helpful if Ofsted could be asked to consider the appropriateness of the governing body's policy in the light of any comments already made by the local education authority or other consulted bodies. If I could have reassurance on the working of my hon. Friend's helpful compromise proposals, I would be very happy to support them.

A rather more disquieting Government amendment is No. 203, on the duty of the district health authority or the local authority to help the local education authority. We are again considering collaboration between statutory agencies. Many concerns have been expressed about the problem of bringing together statutory agencies in order to carry out Government policies. The problem has been expressed many times by hon. Members.

The Children Act 1989 recognised the importance of that matter, with the requirement that local education authorities, district health authorities and other relevant bodies should co-operate with a social services department when a need is identified. In the legislation, there was a perfectly respectable and reasonable let-out clause for circumstances in which the local education authority did not consider that the help that was requested of it was necessary or that offering such help was incompatible with its other duties. We might have expected such a let-out clause in this legislation. It was anticipated that there would be something similar in the Bill.

Hon. Members have often discussed problems of families who are desperate for speech therapy and other services. Unseemly quarrels have developed between various authorities that are unable to agree exactly where responsibility lies. The Bill provides the opportunity to clear up such confusion. Amendment No. 203 allows a new, unprecedented let-out. Under subsection (3) (a), even when the need for help has been established—for example, for speech therapy, which is essential for hearing-impaired children—the district health authority can still claim lack

of resources as an excuse for non-provision. The subsection allows the district health authority to determine whether it is reasonable for it to comply, unlike elsewhere in the Bill, and certainly in subsection (3) (b), where the local authority is not given the same excuse of lack of resources.

I must therefore ask my hon. Friend why the national health service executive, on behalf of the district health authorities, has been able to negotiate a much more comprehensive let-out clause in this Bill than other local authorities have. I refer in particular to housing and social services. I also ask my hon. Friend to consider leaving out subsection (3) (a) and putting district health authorities on the same footing as local authorities, or, alternatively, spelling out exactly when it might be reasonable for a district health authority to plead lack of resources. We need that transparency in the Bill. I hope that the Government can accept the thrust of those concerns. On all other points I warmly support what is being done for children with special educational needs.

Mr. Spearing: In the second half of his speech, the hon. Member for Exeter (Sir J. Hannam) identified the loophole which should not exist. His remarks will receive widespread support. However, in the first part of his speech he referred to amendment No. 209 and Government amendments (a) and (b) in lieu. The hon. Gentleman spoke of consultation, instead of their Lordships' suggestion that a duty be laid upon the local education authority and on the Secretary of State.

Although the hon. Gentleman wants reassurance on consultation, there is surely nothing in statute better than a duty that is securely identified. As I understand it, no such duty is laid upon any body or person to secure the coherent development and oversight of all education in a local education authority. I will be corrected if I am wrong, but it seems that earlier Bills and this one withdraw the authority that was laid on individuals or bodies in the 1944 Act to achieve a purpose that the whole nation and all hon. Members wish to see. That is one of the main flaws in the Bill.

When I first spoke in the House from the Labour Benches, in the mornings I was winding up my duties to about 500 young people between the ages of 12 and 18 who were my responsibility, not as a head but as a housemaster in a large secondary school. Many of those young people were unhappy. I spoke about unhappy young people and our duty to them.

The commonplace in the staff room was that it was possible for young people who were unhappy at home to cope, provided that they were happy and making progress at school. It was possible for young people who were not making progress and who were unhappy at school to make progress if they were happy at home. However, if they were unhappy in both places, there was a poor outlook. That was more than 20 years ago.

Today, I fear that there is a higher proportion of unhappy young people in that age group. The problems that all of us face in our constituencies at least will not be lessened by that fact and the platform that they have in future for learning to become responsible and happy adults and parents will thereby be diminished.

9 pm

My hon. Friends—others wish to speak, so I shall be brief—have spoken of special needs. All children in schools have special needs. However, the distinction is that some pupils have more special needs than others. Pupils are not categorised. Their needs are a continuum. We all know that pupils have different needs.

The problem is that figures such as 2 per cent. and up to 20 per cent. of pupils who have needs that are not statemented covers the fact that, in any learning group in any school, there may be up to a third or more pupils who are not making progress, especially at the secondary stage where, obviously, there are alternative attractions.

I suggest that the Government's refusal to take special needs as defined by statute seriously enough to accept the Lords amendments is a backward step. They will be either contributing to more unhappy pupils or not relieving the unhappiness that already exists.

There is an equally important provision in amendment No. 191 relating to the overall planning of education in any one area. The amendment states:

"(2) A local education authority, and the governing body of any school with duties under this Parliament . . . shall implement the terms of any plan approved by the Secretary of State under this section and shall bring forward as appropriate relevant proposals for this purpose.

(3) A strategic plan compiled under this section shall have effect for such period of not less than four years as the Secretary of State shall specify."

How can one plan for the effective education of all pupils in an area—that is what parents want—without some coherent forward planning based on birth rate, the rising fives, form entry and the geographical location of different schools so that at least teachers and those responsible for that education know what is coming? If there is any uncertainty in any learning environment, the quality of learning is likely to be diminished. Many of the provisions in this Bill will programme uncertainty.

One thing that could help is acceptance of the fundamental responsibility for coherent planning for the total educational resources of the area. That is what parents want. As a result of not supplying that planning and not accepting the amendment, and by breaking up some of the fundamentals of the 1944 Act, the Government are doing a disservice not only to the pupils of today but to those of tomorrow and the population as a whole.

Mr. Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford): I am fully aware of the time, so I intend to be brief. The Government have taken the correct approach. I am relieved that my right hon. and hon. Friends have objected to this group of amendments. Contrary to what the hon. Member for Newham, South (Mr. Spearing) said, this builds on the 1944 Act—it does not destroy it.

I am especially concerned about amendments Nos. 188 and 199. It is wrong to say that the insertion or deletion of a couple of words would not make a difference to clause 151. It would move the provision from a review to direct involvement and, especially in my local area of Waltham Forest, interference. I shall dwell on that in a moment. The Government have clearly identified the power to interfere and, by objecting to the amendments, tackled it.

In that context, amendment No. 199 provides for the insertion of a new clause after clause 156. That new clause would make this part of the Bill unbalanced. The wording

[Mr. Iain Duncan Smith]

would make the Bill far too wide and place far too heavy a burden on the schools. I am glad that the Government have spotted that and tabled their own amendments.

The two amendments that my right hon. and hon. Friends have tabled will do the job that is required. That is essentially what Conservative Members should welcome. The amendments give a far better definition and get rid of the anxiety that I and others in the educational establishment who are involved with special needs children have about the ability of local authorities to interfere in what they believe might be their responsibilities if and when schools opt for grant-maintained status.

Mrs. Anne Campbell: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Duncan Smith: I shall not give way, because I am conscious of the time and I believe that others wish to speak.

I wish to raise with my hon. Friend the Minister a problem that is not tackled specifically or well by this section of the Bill. I wish to highlight the matter and ask the Department to examine it. Since the 1988 Act, the processes for becoming grant-maintained have become well understood by schools and local authorities. Whether the proposal to opt out is opposed or the school takes up the option, people understand how to go through the process.

The process which leads into the run-up to opting for grant-maintained status is the setting of a formula for local management of schools. Schools may at some point express an interest in moving towards grant-maintained status. Whitefield school in my area has expressed such a desire. My hon. Friend the Minister has visited it. Such schools are at the mercy of an ill-disposed local education authority which wishes to oppose opting out early on, even before the LMS stage. I wish to highlight that problem.

Recently, my local education authority decided that its special education budget was overspent and demanded that cuts of some 2·5 per cent. be made by special schools in the borough. Without becoming too political, one accepts that such decisions have to be made, whatever the complexion of the local authority.

Whitefield school, which my hon. Friend knows, is a national institution, which provides an excellent set of standards, as well as teacher training to degree level. The local authority, understanding that the school has a desire or intention to consider grant-maintained status, has skewed the requirement to make cuts so that Whitefield will bear the brunt of the cuts. It will have to make cuts of some 4 per cent. rather than 2·5 per cent., as was originally mooted in discussions.

I am worried that the school has already begun to wind back certain areas of provision. Such cuts will drag away provision in certain teaching departments. As my hon. Friend knows, the loss of staff will be a savage blow to such a centre of excellence as Whitefield. I use the case to demonstrate to my hon. Friend how an LEA can use the scope it already has. I am glad that my hon. Friends on the Front Bench have not allowed that scope to be increased by the Lords amendments, but there is still much scope for such practices to continue.

In conclusion, I request that my hon. Friend take note of the problem, and that the Department pay particular attention to local education authorities which are ill disposed to the process of opting out and to schools which have expressed an interest in becoming grant-maintained, although not necessarily a commitment to it. The Department should watch them carefully to see that they do not step over the line by imposing requirements, interfering and making cuts on a scale which is unfair to such schools.

Given the complexity of some of the arrangements for special needs schools to become grant-maintained, perhaps my hon. Friend the Minister will take into consideration the possibility of steering a flagship school through the procedures, linking them carefully with the Department, once it has applied, so that we can test the requirements as the school goes through the process, and the school gets it right from stage to stage. Others who wish to follow might well learn from the experience. That experience would be publicised and could perhaps be put on a fast track. We could then understand more clearly where the difficulties lie.

I strongly support allowing special needs schools to go grant-maintained if they so choose, but we do not have the scope to make mistakes and alterations as we go along, as we have done since the 1988 Act. I urge my hon. Friend to take note of that and seek, in the course of practice rather than legislation, to see whether it would be possible.

Mr. Miller: When I returned from a civic service yesterday, I saw the Prime Minister on television. I was expecting to see something on "Jurassic Park", but unfortunately found myself watching something pre-Cambrian. However, in his considered words, he said that he wanted to work with teachers, and the whole House will welcome that statement.

In accordance with the Prime Minister's statement, the Minister might like to consider the National Union of Teachers' brief on amendments Nos. 191 and 192, which makes the same point as the hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone) did in his considered contribution.

If the Government want to take the words of neither the hon. Member for Lewes nor the National Union of Teachers, they may consider a letter that I received this week from the Cheshire dyslexia association, which is worried about what may happen to learning support services in the Cheshire area as a result of the Bill. It urges support for amendments Nos. 191 and 192, and says:

"The first amendment aims to ensure that the LEA have a planning responsibility for provision for SEN children. The teaching of dyslexic children requires particular skills and understanding and Cheshire has recognised this by providing a training course for its teachers under the initiative of the Head of its Learning Support Service".

The letter then illustrates how the approach that has been adopted by the other place helps SEN children. It says:

"Without such a planning agency we feel that the services may collapse and dyslexic children would no longer receive appropriate teaching."

The letter goes on:

"The second amendment aims to ensure that nursery education is available for all children aged 3-5 years with special educational needs. The social, moral and economic arguments for early intervention for children with learning difficulties are very strong. This provision would be targeted at those most in need"—

and argues the moral case for such a provision.

Those are powerful words by a charitable foundation in the Cheshire area, which is doing an extremely good job for the people whom it seeks to represent. If the Minister

is not prepared to accept the word of the Opposition, professional teachers or the hon. Member for Lewes, I hope that he will take those words into account.

The Government amendments will not make the necessary provision. The hon. Member for Exeter (Sir J. Hannam) invited the Minister to spell out precisely what he meant, but the Lords amendment sought to do that in a constructive way. If the Minister accepted it, he would not have to spell out what he meant, because it would be built into statute, which would be a much better way to deal with the problem.

As my wife works part-time with special educational needs children, I am not sure whether I need to declare an interest, but I certainly have an interest in the matter.

I hope that the House, and indeed the country, will listen carefully to the points that have been raised in this part of the debate. The Minister will be aware that there are great arguments in my area about whether the Government are providing proper funding for education. An all-party delegation met Government officials recently to talk about standard spending assessment expenditure, and that debate will go on; but however long that debate goes on, we should not be distracted from making sure that the proper provision is made to those who are most disadvantaged.

I shall explain why I think that the strategic plan envisaged in the Lords amendment is necessary by referring to three cases—clearly, not by name—of children whose parents reside in an army camp within my constituency. The changing domestic circumstances of, and the pressures on, armed forces personnel make that a difficult subject, and the lack of strategic planning creates a disadvantage for those people.

9.15 pm

If one finds such a simple illustration in one constituency, I am sure that it can be multiplied many times over in other constituencies. You, Madam Deputy Speaker, also represent an area with military personnel in the population, and I am sure that the argument can be found all over the country.

The hon Member for Bridgend (Mr. Griffiths) said that the debate was not about statemented children—it is about all children who have special needs. It is a subject in which strategy and partnership are necessary to overcome the problems that are faced by children in rural areas and children whose domestic circumstances are difficult to handle, such as those in military areas.

The Minister must spell out his views, and I urge him in the few minutes available to think carefully about the issues raised by the noble Lords. They have hit the nail on the head on this subject, and I urge the Minister to accept amendments No. 191 and No. 192.

Mr. Win Griffiths: I wish to respond briefly to the debate. I must remind the Government that the amendments were accepted in the Lords, and they must know that virtually everyone concerned with the provision of special educational needs backs the amendments.

The Government have produced amendments (a) and (b) in lieu of Lords amendments Nos. 178, 188, 193, 196, 199 and 209, and have also produced their own amendment. But it remains an extremely weak alternative, and the original reaction of Baroness Blatch to accept the amendments was right. Concerns have been expressed by hon. Members of all parties about what might happen if the Bill is passed with amendments (a) and (b) and the rest of the clauses.

Fears have been expressed to hon. Members by a wide range of people involved in provision for special educational needs. The fear is that there is a need to have a planning duty and to have regard to special educational needs and nursery education to make sure that the best provision exists. Perhaps just as important is the fact that the amendment relating to the review of access to schools has been omitted from the Government's amendment in lieu, and that the proposal is not covered in a precise way anywhere else. Although it may become the subject of the developments outlined in the Government's amendment in lieu, there is no guarantee that the issue will be looked at specifically.

When we debated in Committee questions relating to research, the Government accepted—in clause 18(3)—the need for specific account to be taken of special educational needs. We believe that within special educational needs there is a case for taking account of the access issue. Although we have been constrained this evening by the Government's timetable motion and have not had a chance to debate even this group of amendments fully, we hope that they will reverse their decision to disagree with the amendments. We certainly propose to exercise our right to vote on what we consider to be most important issues.

Mr. Forth: First, I take issue—if that is not too strong a phrase—with the hon. Member for Newham, South (Mr. Spearing), who said with a flourish, "All pupils have special needs; all pupils have different needs." I made a careful note of what the hon. Gentleman said, and no doubt he meant it in his own terms. He puts an interesting gloss on the subject. I must in all fairness refer the hon. Gentleman to clause 148, which says:

"for the purposes of the Education Acts, a child has 'special educational needs' if he has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him."

We are not talking about the individual needs of children in the classroom in mainstream education, which I would never dispute. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman knew that, but I thought I had better put that straight in case he was just being mischievous.

Mr. Spearing: I think that I agree with the spirit of the Minister's reply. I was merely pointing out that all pupils who are not making progress and are therefore unhappy and are therefore not learning have special needs, although they may not be statemented as such.

Mr. Forth: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for that clarification.

It has been alleged that the Government accepted the amendments in the other place only to oppose them thereafter. The first amendment in the group was agreed to against the will of the Government. I need not remind Opposition Members of that, as it was one of their greatest moments during our proceedings on the Bill. In line with convention, the Government then chose not to oppose the remainder of the amendments—not least to give us a chance to study their implications and to decide what we wanted to do about them.

The hon. Member for Bridgend rather seductively tried to convince the House that, where there is a partnership between local education authorities and grant-maintained

[Mr. Forth]

schools—as he claimed is specified in the amendments with which I have asked the House to disagree—it need not affect the autonomy of grant-maintained schools. That was also the thrust of the argument advanced by my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Mr. Rathbone).

I must remind the House of the text of the amendment. It refers first to a local education authority submitting for approval a strategic plan for the purposes of section 151 and of the progressive development of educational provision—which means general educational provision, I assume—"including special needs." The amendment goes on:

"A local education authority, and the governing body of any school with duties under this Part, including a grant-maintained school, shall implement the terms of any plan"—

the House will note the reference to the LEA implementing the terms of the plan—

"and shall bring forward as appropriate relevant proposals".

The proposed subsection (6) says:

"A plan compiled under this section shall contain proposals on the following matters . . . the number and size of mixed and single sex schools in the authority concerned; the number and size of comprehensive or, as the case may be, selective schools in the area; the number of places available in all maintained and grant-maintained schools".

That is why the hon. Gentleman cannot persuade me that that need not affect GM school autonomy. The words of the amendment from another place say precisely the opposite.

Mr. Griffiths: I pointed out that this was a partnership, and that there were two reasons why that view could be justified. First, to reach an agreed plan, there would be wide consultation, so it would be necessary for all the schools involved to agree to the plan. Secondly, it would require the approval of the Secretary of State for Education of the day. Given those two criteria, which are also in the amendment—as is nursery education, which the Minister did not mention—there is every reason to believe that a successful partnership can be developed which will not affect the autonomy of any school.

Mr. Forth: The hon. Gentleman misses the whole point. Given the words that I have just quoted, it runs directly counter to the whole thrust and philosophy of GM schools. In allowing parents a chance to ballot on whether their school becomes grant maintained, we are offering them a chance to get out from under the local education authority. The amendments would run counter to that and would undermine, as they were intended to do, the whole purpose and thrust of grant-maintained status.

Mr. Miller: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Forth: No, I will not give way. I want to try to answer as many points that have been raised as I can.

The hon. Member for Bridgend went on to ask about amendment No. 190. I should remind the House that there are provisions on the face of the Bill that make that amendment unnecessary. Clause 18, for example, empowers the Secretary of State to require information relating to primary or secondary education as necessary from both the funding authority—if a section 10 order applies to the area—and local education authorities. Clause 18(3), from which the hon. Gentleman quoted a moment ago, specifically mentions special educational provision in relation to those powers. It is probably self-evident that amendment No. 190 would be superfluous if the Secretary of State used the powers outlined in clause 18, as I fully envisage he would.

We are strongly committed to encouraging the growing grant-maintained sector to apply for capital grants to improve access for the disabled. We will shortly be inviting all self-governing schools to consider the needs for that purpose. Projects to allow disabled pupils access to self-governing schools will be given the highest priority. I made that point in Committee, but I am happy to reiterate it.

Mr. Griffiths: How many of the 400 GM schools that currently exist have made capital requests to improve facilities for disabled pupils?

Mr. Forth: I cannot give the hon. Gentleman that information offhand, but I will be only too happy to do so. In the continuing round of bidding, we expect priority to be given to disabled facilities, as I have just said, and we will look extremely sympathetically at all bids made under that aegis.

My hon. Friend the Member for Chingford (Mr. Duncan Smith) asked me if we should give special treatment—he used the term "assistance", then the term "fast track"—for a special school that wanted GM status. In fairness, I do not think that we can single out particular schools for that sort of special treatment. My Department, however, will always give the maximum help, assistance and co-operation to any school that wants to know what its rights are, and how to exercise those rights and use the procedures available.

I must remind my hon. Friend and the House that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is duty bound carefully to consider all proposals on their merits and to consider any objections that may be made to them, so I cannot promise the kind of treatment that my hon. Friend had in mind. I suspect, knowing the school that he has in mind, that it will do its homework extremely well and that, were it to make such proposals, it would do so extremely effectively. I cannot say any more than that, and I do not want to prejudice my right hon. Friend's duty under legislation to ensure that things are dealt with as they should be.

My hon. Friend the Member for Exeter (Sir J. Hannam) has unparalleled knowledge and expertise in this regard. I am very grateful for the help that he has given my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, my noble Friend the Minister of State and me: indeed, it was in no small part thanks to him that we tabled the alternative amendments welcomed by him, and by my hon. Friend the Member for Chingford and others. I am grateful for their comments as well.

My hon. Friend the Member for Exeter asked me some specific questions about the mechanisms for consultations. We envisage issuing guidance to the governors of self-governing schools on their duties under the law, including all the duties newly laid down under part III of the Bill, such as the provision about consultation. We shall also revise the——

It being half-past Nine o'clock, MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER, *pursuant to the Order this day, put the question already proposed from the Chair.* That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.

The House divided: Ayes 304, Noes 252.

Division No. 339] **[9.30 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Allison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Timothy Wood and
Mr. Andrew MacKay.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Bdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Spearing, Nigel
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Peter Kilfoyle and
Mr. John Spellar.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment disagreed to.

Lords amendment: No. 180, after clause 146, insert the following clause—*Inspection of accounts and reports to Parliament—*

(".—(1) The accounts of the governing body of any grant-maintained school shall be open to the inspection of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

(2) The Comptroller and Auditor General shall, in each session of Parliament, report to the House of Commons—

(a) whether he has carried out under section 6 of the National Audit Act 1983 any examinations in respect of grant-maintained schools, and if he has,

(b) the results of such examinations.

(3) The first report under subsection (2) above shall cover a period beginning with the commencement of this section and each subsequent report shall cover a period beginning at the end of the period covered by the preceding report.

(4) In determining whether to carry out any examination under that section in respect of grant-maintained schools and, if he determines to do so, the nature of the examination, the Comptroller and Auditor General shall have regard to any relevant published report of any study promoted or undertaken by the Audit Commission under section 220 of the Education Reform Act 1988.")

Government amendment (a) to Lords amendment No. 180, in lieu of Lords amendment No. 181, in line 19, after 'Commission' insert,

'for Local Authorities and the National Health Service in England and Wales'.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

Amendment agreed to.

Lords amendment No. 180, as amended, agreed to.

[Special Entry]

Clause 149

CODE OF PRACTICE

Lords amendment No. 185, in page 90, line 42, leave out from ("of") to end of line 43 and insert—

("( ) local education authorities, and such governing bodies, exercising functions under this Part of this Act,

( ) any other person exercising any function for the purpose of the discharge by local education authorities, and such governing bodies, of functions under this Part of this Act, and

( ) the Special Educational Needs Tribunal")

Amendments made to the Lords amendment: (a), in line 3, at end add 'and'.

(b); in line 6, leave out from 'Act' to end of line 7.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

Lords amendment No. 185, as amended, agreed to.

Lords amendments Nos. 181 and 186 disagreed to.

Amendment (a) in lieu of Lords amendment No. 186 agreed to.

Clause 151

REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS

Lords amendment: No. 188, in page 91, line 21, after ("shall") insert ("plan and")

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 293, Noes 245.

Division No. 340] **[9.50 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cartliss, Michael
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*

Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Andrew Mitchell and
Mr. Derek Conway.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McNamara, Kevin
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*

Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Dennis Turner and
Mr. Gordon McMaster.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment: No. 189, in page 91, line 22, leave out ("by them").

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 289, Noes 240.

Division No. 341] **[10.1 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*

Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Irvine Patnick and
Mr. Timothy Wood.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. John Spellar and
Mr. Peter Kilfoyle.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment: No. 190, in page 91, line 22, at end insert

("and the arrangements made for school premises to be made accessible to children requiring special educational provision within the area of the local education authority.")

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 296, Noes 242.

Division No. 342] **[10.15pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*

Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Merchant, Piers
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Andrew MacKay and
Mr. Andrew Mitchell.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*

Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Eric Illsley and
Mr. Gordon McMaster.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment: No. 191, after clause 151, insert the following clause—*Strategic plan by local education authority*—

(".—(1) A local education authority shall submit to the Secretary of State for approval a strategic plan for the purposes of section 151 above and of the progressive development of educational provision including special needs within their areas.

(2) A local education authority, and the governing body of any school with duties under this Part, including a grant-maintained school, shall implement the terms of any plan approved by the Secretary of State under this section and shall bring forward as appropriate relevant proposals for this purpose.

(3) A strategic plan compiled under this section shall have effect for such period of not less than four years as the Secretary of State shall specify.

(4) The Secretary of State may approve any plan submitted to him under this section with such modifications as he considers appropriate having regard to the interests of pupils.

(5) Any proposals contained in any plan submitted under this section shall have regard to the need to promote the interests of children with special educational needs.

(6) A plan compiled under this section shall contain proposals on the following matters—

(a) a broad direction and development of nursery, primary and secondary education respectively within the authority concerned, having regard to the requirements of section 152 below;

(b) the number and size of mixed and single sex schools in the authority concerned;

(c) the number and size of comprehensive or, as the case may be, selective schools in the area, taking account of the requirments of section 152 below;

(d) the number of places available in all maintained and grant-maintained schools, and City Technology Colleges, together with targets for numbers of entry from their catchment areas;

(e) the range of goods and services to be provided by the authority under sections 154 and (where applicable) 265 below; and

(f) any other matter which the authority may consider appropriate or the Secretary of State may specify.

(7) Any local education authority shall consult any neighbouring local education authority, and such representatives of parents, headteachers, teaching and non-teaching staff and other community organisations as appear to it to be concerned before submitting any plan under this section.")

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 296, Noes 241.

Division No. 343] **[10.28 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Killedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Merchant, Piers
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Timothy Wood and
Mr. Timothy Kirkhope.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Eric Illsley and
Mr. John Spellar.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment: No. 192—insert the following new clause—*Planning of nursery provision for pupils with special needs*—

("—(1) Without prejudice to the provisions of section 165 below, a local education authority shall plan and keep under review, and secure the provision of, nursery education in respect of any child to whom subsection (2) below applies.

(2) A child to whom this section applies is a child who is aged not less than three nor more than five years and who has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him.

(3) The Secretary of State shall within three years of the date of Royal Assent to this Act review and publish his conclusions on the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of provision under this section (including its impact on the education of pupils with special educational needs in schools which are not special schools) and the desirability or otherwise of the extension of the duty referred to in subsection (1) above to include the planning and review of, and the securing of the provision of, nursery education in respect of all pupils aged not less than three nor more than five years whose parents wish it.")

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 296, Noes 239.

Division No. 344] **[10.41 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David

Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Timothy Kirkhope and Mr. Derek Conway.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive

Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
McLeish, Henry
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Andrew Mackinlay and Mr. Jack Thompson.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Clause 153

DUTIES OF GOVERNING BODY ETC. IN RELATION TO PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Lords amendment: No. 193, in page 91, line 46, after ("him") insert—

("( ) secure that, where a registered pupil with special educational needs is not the subject of a Statement of Special Educational Needs maintained by an education authority, there shall be a review of the provision made for the child within the period of twelve months beginning with the making of the provision, or as the case may be, with the previous review.").

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 296, Noes 240.

Division No. 345] **[10.53 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John

Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Andrew MacKay.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*

Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. John Spellar and
Mr. Gordon McMaster.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Clause 154

PROVISION OF SEN ASSISTANCE

Lords amendment: No. 196, in page 92, line 35, at end insert—

("( ) The local education authority shall ensure the availability of goods and services to assist governing bodies in their duties under section 153(1)(a) of this Act.")

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 296, Noes 240.

Division No. 346] **[11.5 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*

Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Timothy Wood.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug

Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Jack Thompson and Mr. Eric Illsley.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment: No. 199, after clause 156, insert the following clause—*Relationship of local education authority and grant-maintained special school—*

("—(1) The funding authority shall consult any local education authority which has in the previous three years named in a statement a school which is or has become a grant-maintained special school.

(2) A grant-maintained special school shall assist the authority in any inspection and review carried out under section *(Duty to direct governing body to make special educational provision)* below.

(3) The funding authority and governing body of a grant-maintained special school shall consult any local education authority to which subsection (1) above applies on the range and type of provision at the school and of any proposals for a change of character.")

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 298, Noes 238.

Division No. 347] **[11.17pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shr)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.

Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Andrew Mitchell and
Mr. Derek Conway.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry

McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Spearing, Nigel
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. John Spellar and
Mr. Peter Kilfoyle.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lord amendment: No. 209, after clause 162, insert the following clause—*Duty to direct Governing Body to make special educational provision*—

("(1) Where it has come to the attention of the local education authority that the governing body of a county, voluntary or grant-maintained school is not fulfilling its duties under section 153 of this Act in respect of a pupil for whom a statement of special educational needs is maintained under section 159 of this Act then the local education authority shall direct that the governing body make the special educational provision specified in the statement.

(2) In order to carry out its duty under this section, the local education authority shall have the power to inspect the special educational provision and require the governing body to supply such reports as the local education authority may require.

(3) After a period of two months after the making of a direction under subsection (1) above, the local education authority shall review the special educational provision made for the pupil for whom the direction was made and, where it appears that the provision has not been made, the local education authority shall review the educational needs of the pupil under section 162 of this Act.

(4) Where, as a consequence of a review under subsection (3) above, a new statement of special educational needs is made under section 159 that names a different school, the Governing Body shall pay to the local education authority the cost of educating that pupil for the remainder of the financial year, the cost of reassessment and such compensation to the parents of the pupil as the local education authority deems reasonable.")

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said amendment.—*[Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 298, Noes 243.

Division No. 348] **[11.29 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew

Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Killedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Sackville, Tom
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Irvine Patnick and
Mr. Michael Brown.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Allon, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Betts, Clive
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S.O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*

Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Eric Illsley and
Mr. Jack Thompson.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Subsequent Lords amendments agreed to, some with Special Entry.

Lords amendment: No. 334, after clause 227, insert new clause—*Temporary procedure for making certain orders*——

(".—(1) Where this section applies in relation to any proposals by the Secretary of State to make an order under section 3(4) or 4(2)(a) or (b) of the Education Reform Act 1988 (orders relating to foundation subjects, key stages and attainment targets), or regulations under section 17 of that Act (exceptions from National Curriculum)—

(a) the Secretary of State shall make such arrangements for consultation about the proposals as he considers appropriate, and

(b) sections 20 and 21 of that Act (procedure for representations in relation to England and Wales) shall not apply.

(2) Where, at any time after the commencement of this section and before 1st September 1996, the Secretary of State proposes to make such an order or such regulations, this section applies in relation to the proposals unless, at any time before the commencement of this section—

(a) they were referred under section 20(2) of that Act, or

(b) notice of them was given under section 21(2) of that Act.

(3) Where the Secretary of State proposes, at any time on or after 1st September 1996, to make such an order or such regulations, this section applies in relation to the proposals if arrangements under this section for consultation about the proposals were made before that date.")

11.45 pm

Mr. Win Griffiths: I beg to move amendment (a) to the Lords amendment, in line 12, leave out

'after the commencement of this section and before 1st September 1996'

and insert

'during the temporary procedure period'.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: With this we may also discuss amendments (a) to (d) to the Lords amendment and the consequential amendment, Lords amendment No. 335, Lords amendment No. 336 and amendment (a), Lords amendments Nos. 337 to 341, No. 384, 479 to 486, 488, 504, 528, 529, 534, 535, 549 and 580.

Mr. Griffiths: We shall obviously have to be brief to give the Government a chance to respond to the debate on the amendment. The amendment is important because in the Bill the Government propose to reduce the period of three years during which statutory consultation is required on changes in the national curriculum. They argue for that reduction on the grounds that the Dearing review, which is non-statutory consultation, will produce a consensus which will make it unnecessary to go through the two-stage process of consultation under sections 20 and 21 of the 1988 Act.

We believe that, however well Sir Ron Dearing carries out the review, there can be no guarantee that his proposals will represent a consensus of the views delivered to him, nor can we guarantee that the Government will accept all that comes out of his review. Therefore, we feel that it is not wise to allow a three-year period in which the level of consultation will be reduced. We support the Lords in their proposal that the fixed period for reduced consultation should be covered by a one-year term to August 1994. That one-year term will be renewable for two further one-year terms by affirmative order. The reduced consultation should be covered by parliamentary scrutiny.

We are also worried because sections 20 and 21 of the 1988 Act mainly cover subject orders. The Dearing review deals with not only subjects in the national curriculum but matters of assessment. Those matters are too important to be left to a reduced consultation period. We accept that there would be advantages for children and teachers in securing rapid implementation of fairly simple, consensual changes, but it is not right to let that happen in a way that would not be subject to any parliamentary review for a full three years.

Through the Lords amendments, we want to ensure that we have an annual review by affirmative order. We hope that the Government accept that that is not too onerous a burden and that they will be prepared to accept Lords amendment No. 334.

Mr. Robin Squire: It is a bit rich, after what we have experienced in the past two hours-plus, to be advised by the hon. Member for Bridgend (Mr. Griffiths) that we need significant time to discuss this group of amendments. An independent observer of our proceedings would conclude that Opposition Members have no arguments on the Bill and are reduced to using their feet instead of their mouths. None the less—before you call me to order, Mr. Deputy Speaker—the intention behind Lords amendment No. 334, which was tabled in another place following my right hon. Friend's statement to the House of 11 May, is to be able to respond quickly and positively to the recommendation of Sir Ron Dearing's review on the broad principles of the national curriculum and assessment to remedy the current unmanageable situation.

I share the concern of the hon. Member for Bridgend to secure adequate consultation on the new curriculum orders. He also spoke about the importance of putting into effect the proposals that may arise from the review. Their Lordships propose to lift the current requirements for just long enough to complete reviews of individual orders in the light of the full and wide-ranging consultation on broad principles.

Opposition Members wish to ensure that this temporary measure is even shorter than we propose—one year—unless Parliament grants extensions of one year by affirmative resolution. I do not believe that their aims will be compromised by the Lords amendment. I do not propose to lift the requirements for longer than is strictly necessary, and the Government have already given assurances in another place about the nature of such consultation.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Squire: I should like to continue speaking, as I have waited for some time for this opportunity.

We must, however, be prepared to respond properly and, depending on the scale of Sir Ron's recommendations, that may take more than the year allowed by the Opposition's amendments, particularly as Sir Ron's report will not be completed until the end of this year.

It would be a mistake if a widely recognised need for change, reflected in the work of Sir Ron's review, could not be put in place as quickly as is reasonably possible. At the same time, we must allow for a planned series of changes rather than a "big bang" approach, if that is what schools feel would work best. That might mean issuing proposals for changes to be introduced by, at the latest, the beginning of September 1996, the date set in the amendment. The extension of the proposed consultation arrangements until 1996 will, therefore, allow us to present a coherent package to schools in the light of Sir Ron's review.

I should also give the same assurances to the House that my right hon. and noble Friend the Minister of State was concerned to give in another place about the nature of consultation. Once the current consultation arrangements are suspended, I assure hon. Members that, wherever possible, although there will be no statutory requirement to do so, we intend to follow the procedures set out in sections 20 and 21 of the Education Reform Act 1988 and to hold both rounds of consultation. Where we need to proceed more quickly, and use the flexibility introduced by the clause to hold only one round of consultations, we would intend to consult at least as widely as is required in the Education Reform Act——

Mr. D. N. Campbell-Savours (Workington): And Parliament?

Mr. Squire: I shall come to Parliament in a moment.

We would expect to consult more widely, allowing adequate time for consultation appropriate to the organisations that we consult on any particular proposal.

Furthermore, although I respect the desire of Opposition Members to secure parliamentary scrutiny of any extensions to the suspension beyond 1994, their concerns are misplaced. Any revised orders will still require parliamentary approval before being introduced; we will simply be able to bring them before Parliament earlier than before.

Lords amendment No. 336 concerns consultation. Nobody would wish to suggest that the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority should not consult, and those of us who are following Sir Ron Dearing's review will have noted his personal commitment to widespread consultation. But it is for the authority itself to decide how best to consult, and with whom. There is no need to lay down statutory requirements in this regard.

Of the other amendments in the group, amendment No. 335 was tabled by the Government at Third Reading in another place in response to concerns expressed on Report there that the criteria for the appointment of members to the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority should be set out more explicitly.

Other amendments concerned with the new authority and with the Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales—Nos. 337 to 341, 479 to 486, 487 to 488, 504, 528 to 529, 534, 535, 549 and 580—are technical amendments tabled by the Government dealing with the transfer of the assets and liabilities of the National Curriculum Council and the Schools Examination and Assessment Council, the charitable status and payments to members of the new authorities in England and Wales and the financial year of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Question put, That the amendment to the Lords amendment be made:—

The House divided: Ayes 84, Noes 259.

Division No. 349] **[11.53 pm**

AYES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Alton, David
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Betts, Clive
Boyce, Jimmy
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Caborn, Richard
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Connarty, Michael
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Dalyell, Tam
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dowd, Jim
Enright, Derek
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Fraser, John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Lewis, Terry
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAvoy, Thomas
McFall, John
McMaster, Gordon
Marek, Dr John
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mudie, George
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Sedgemore, Brian
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Spearing, Nigel
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Turner, Dennis
Watson, Mike

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Alan Meale and
Mr. Andrew Mackinlay.

NOES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Burns, Simon
Butcher, John

Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
McLoughlin, Patrick
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Paice, James
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Irvine Patnick and
Mr. Michael Brown.

Question accordingly negatived.

It being after Twelve o'clock, MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, *pursuant to order yesterday, then put the Question*, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment.

Question agreed to.

Lords amendment No. 334 accordingly agreed to.

Subsequent Lords amendments agreed to. [Some with special entry.]

Clause 247

SPONSOR GOVERNORS FOR AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Lords amendment proposed: No. 354, in page 148, line 6, at end insert—

("(8) In this section "direction" means a direction contained in an order made by the Secretary of State.")

Amendment proposed to the Lords amendment: (a), in line 3, after 'State' add

'but section 63(1) of this Act shall not apply to the power of the Secretary of State to make orders under this section.' —*[Mr. Forth.]*

Question put, That the amendment to the Lords amendment be made:—

The House divided: Ayes 255, Noes 88.

Division No. 350] **[12.6 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John

Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Burns, Simon
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Michael Brown.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Alton, David
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Betts, Clive
Boyce, Jimmy
Bradley, Keith
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Dalyell, Tam
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Dowd, Jim
Enright, Derek
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Henderson, Doug
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Lewis, Terry
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McCartney, Ian
McFall, John
Mackinlay, Andrew
McMaster, Gordon
Mahon, Alice
Marek, Dr John
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mudie, George
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Purchase, Ken
Raynsford, Nick
Rendel, David
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Sedgemore, Brian
Short, Clare
Skinner, Dennis
Snape, Peter
Spearing, Nigel
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stott, Roger
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Turner, Dennis
Wareing, Robert N

Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Alan Meale and
Mr. John Spellar.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Motion made, and Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said amendment, as amended. *—[Mr. Forth.]*

The House divided: Ayes 334, Noes 69.

Division No. 351] **[12.18 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Burns, Simon
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Sackville, Tom
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Sims, Roger
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Timothy Wood and
Mr. James Arbuthnot.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Alton, David
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Betts, Clive
Bradley, Keith
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Dalyell, Tam
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Dowd, Jim
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Lewis, Terry
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McFall, John
Mackinlay, Andrew
Mahon, Alice
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mudie, George
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin

Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Raynsford, Nick
Rendel, David
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Sedgemore, Brian
Short, Clare
Skinner, Dennis
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stott, Roger
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Turner, Dennis
Wareing, Robert N

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Eric Illsley and
Mr. Gordon McMaster.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment No. 354, as amended, agreed to.

Lords amendment No. 363, as amended, agreed to.

[Special Entry.]

Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the remaining amendments involving privilege:—

The House divided: Ayes 224, Noes 58.

Division No. 352] **[12.30 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Burns, Simon
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Sackville, Tom
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Sims, Roger
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wood, Timothy

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Andrew MacKay.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Alton, David
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Betts, Clive
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Dalyell, Tam
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Dowd, Jim
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Lewis, Terry
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McFall, John
Mackinlay, Andrew
McMaster, Gordon
Mahon, Alice
Meale, Alan

Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mudie, George
Olner, William
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Raynsford, Nick
Rendel, David
Rooker, Jeff
Sedgemore, Brian
Skinner, Dennis
Spearing, Nigel
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Turner, Dennis

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. John Spellar and
Mr. Eric Illsley.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendments Nos. 350, 365, 377, 404, 407, 410, 460, 503, 532, and 556 agreed to. [Special Entry.]

Question put, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the remaining amendments:—

The House divided: Ayes 217, Noes 59.

Division No. 353] **[12.42 am**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Burns, Simon
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Elletson, Harold
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Harris, David
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunter, Andrew
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Sackville, Tom
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Sims, Roger
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wood, Timothy

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Michael Brown and
Mr. Derek Conway.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Alton, David
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Betts, Clive
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Dalyell, Tam
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Dowd, Jim
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Illsley, Eric
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Lewis, Terry
Lynne, Ms Liz
McFall, John
Mackinlay, Andrew
McMaster, Gordon
McWilliam, John
Mahon, Alice
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mudie, George
Olner, William
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Raynsford, Nick
Rendel, David
Rooker, Jeff

Sedgemore, Brian
Skinner, Dennis
Spearing, Nigel
Taylor, Mrs Ann (Dewsbury)
Turner, Dennis

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. John Spellar and
Mr. Alan Meale.

Question accordingly agreed to.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS, &c.

Motion made, and Question put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 101(5) (Standing Committees on Statutory Instruments, &c.).

MEAT AND LIVESTOCK COMMISSION (LEVY)

That the draft Meat and Livestock Commission Levy (Variation) Scheme (Confirmation) Order 1993, which was laid before this House on 7th June, be approved.—*[Mr. MacKay.]*

Question agreed to.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY DOCUMENTS

Motion made, and Question put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 102(9) (European Standing Committees).

SET-ASIDE

That this House takes note of European Community Documents Nos. 6744/93 and 7033/93, relating to set-aside; notes the Commission's intention to produce further proposals, in particular for the implementation of non-rotational set-aside; and supports the Government's objective of securing rules which, whilst maintaining the effectiveness of set-aside, give United Kingdom farmers flexibility in managing their set-aside land and enable them to do so in ways which benefit the environment.—*[Mr. MacKay.]*

Question agreed to.

Motion made, and Question put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 102(9) (European Standing Committees).

BIOTECHNOLOGICAL INVENTIONS

That this House takes note of the European Community Document No. 4148/93, relating to the patenting of biotechnological inventions; and supports the Government's view that the draft Directive will need substantial amendment, including improved safeguards for animals, if it is to be acceptable.—*[Mr. MacKay.]*

Question agreed to.

Motion made, and Question put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 102(9) (European Standing Committees).

PROCEDURE

Ordered,

That Sir Michael Marshall be added to the Select Committee on Procedure.—*[Mr. MacKay.]*

Globe Theatre Project

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. MacKay.]*

12.51 pm

Mr. Robert Banks (Harrogate): I am most grateful for this opportunity to draw attention to an important international project of immense significance not only to London and Southwark but everyone who is interested in the works of the greatest English playwright, William Shakespeare. I am delighted to see that the hon. Member for Southwark and Bermondsey (Mr. Hughes) is in his seat tonight. He has taken a keen interest in this project and, of course, has tabled many questions about it.

The area on the southern bank of the Thames known as Bankside was once the liveliest and most entertaining place in the kingdom. Elizabethan Londoners thronged to this notoriously boisterous stretch of the Thames around the southern approach to London bridge, making for its bull and bear-baiting rings, cockfighting pits, hostelries and brothels. But the most popular attraction were Bankside's four theatres, the Rose, the Swan, the Hope and—the most successful of all—the Globe.

The Globe was built in 1598 to a roughly circular design of 20 bays around the stage. A thatched roof lay over the bays around the perimeter of the theatre and the central area, where it cost a penny to stand and watch a play, was open to the sky. The bays stood three floors high and were made of oak frames coated in lime plaster. Londoners of all callings and occupations frequented Bankside's great theatres. After all, this was the cradle of perhaps the most exciting and important period of English drama.

Although, in many people's minds, William Shakespeare is firmly associated with Stratford upon Avon, he chose to live and work at Bankside for the most creative years of his life. He chose the Globe as the venue for performances of his masterpieces, and it was there that "Hamlet", "King Lear", "Othello" and the Scottish play was first enacted.

During a performance of Henry VIII in 1613, the Globe burned down, set ablaze by a spark from the stage cannon. It was rebuilt on its original foundations, but in 1642 the Puritans forced its closure, together with the other attractions at Bankside of which they disapproved so strongly. Two years later, the Globe was torn down to make way for new tenements in the area, and the character of Bankside quickly changed, becoming duller as the memory of its glorious, if sometimes notorious, attractions faded.

Since then, the South Bank has seen many changes. In places, the area's theatrical tradition has been revived, with the restoration of the Old Vic and opening of the National Theatre, but not at Bankside, where the world's most famous playwright lived and his greatest plays were first performed. More than three centuries later, Shakespeare's work is cherished for incomparable insight, wit and drama, not only by English-speaking peoples but throughout the world.

Nothing of significance marked Bankside's unique and colourful history until Mr. Sam Wanamaker, the American film actor and director, was inspired by his love and knowledge of Shakespearean theatre to end this sorry neglect. Visiting the 1934 international world fair at Chicago, Mr. Wanamaker was much impressed by

Britain's contribution of a mock Globe theatre. Since then, he has seen the success that mock Globes have had across the United States and in many other countries.

As a dramatist and trained actor, he understands particularly well that the beauty and artistry in Shakespeare's language is most clearly expressed when his plays are performed in authentic fashion and in the relatively unadorned setting for which the great bard intended them. Driven by his passion for Shakespeare, Mr. Wanamaker came to London in 1949 searching for evidence of the original Globe. Astonished and indignant at finding only a blackened plaque on a brewery wall to mark the spot, Mr. Wanamaker was convinced that the Globe should be reconstructed at Bankside.

In 1970, the Globe Playhouse Trust was formed. Soon after, a small museum and theatre were built at Bankside's Bear gardens. The museum exhibits many unusual items of theatrical interest, including several intricate models of the Globe and other open-air theatres of its time. Thousands of schoolchildren from across the country and abroad have visited the small theatre connected to the museum to take part in its wonderfully enjoyable drama workshops and productions.

It was not until 1982, after a pioneering struggle to raise support for the Globe project, that a 125-year lease was signed with Southwark borough council for a riverside site opposite St. Paul's cathedral. The site had been a bear-baiting pit during the 16th century, and the foundations of the original Globe lie only 200 yd south of the Bear gardens beyond a block of offices. Those foundations and the foundations of the Rose theatre were unearthed in 1989. The original Globe is now largely covered by listed Georgian buildings, so it cannot be further excavated.

After years of planning and fund raising, the project to build the most authentic Globe theatre in the world was ready to commence. I say the most authentic, not only because of its location but because of the extent to which authentic materials and craftsmanship would be used and the depth of historical research that went into the new Globe's design were unprecedented.

When part of the original Globe's foundations were uncovered, the project's architects were able to improve significantly on the previous best guesses as to the construction and appearance of the Globe. The theatre is to be the focal point of the much more extensive Globe centre. The centre will incorporate a large museum and exhibition, with an audio-visual achive and library. These, together with the Globe education centre, will offer visitors a unique chance to learn about Shakespeare, his plays and his times.

A grand piazza is to be surrounded by shops, flats and restaurants. The centre will also boast the Inigo Jones theatre, built to the great architect's elegant design. It will be used to stage plays by Shakespeare and his contemporaries, and for concerts, poetry readings, lectures and recitals. With these plans, the Globe centre is set to become a cultural, educational and recreational attraction of international importance.

The project also offers significant commercial opportunities which private business will be keen to develop. However, before work could start, Mr. Wanamaker and the Globe trust had to contend with the destructive opposition of a newly installed extreme left Labour council at Southwark: 340 years after the puritans had forced Bankside's theatres to close, the ideologues of Southwark borough council claimed that the Globe project and even the study of Shakespeare were elitist. They tried to tear up the Bear gardens lease.

Thankfully, after four frustrating years of battle, the site was won back for the Globe, when Southwark borough council realised that it could not hope to defend its actions successfully in a court of law. Prince Philip presided over the Globe's ground-breaking ceremony in 1987, and construction began in earnest in 1989. Since then, a great deal has been achieved.

A major cost of the project was the construction of massive foundations 6 m deep to cope with a tidal river. Those foundations, and the shell of a vast subterranean Globe museum and exhibition, are now complete.

May I offer my warmest appreciation to those members of the general public and companies and others whose generosity has enabled the project to progress so far? I pay a special tribute to Mrs. Elizabeth Tompkins, widow of the late Richard Tompkins, who donated £250,000 for the construction of the Globe's stage, which is to be named after her late husband. Many companies, including Reuter's and Glaxo, have provided sponsorship and materials at greatly reduced prices. Others have given their expert advice free of charge. Donations in cash and kind have come in from the Governments of New Zealand, Denmark, Canada, Japan and the state of Bremen in Germany, demonstrating the great international interest in the project.

Unfortunately, no public body exists at present with responsibility for helping to fund theatre building. The Globe theatre project may be able to apply to the Millenium fund for financial assistance, but not for some years to come. Meanwhile, construction of the theatre remains dependent on donations and sponsorship. His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh has donated oaks from Great Windsor park to build the Globe's bays and tiered seating. Timber was also given by the Forestry Commission from the New Forest and the forest of Dean. More English oak is desperately needed, and I hope that the Government will be able to inspire and encourage the Forestry Commission and other landowning public bodies to supply the oak still needed to complete the Globe.

There is also a shortfall of steel. British Steel made a contribution, and Marais Steel of California donated 100 tonnes of reinforced steel. But 250 tonnes more are required to finish the project, and I hope that British Steel can be encouraged to step in with a further contribution.

The Globe offers many opportunities to Southwark, London and the whole country. The centre is set to become one of London's foremost tourist attractions and, as such, will bring large numbers of new jobs to Southwark.

The English tourist board estimates that, once completed, the Globe will be visited by more than 600,000 people each year—many, no doubt, from Yorkshire. With typical confidence, Sam Wanamaker predicts a figure closer to a million. What is certain is that shops, pubs and restaurants in Southwark will all benefit enormously from an influx of high-spending visitors.

The Globe centre itself will become a significant long-term employer for the area, with staff needed in its shops, restaurants, theatres and at the education centre, museum and exhibition. As I said earlier, not only is the Globe centre a great cultural project: it also offers important opportunities to private business.

At present, Bankside is dominated by office blocks and derelict warehouses and, as a result, the area is virtually

[Mr. Robert Banks]

deserted after office hours and at weekends. The Globe centre brings new recreational and educational facilities, new trading and employment opportunities and is helping to revive some of the bustling vitality that Bankside enjoyed in the days of the original Globe.

The Globe project has received all sorts of terrific support, but, alas, it has not escaped the economic difficulties of recent times. Authentic materials and building techniques are no less than this project deserves, but they are also very costly. For example, the bricks laid at the base of the theatre are the same shape and size as those of the original Globe, and have to be specially fired. Despite the brickmaker's generosity in halving the price he would charge, these special bricks still cost four times as much as standard bricks. Thatching and lime plastering, which can only be done during the summer months, are similarly expensive.

Some £7·5 million has been raised and spent so far, to lay down the Globe's foundations. Another £2·5 million is needed to complete the Globe theatre's reconstruction. Now that the theatre itself is rising, the private sector will have a sound opportunity to participate in building the surrounding restaurants, shops and flats, to complete the project, designed by Theo Crosby of Pentagram Design.

The bulk of the money needed to finish the centre will continue to come from donors, sponsors and the private sector. However, I hope that my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State shares my high opinion of the Globe's merits, and that he will look very carefully into the ways in which the Government could make a significant contribution, in cash or materials, to help boost the Globe project through to completion.

Then, despite fire, closure, destruction, and three centuries of neglect, the Globe will once again stand at Bankside, thanks to the inspiration, exceptional efforts and dogged determination of one man, Sam Wanamaker. Perhaps I hear Pericles in the wings:

"Now do I long to hear who to thank
Besides the gods, for this great miracle".

1.4 am

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey): I do not know whether the hon. Member for Harrogate (Mr. Banks) realises that tonight's debate is particularly timely because this is the eve of the first South Thames festival, but we are in any case grateful to him for using this opportunity to draw attention to the case for completing the reconstruction of the Globe theatre, which is situated in one of the most historic parts of our capital city, which it is my great privilege to represent.

The hon. Gentleman was kind enough to say—I thank him for it—that I, like many other hon. Members, have throughout been highly supportive of the Globe project, and wish it a speedy completion. I join the hon. Gentleman in paying tribute to all those who have sought to achieve Sam Wanamaker's dream. Sam Wanamaker has been involved for longer than my lifetime, and there have been many others—most recently Sir David Orr, who was for many years the chairman and key promoter of the fund-raising project.

Let me correct what may have been an unintended misrepresentation on the hon. Gentleman's part. Whatever the earlier history, it is certainly now the case that all three political parties on Southwark council—the majority Labour group of 34 councillors, the Liberal Democrat opposition group of 22 councillors and the third-party Conservative group of six councillors—all support the project. The project is thus entirely endorsed by the representatives of the local community, including the local councillors who represent the cathedral ward of the borough; indeed, the borough has made the area a regeneration area, creating a particular partnership between the local authority, the private sector and the local community.

I should add that there is a resident local community; we are not talking only about offices and open space. The rebuilt Globe site is also on the river, and the Countryside Commission has just completed a further stretch of the Thames path.

Perhaps the case for the Globe is best made if the House and the country appreciate the importance of Bankside as a whole: it embodies Shakespeare's England in all its glory—best if it can be enjoyed in the future as it was in the past.

May I say to the Minister and through him to his ministerial colleagues that his Department and others can help if they consider all that can be done for the area. So much could be done if the Government gave the area their full support. We could have the money to complete the Jubilee line extention and other public transport access, making the area much more accessible; we could have highly imaginative development of the Bankside power station site when that comes on the market next year; and we could have the continuing support of—and, it is to be hoped, the anticipated finance from—English Heritage, to ensure that the adjacent Rose theatre site, of which I am a director and trustee, is brought back to the public view.

I hope that the Globe will rise again very soon, and I hope that the Government will be very supportive of all that will bring Bankside back to its previously resplendent place on the London riverside.

1.7 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for National Heritage (Mr. Iain Sproat): I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Harrogate (Mr. Banks) on his good fortune in securing this evening's debate and on the erudite way in which he has presented the case for the replica of the Globe theatre that is at present being constructed in Southwark. I also congratulate the hon. Member for Southwark and Bermondsey (Mr. Hughes) on his assiduous support of this and related projects.

I have heard much about this ambitious undertaking, and I look forward to meeting Mr. Wanamaker and his colleagues in September. I know that the proponents of the scheme—most notably Mr. Wanamaker—have been tireless in their efforts on its behalf. Successive Arts Ministers—including, as recently as February this year, my hon. Friend the Member for Salisbury (Mr. Key), now Minister for Roads and Traffic, have considered with the greatest care the not infrequent requests that have been made for a Government contribution towards meeting the costs of the project. On each occasion, the Government have warmly endorsed the efforts of Mr. Wanamaker and his distinguished colleagues, but have been unable to provide the financial support that they have been seeking.

Having listened intently to what my hon. Friend has said this evening, I have to tell him that I have not yet been persuaded of the need for any change in that response. None the less, I very much welcome the opportunity to

explain to the House the Government's position on the Globe project, in wider context of our support for those who uphold and build upon our matchless Shakespearian heritage.

Before doing so, I should like to congratulate Mr. Wanamaker on his appointment by Her Majesty the Queen as an honourary Commader of the British Empire. By a happy coincidence, the award was annouced earlier today. It was made in recognition of Mr. Wanamaker's remarkable contribution to relations between Britain and the United States of America, and all that he has done on behalf of the Globe.

Mr. Wanamaker has achieved distinction as an actor, director and producer, in films, television and the theatre, both here and in the United States. He has made a significant contribution to the cultural life of both countries and, in so doing, has strengthened the links between them. His award is well deserved, and will give much pleasure to many people on boths sides of the Atlantic.

I also greatly admire Mr. Wanamaker's commitment to the Globe project. He has long stalked the corridors of Whitehall seeking Government support for the scheme. He must therefore have viewed the advent of the Department of National Heritage with renewed hope. For the first time, policy responsible for the two areas that are most closely associated with the Globe project—the arts and tourism—have been combined within the remit of a single Department. The connection between the two is self-evident; it is, indeed, a primary aim of the Department to seek out ways of utilising and enhancing the links as a means of developing coherent policies that add value to both the arts and tourism. That is one of the new—and, to my mind, without doubt the most far-reaching—of the changes that have taken place.

But there is also an important element of continuity. Day-to-day responsibility for programmes, for which the Department is accountable, remains the preserve of a wide range of specialist agencies. In practice, that means that all but a very small proportion of the Department's budget of £1 billion or so is distributed through those sponsored bodies.

It is for that reason that the Department and its predecessor Departments have consistently held the view that any bid for support for the Globe project must be addressed to those bodies within the arts funding system, and by the tourist authorities, which have a direct interest. These bodies are clearly best placed to assess the priority that might be accorded to such an application, within the framework of their own policies and plans and the resources that have been made available to them.

Wholly exceptionally, the Government have made funding directly available, within these areas, for projects that are indisputably of outstanding national significance, such as the new British library at St. Pancras. Another example is the special grant that was made to secure a permanent home for one of our great opera companies. I must tell my hon. Friend that I share the view of successive Ministers that the Globe project does not fall within that category. That conclusion is heightened by the overriding need to exert the firmest controls on public spending.

As my hon. Friend will know, approaches on behalf of the Globe project have been made to a range of bodies funded by central Government. In February 1989, the English tourist board offered the Shakespeare Globe centre a grant of £200,000. The money was to have contributed towards the cost of constructing and fitting out an exhibition centre, and the substructure of the Globe and Inigo Jones theatres.

The grant was awarded on condition that those elements of the project were completed by June 1991; however, by January 1992 the work had yet to begin, and —as it was obliged to do—the English tourist board withdrew the offer. I know that that must have been extremely disappointing for the Globe. I fear that it will not be possible to return to that potential source of funding, because that English tourist board scheme has now come to an end.

I know that Mr. Wanamaker and his colleagues have for some time been engaged in discussions with the Arts Council and the London Arts Board. Neither body is in the business of making capital grants, but both have welcomed the opportunity to know more of the Globe's plans for the productions that will be mounted there, and for the kind of educational work in which it will be engaged.

I am advised that the Arts Council's drama department would certainly be prepared to consider any proposal related to the use of the Globe that Mr. Wanamaker might wish to put forward—subject, it must be said, to the usual grant application criteria, and to available funding. Similarly, the London Arts Board has had a number of meetings with representatives of the Globe. Clive Priestley, its chairman, met Sam Wanamaker about a year ago; and, more recently, officers of the Globe have met the London Arts Board's drama team.

I understand that, at present, it is unlikely that the Globe could be offered revenue funding, but that project funding, through drama or education, would of course be considered. The Globe representatives have been encouraged to talk to the board's education team about Shakespeare in the national curriculum.

Mr. D. N. Campbell-Savours (Workington): Is there any truth behind the stories in the weekend press that the Government are seeking to restore to themselves the right to pay grants to such organisations, as against leaving that funding to the existing responsible bodies?

Mr. Sproat: I feel sure that, if anyone would know the answer to that question, it would be me, and I have heard no such rumours other than those that I read in the press.

The national lottery might offer more hope to my hon. Friend the Member for Harrogate. It is at the forefront of the minds of many people with ambitions for capital projects like that of the Globe theatre. The most important thing about the national lottery is that it will not be a substitute for the £1 billion-worth of public expenditure of the Department. All the money that is made available from the proceeds of the lottery will be a bonus to the Department's existing public expenditure. New capital projects will be able to get off the ground where, previously, no money was available.

The hon. Member for Workington (Mr. Campbell-Savours) will be keen to know, however, that the Department's role in deciding the beneficiaries of the national lottery will be akin to its role in the present funding structure. When it comes to individual funding decisions, it will maintain its arm's-length role.

We have said, however, that there will be a presumption towards those capital projects where it is hoped that revenue cost support would be found from other sources,

[Mr. Sproat]

particularly from the private or voluntary sectors. Projects with clear plans for revenue costs would be favourably placed to be considered for lottery funds.

I am wholly at one with my hon. Friend, and indeed with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, in acknowledging the absolutely central place of Shakespeare within the cultural heritage of this country; and, of course, there can be no doubt of the universal prominence and significance of our greatest playwright and poet. The Globe project is dedicated to the study, appreciation and excellence in the performance of Shakespeare's plays. I strongly endorse those aims; and I equally strongly endorse the idea that everything possible should be done to safeguard and enjoy our Shakespearean inheritance.

The Government, through the Arts Council, play a major part—one might say the major part—in ensuring that performances of the plays continue to be available by companies large and small, in all parts of the country. The superb work of the Royal Shakespeare Company, and the Royal National Theatre, attracts large audiences in London, and, in the case of the RSC, also in Stratford. But it is worth noting that, with its grant from the Government, the Arts Council is able to support a number of tours of Shakespeare's plays, as well as productions at the great regional theatres.

With the support of the drama and touring departments of the Arts Council, in the past 18 months in this country, 55 companies put on 74 productions of 25 of William Shakespeare's plays—proof indeed of the value of this marvellous inheritance. There are also highly praised productions in the commercial theatre of the west end. At this present moment, "Much Ado About Nothing" is playing at the Queen's theatre, and "Romeo and Juliet" is being performed at the Open Air theatre in Regent's park.

William Shakespeare's importance as our greatest writer is reinforced by his unique position in the national curriculum. With the introduction of that curriculum, study of the work of Shakespeare, for the first time in this country, became compulsory for all pupils as part of English studies at key stages 3 and 4—that is, pupils between the ages of 11 and 16. Shakespeare is the only author in the English language whose work is an essential part of the national curriculum—study of the work of any other author is discretionary.

The Government have therefore led the way, directly and indirectly, in encouraging both the performance and the study of the works of Shakespeare. The reconstructed Globe would be a welcome addition to this already very lively and expanding scene.

Mr. Robert Banks: I am delighted to hear of my hon. Friend's commitment to Shakespeare, but would he be kind enough to go to see the project for himself, because he is so near? I know that that would be a great joy to those who are working so hard on it.

Mr. Sproat: I can give my hon. Friend that assurance. If he wants to pursue that matter with me in more detail later on, I would be happy to meet him.

On behalf of the Government, I commend again the outstanding and prodigious efforts of Sam Wanamaker and his fellow trustees. I wish them well in meeting the challenges that remain, and in completing the daunting tasks that they have set themselves. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I stand ready to continue to offer what help we can.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at nineteen minutes past One o'clock.

House of Commons

Tuesday 20 July 1993

The House met at half-past Two o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PRIVATE BUSINESS

CITIBANK INTERNATIONAL BILL *[Lords]*

UNIBANK BILL *[Lords]*

Considered; to be read the Third time.

CROSSRAIL BILL

Ordered,

That the Promoters of the Crossrail Bill shall have leave to suspend proceedings thereon in order to proceed with the Bill, if they think fit, in the next Session of Parliament, provided that the Agents for the Bill give notice to the Clerks in the Private Bill Office not later than the day before the close of the present Session of their intention to suspend further proceedings and that all Fees due on the Bill up to that date be paid;

Ordered,

That on the fifth day on which the House sits in the next Session the Bill shall be presented to the House;

Ordered,

That there shall be deposited with the Bill a declaration signed by the Agents for the Bill, stating that the Bill is the same, in every respect, as the Bill at the last stage of its proceedings in this House in the present Session;

Ordered,

That the Bill shall be laid upon the Table of the House by one of the Clerks in the Private Bill office on the next meeting of the House after the day on which the Bill has been presented and, when so laid, shall be read the first and second time and committed (and shall be recorded in the Journal of this House as having been so read and committed);

Ordered,

That all Petitions relating to the Bill presented in Session 1991-92 or the present Session which stand referred to the Committee on the Bill, together with any minutes of evidence taken before the Committee on the Bill, shall stand referred to the Committee on the Bill in the next Session;

Ordered,

That no Petitioners shall be heard before the Committee on the Bill, unless their Petition has been presented within the time limited within Session 1991-92 or deposited pursuant to paragraph *(b)* of Standing Order 126 relating to Private Business;

Ordered,

That in relation to the Bill, Standing Order 127 relating to Private Business shall have effect as if the words 'under Standing Order 126 (Reference to committee of petitions against Bill)' were omitted;

Ordered,

That no further Fees shall be charged in respect of any proceedings on the Bill in respect of which Fees have already been incurred during the present Session;

Ordered,

That these Orderes be Standing Orders of the House.—*[The First Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means.]*

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL (WESTER BRIDGE) ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL

Considered; to be read the Third time.

Oral Answers to Questions

DEFENCE

Employment Statistics

1. **Mr. Jon Owen Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is his Department's estimate of the number of people employed in the defence industry in the United Kingdom.

The Minister of State for Defence Procurement (Mr. Jonathan Aitken): We estimate that approximately 500,000 people are directly or indirectly employed in the United Kingdom defence industry.

Mr. Jones: The Minister will know that there are many jobs in the defence industry, but does he realise that those jobs are most unfairly distributed? There is one post for every 300 individuals in the east and west midlands, one post for every 300 individuals in Wales, but only one post for every 700 individuals in the north of England and one post for every 130 individuals in the most prosperous part of Britain, the south-east of England. Will he consider the implications of distributing the jobs more fairly when he considers job cuts in the defence industry?

Mr. Aitken: I was fascinated by the hon. Gentleman's statistics. They seemed to come from one who labours under the delusion that he is still an old-fashioned, unreconstructed, socialist planner. It is not the Government who direct where defence companies put their factories or locate their offices. Those decisions are taken by companies themselves. My Department places its contracts on a value-for-money basis with the best possible firms. That is the only correct policy for a Government Department to follow.

Mr. Devlin: When the Minister considers not only the defence industry but the civilians in his Department, will he look at the implications of moving those people around the country as a part of "Options for Change"? Will he confirm that the cost of moving a person from one region to another has now risen to a figure in excess of £40,000? If that is the case, how can my hon. Friend justify concentrating the naval support command in Bath away from the north-east of England?

Mr. Aitken: Unlike the previous questioner, my hon. Friend is at least right to concentrate on something for which the Ministry of Defence has responsibility—the location of its own personnel—although, of course, it is not directly related to defence industries. We are careful to take into account the costs of relocation, which are expensive these days. I cannot comment on the individual case raised by my hon. Friend, but we will certainly consider it in the light of his representations.

Dr. David Clark: Is the Minister aware that with the cuts in defence spending, more than 100,000 men and women working in defence-related industries have lost their jobs and that many more face redundancy? Does the Minister feel no responsibility at all towards those workers and will he set up a defence diversification agency to ensure that the skills of those workers are retained for Britain's manufacturing effort?

Mr. Aitken: That is another unreconstructed, old-fashioned socialist idea: creating a Government quango at the taxpayers' expense to do a job for which Governments are not qualified. It is not for Governments to direct companies on where they should diversify their efforts. I recognise the sadness that the hon. Gentleman feels about the loss of defence jobs, but, as he well knows, the strategic environment has completely changed. The figures that he quoted cannot be reconciled with those produced by the House of Commons Library, which show that not 100,000 but 52,000 jobs have been lost in the past two years. One job lost is one too many, but there is no point in crying for a defence diversification agency, which would only increase the amount of money that is wasted by Government.

Mr. Mark Robinson: My hon. Friend is, I am sure, aware of what the consequences would have been if the Labour party had been in power and had implemented its policy of reducing defence expenditure to the European average. What effect would that have had on defence jobs in this country?

Mr. Aitken: My hon. Friend is right to point out that the policies of the Labour party, which proposed a cut in defence spending of one third, would have reduced jobs in defence industries by more than a third. About 150,000 jobs or more could have been lost in defence industries if its policies had been implemented.

Desert Fever

2. **Mr. Enright:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what investigations he has undertaken into the incidence of desert fever.

The Minister of State for the Armed Forces (Mr. Jeremy Hanley): There is to date no clincial evidence in the United Kingdom that the alleged complaint known as desert fever or Desert Storm syndrome exists as a separate medical condition. Statistics compiled by the Ministry show that, since the Gulf conflict, there has been no overall increase among serving service personnel in the incidence of the type of diverse symptons that are alleged to make up the syndrome. My Department will continue to investigate any information that is provided and to monitor all evidence bearing on the situation.

Mr. Enright: I am extremely grateful for that answer. The Minister will be aware that the United Nations Environment Programme and the United States Congress are extremely keen to monitor the results of depleted uranium shells that were left after the Gulf war. Will he give an unequivocal assurance that he will support on-site inspections by United Nations scientists and ignore the mealy-mouthed words of the Ministry's civil servants?

Mr. Hanley: The hon. Gentleman's last few words serve neither him nor this issue well. This is a serious issue. We are trying to gather all the facts and information because we have an interest in all our personnel. It is in our interests that our serving forces and those who have left them are fit and well and stand no extra risk because of their experience. We will, therefore, co-operate with any investigations to try to ensure that there is not the risk that the hon. Gentleman perhaps believes there is.

Mr. Ashby: Will my hon. Friend confirm that spent uranium shells were used by the United States, and did the British Government know that they were being used?

Mr. Hanley: I can confirm that the United Kingdom used depleted uranium shells. We fired some 88 such shells during the conflict. The United States also fired depleted uranium shells, but perhaps I should say to my hon. Friend and the House that we use such sophisticated and effective ordnance if it is intended to save our lives. This ordnance is extremely effective and it gets through the toughest armour. Our lives were saved because of its use.

Dr. David Clark: Will the Minister take this opportunity to apologise to service personnel who fought in the Gulf, but who were not provided with proper advice on the health and safety risks of depleted uranium? Following the admission in his letter of 13 July, will he come completely clean and set up an investigation into Desert Storm syndrome along the lines of that set up by the United States military authorities?

Mr. Hanley: We have been open and honest throughout. I answered a question on the basis of the information that was given to me, and in all good faith. The following day, I discovered that the leaflet had not gone as far afield as I was told. I immediately gave the extra information to Members who had written to me. We were not forced into this. There has never been a cover-up. There has been a genuine search for information so that we can help people who might be suffering from what is suspected by certain newspapers and certain television programmes. All those who served in the Gulf who were most at risk—those who collected ordnance and those who packed the shells to bring them home because so few were used by us—were told of the risks, but, in the heat of battle, tank crews were not given the instructions, for the simple reason that time was tight. They had to use the shells to save their lives, and the risk was infinitesimal.

Eurofighter-2000 Project

3. **Mr. Waterson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the effect of the proposals in his White Paper, Cm 2270, on the Eurofighter 2000 project; and if he will make a statement.

12. **Mr. Heald:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the implications of his White Paper, Cm 2270, for the Eurofighter 2000 project; and if he will make a statement.

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Malcolm Rifkind): The White Paper reaffirms our commitment to the Eurofighter 2000 project, which will be the cornerstone of the RAF's capability in the future.

Mr. Waterson: Does my right hon. and learned Friend agree that that statement will be welcomed not only by the RAF, but by my constituents in Eastbourne who work for Computing Devices, a company which has won orders worth £20 million for the project? Will he reassure the House that production work on the project will be allocated between the partner countries on the basis of the number of aircraft ordered?

Mr. Rifkind: Yes, I can confirm to my hon. Friend that the project provides valuable work in his constituency and in the constituencies of many hon. Members around the

country. I can also confirm that, when we come to the production stage, the precise aircraft number requirements of the various participating countries will be taken into account.

Mr. Morgan: Does the Secretary of State agree that lessons must be learnt on how to look after the Eurofighter 2000 from the appalling fiasco involving the recent modification work that was carried out on the Tornado F3 —the Eurofighter's predecessor—by Airworks at RAF St. Athan? Will he confirm that the damage was discovered by aircraft technicians at RAF Leeming only as a squadron of Tornadoes was preparing to fly to Bosnia?

Will the Secretary of State further confirm that the technicians became aware of the huge quantities of aircraft Polyfilla known as Thiokol that had been used to cover up the damage when they took down the undercarriage just before the aircraft were to fly? Did that give a possible risk of the aircraft crashing in Bosnia?

Mr. Rifkind: The important point which the hon. Gentleman failed to mention was that the defects in the workmanship were discovered in the normal and proper way by the RAF. As a consequence, there was no risk to RAF personnel, and the work required to correct the defects is being undertaken.

Mr. Quentin Davies: In view of the volatile international scene and the near-certainty that substantial nuclear proliferation will occur over the next few years —not only in the CIS but through north Africa and the near east—does my right hon. and learned Friend think that it would be wise to provide an effective dual-purpose tactical air-to-surface missile system for the Eurofighter 2000?

Has my right hon. and learned Friend considered that system? Will he tell the House what the approximate cost would be for such a system, which could have a possible range of 500 miles?

Mr. Rifkind: My hon. Friend is correct to draw attention to the fact that proliferation could occur during the years that the Eurofighter may be in operation. That proliferation may not only be of nuclear weapons, but of other weapons of mass destruction. It is appropriate to consider that the Eurofighter should have proper equipment. The precise details of the equipment are being worked on. I acknowledge the relevance of the point made by my hon. Friend.

Mr. Lewis: In view of the scandal that surrounds the Airworks F3 fiasco, will the Secretary of State consider for a moment putting the rest of market testing on hold?

Mr. Rifkind: The incident to which the hon. Gentleman refers has nothing to do with market testing, which has already produced savings of tens of millions of pounds for the RAF. Those savings enable them to carry out their responsibilities in an even more effective fashion.

I understand why the hon. Gentleman and his hon. Friends are hostile to the private sector making a full contribution to the United Kingdom's defence needs, but the hon. Gentleman does a great disservice to the RAF and to its interests.

Mr. Brazier: Will my right hon. and learned Friend confirm that for EFA to do its job it must indeed have the right weapon for the sort of threats that we are likely to face in the next few years? Many countires are trying to acquire nuclear technology—some of them already have delivery systems. What studies will he instigate, as there was a complete absence of discussion of nuclear proliferation in the White Paper, to look into nuclear proliferation, so that these issues may be debated in the House?

Mr. Rifkind: As my hon. Friend is aware, nuclear proliferation is particularly relevant to the work being undertaken on the sub-strategic nuclear weapon and to any future for the WE177 freefall bomb. That work is now at an advanced stage and I would expect to report to the House on conclusions about the sub-strategic nuclear dimension in the relatively near future.

Departmental Land

4. **Mr. Simon Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list by English local authority *(a)* the extent of land held by his Department and *(b)* the amount or proportion of such land (i) in respect of which agreement on sale has been completed and (ii) it is proposed to sell by the end of 1993.

Mr. Hanley: The total area of land held by the MOD in England on 1 April 1993 was 194,541 hectares, of which some 850 hectares has been, or is expected to be, sold in 1993. I am sure that the hon. Gentleman will understand, as he asked for a breakdown for each local authority, that it would take me the rest of the day to give a full answer. I have, therefore, taken the opportunity to put the figures, by county, in the Library of the House.

Mr. Hughes: I am grateful to the Minister and I look forward to reading the figures. A parliamentary answer from the Minister last week showed that in the past four years the MOD's land holdings have increased by 1,242 hectares. There is enormous concern that the review of land holdings is not happening quickly enough. Counties such as Hampshire and adjacent counties in the south of England would benefit greatly if the land were released, thereby creating jobs and homes and allowing development to occur. It would also save the green belt and compensate for some of the jobs that are being lost in the defence-related industries.

Mr. Hanley: The hon. Gentleman makes a fair point. Every year we have to look at what land we need and take into account the draw back of battalions from Germany and how to house and train them. The purchase of land is, therefore, a fluid issue. It is matched by land sales, because we are deeply concerned about the taxpayers' interests, so we have to ensure that when land that is not in use becomes available for sale it is sold at the best price.

This year, we will be selling £68 million worth of land, and selling 2,050 married quarters and making 200 sales of houses to civilian tenants.

Mr. Wilkinson: My hon. Friend rightly refers to bringing British troops back from Germany. In that connection, will he please answer questions in future in acres, not hectares, so that we can better understand what he means? Will he recognise that the Russians have only 68,000 troops in the eastern part of Germany and that, we hope, by August of next year they will all be out? Would it not be wise to make land available in the United Kingdom for the eventual return of all British forces?

Mr. Hanley: My hon. Friend's latter point must certainly be kept under consideration, because it is important. As for his former point, there are 2·2 acres in each hectare. I know that there is a lot of nostalgia about these things in the House—my hon. Friend can use any measurements that he chooses.

Expenditure

6. **Mr. Patrick Thompson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the current share of gross domestic product spent on defence; and what is the comparable figure for other North Atlantic Treaty Organisation countries.

Mr. Rifkind: United Kingdom defence expenditure in 1992 was some 4·1 per cent. of GDP, but is expected to reduce to 3·2 per cent. by 1995-96. Figures giving defence expenditure for other NATO countries as a proportion of GDP are included in the "Statement on the Defence Estimates 1993" on page 76. These range from 1·2 per cent. for Luxembourg to 5·5 per cent. for Greece.

Mr. Thompson: I thank my right hon. and learned Friend for that detailed reply. Will he note my concern, and that of many of my constituents, that defence expenditure, as a percentage of GDP, is falling significantly at a time when, as I believe, many threats to our national security remain in prospect? Will he confirm, in particular, that the reserves remain a vital component of our defence forces? Will he pay tribute to those serving in Bosnia; will he offer encouragement and further resources to the men and women in Norfolk and elsewhere who give up their time to train and to serve the community so excellently in this way?

Mr. Rifkind: Defence expenditure is falling in the United Kingdom. It is also falling at a far faster rate in some countries of the former Warsaw pact, particularly Russia. As for the reserves, I am happy to confirm the inviolable role that they play. My hon. Friend will have welcomed our announcement some weeks ago that in future the reserves will have the opportunity to carry out operational work in peacetime, in the format that we indicated during the recent defence debate.

Mr. Cohen: Will the Secretary of State confirm the figures of Malcolm Chambers of the university of Bradford, given in the July edition of "Parliamentary Brief"? He said that between 1988 and 1992, defence spending fell far more slowly in the United Kingdom than in our allied countries, and that we now spend 74 per cent. more than our western European allies. Is not that an example of the Government's overspending on militarism, and a lost opportunity to gain a proper peace dividend?

Mr. Rifkind: No; it is another example of the hon. Gentleman's muddled thinking. If he wants to examine the reality of the situation, he will find that Britain, France and Germany, in the past year, spent almost exactly the same amount on their defence forces. That is a far more accurate reflection of the security and defence interests of the most prominent members of the NATO alliance in Europe.

Dame Peggy Fenner: Does my right hon. and learned Friend recognise that the great naval base at Chatham had a very early peace dividend when, in the early 1980s, it lost 7,000 job opportunities at one fell swoop? Will my right hon. and learned Friend consider the centuries-old connection between Chatham and the Royal Navy and not close HMS Wildfire, and allow us to keep the RNVR as a last connection with our great naval tradition?

Mr. Rifkind: I fully understand the concerns behind my hon. Friend's question. As she is aware, the proposals on the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and the Royal Naval Auxiliary Service are currently out to consultation. We will look very carefully at representations from Chatham and from any other part of the country that is affected by the proposals.

Mr. George: Defence expenditure in 1974-79 averaged 4·9 per cent. of GDP. Now it is 4·1 per cent. and is falling to 3·2 per cent. If current trends continue, does not the Secretary of State run the distinct risk of having his conventional defence policy unanimously approved by a Labour party conference?

Mr. Rifkind: I think that the hon. Gentleman can take some comfort from the fact that he will feel distinctly uncomfortable when he attends Labour party conferences. Indeed, his own Front Benchers, desperate as they are to try to appear respectable on defence matters, constantly come up against the massed ranks of the Labour party —if that is not an inaccurate expression—who still believe that there should be £6 billion worth of cuts in our defence expenditure, with all the consequences that that would have for the armed forces.

Housing

7. **Mr. Moss:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he is making to improve the quality of housing for the armed forces; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The three services have continuing programmes for the repair and modernisation of their housing stock.

Mr. Moss: Does my hon. Friend share my concern at the recent reports of unsatisfactory handovers and takeovers of service married quarters, which causes anxiety to the wives and families involved and has a serious effect on service morale generally? Does my hon. Friend agree that there are no insurmountable difficulties in transferring MOD housing stock to the private sector? If that were to happen, would not tenants get a much better deal?

Mr. Hanley: Naturally, this is a matter which should cause serious concern because of the social implications for those who work in the forces. In recent years, great progress has been made in developing imaginative schemes to help serving personnel and their families to inhabit their homes and to take over their homes when they leave the forces.

The Ministry of Defence is working out on the concept of the new housing trust that was announced last year. That will offer exciting opportunities to improve the quality of life of our service men and women and their families. It would help the House if I put an explanatory note in the Library of the House to show the progress of the new housing trust in the private sector.

Mr. Frank Cook: As the Government are so keen to support the principles of market testing, will the Minister

undertake to consult service families in Cyprus, who are suffering a colossal level of condensation for three quarters of the year? Will he also consult families at Tidworth, who are currently accommodated in hovels—I used the word advisedly—and can hear the weather forecast being broadcast on small pocket transistor radios four doors away?

The Minister says that he is putting 2,050 married quarters on the market this year. Will they be at the top or the bottom end of the market? Will our service men and women be compelled to go on living in dog kennels?

Mr. Hanley: The hon. Gentleman is absolutely right to raise the problem of sub-standard housing for service personnel wherever it exists. It is because of that problem that a continuing programme is in operation in all three services.

I am aware of the housing problem in Cyprus to which the hon. Gentleman specifically referred. Some 50 per cent. of those properties belong to the Ministry; 50 per cent. are tenanted outside. I know that dissatisfaction exists, and my noble Friend Lord Cranborne, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, is examining the position. I will ask him to examine the Tidworth case as well. I also take on board the hon. Gentleman's final point.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: Will my hon. Friend give urgent consideration to Ministry of Defence housing stock? While bearing in mind the need to maintain available housing stock to which to repatriate our troops, and to improve its quality, will he also consider whether surplus stock could be sold off—particularly the surplus stock at RAF Rissington in my constituency?

Mr. Hanley: My hon. Friend is right: any surplus stock should be sold off. He should remember, however, that in March 1993 9,166 quarters were vacant, out of a total stock of some 71,000. Felexibility is needed, because of the movement of troops and other parts of the services—for instance, back from Germany and around the United Kingdom. We cannot sell every empty house; that simply is not possible.

Railway Freight

8. **Mr. Grocott:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to encourage his Department to use the railways for the carriage of freight.

Mr. Hanley: My Department uses the most convenient and cost-effective methods to transport freight, including railways, but has no plans specifically to favour the use of rail over any other method of transport.

Mr. Grocott: The facts do not square with the Minister's answer. Can he confirm that, when the Government came to power, 38 Ministry of Defence depots has rail links with the main line? They have been progressively closed, however, and now only 21 are left. One of the closures was at Donington, in my constituency. Is it not ridiculous that, while the Department of Transport argues that freight should be transferred from road to rail, the Ministry of Defence pursues a clear and determined policy of transferring it from rail to road?

Mr. Hanley: I am well aware of the hon. Gentleman's constituency point. He may take some comfort from the fact that a £10 million, two-year contract between the MOD and British Rail has recently been extended by a further year, to next June. Moreover, we use rail whenever it is sensible, practicable and economical to do so.

The hon. Gentleman should consider British Rail's freight transport policy, as it has changed its practices, which makes freight transport difficult, especially when an entire train has to be hired, rather than one or two carriages.

Deaths and Injuries (Northern Ireland)

9. **Mrs. Ann Winterton:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service men have been killed or injured in the last 10 years while stationed in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Rifkind: In the 10-year period up to 31 December 1992, 145 service men were murdered in terrorist-related incidents in Northern Ireland; a further 1,573 were injured.

Mrs. Winterton: Does my right hon. and learned Friend accept that soldiers in Northern Ireland must make rapid, life-or-death decisions in extremely difficult and dangerous circumstances? Inevitably, mistakes occur from time to time. Does my right hon. and learned Friend agree that, when a genuine mistake is made, soldiers should not be subject to the threat of criminal proceedings? Will he and his colleagues examine the present law and ensure that soldiers fighting the brutal Irish Republican Army do not do so with one hand tied behind their backs?

Mr. Rifkind: My hon. Friend raises an important point. There can be no doubting the courage and gallantry of so many soldiers in Northern Ireland. In 1992 alone, 356 awards were given for gallantry or meritorious conduct in Northern Ireland.

There have been occasions when individual soldiers have been charged with criminal offences. These are always difficult and sensitive issues, but I think that my hon. Friend would be the first to agree that our armed forces must operate under the same law of the land as the rest of the British public. It is for the courts to decide any case where a person, whether a civilian or a soldier, has broken the law of the land. The Army would be the first to insist that that should continue to be the case.

Mr. John D. Taylor: As many soldiers have been tragically killed along the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland—including, regrettably, another one this week—is the Secretary of State surprised at the astonishment felt in Northern Ireland at his statement last week that there is now great co-operation between the security forces on both sides of the border? If he is correct, when the British forces are under attack across the border, why do the Irish Army still refuse to speak or communicate with the British Army?

Mr. Rifkind: The remark that I made was that co-operation between the British and Irish Governments on battling against the Irish terrorist menace is better than it has ever been in the past. That is something about which the right hon. Gentleman will not disagree. The fact that he may point out, quite correctly, that there is still considerable scope for further progress is something on which we both can heartily agree.

Mr. Cyril D. Townsend: My right hon. and learned Friend knows well the determination of the British Army to eradicate terrorism. What talks is he having with the Northern Ireland Office to try to reduce the size of the British Army in Northern Ireland to its level of a few years ago? Will he insist that the British Army remains in support of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and locally raised defence forces in Northern Ireland?

Mr. Rifkind: The size of the Army contribution to Northern Ireland must depend on security considerations and on security considerations alone. I have no doubt that the defence of territory of the United Kingdom and its citizens must continue to be the first call on Her Majesty's armed forces. We will continue to discuss with the Northern Ireland Office whether there are ways of improving the use that is made of our armed forces in order to ensure that they, in co-operation with the RUC, can be as effective as possible in the battle against terrorism.

Defence Procurement

10. **Mr. Roy Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with his United States counterpart concerning future defence procurement.

Mr. Aitken: My right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State met United States Defence Secretary Mr. Les Aspin in April and May. They had wide-ranging discussions on defence matters.

Mr. Hughes: I draw the Minister's attention to the clear message coming from the United States that Governments should do more to assist the defence industry to diversify. Many defence establishments are being closed or run down and people are being put out of work. Market forces alone will not provide the new jobs. There is a need for active Government intervention. Does he accept that simple message coming from across the other side of the Atlantic?

Mr. Aitken: I certainly do not accept the message coming from the other side of the House on that matter. The hon. Gentleman praises the American announcements, but if he looked more closely at them he would see that they have been greeted by a great deal of quite knowledgeable criticism. In particular, I draw his attention to a recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* headed "The False Promise of Defence Conversion". It contained a great line from a senior defence official saying that the programme so far had been "unblemished by success." We should like to see a much more credible programme before a penny of taxpayers' money is put into it.

Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith: My hon. Friend has taken a number of important initiatives to let British industry know about the future defence needs of the country and the part that it can play. I congratulate him on that. Is he aware that, during the past few years, defence procurement as a proportion of our arms budget has fallen, and that if we are to have a smaller but meaner, tougher and better equipped Army, it is necessary for that trend to be reversed?

Mr. Aitken: I am grateful for my hon. Friend's point. I should make it clear that the defence equipment budget remains, by any standards, a substantial one. In the current year, we expect to spend just over £9 billion, or 39 per cent. of the defence budget, on it. In view of the new strategic and security situation, that is a realistic proportion.

Mr. Menzies Campbell: In the matter of defence procurement, is not the best way ahead to be found in the memorandum of understanding signed last week by the United Kingdom, France and Italy for the development and production of an anti-air warfare frigate to replace the type 42? Are not such procurement decisions important steps towards the common defence policy that the Maastricht treaty envisages?

Mr. Aitken: We believe that that project is the right one. That is why we signed the memorandum of understanding. However, it is a most acrobatic leap, which only a dedicated Liberal federalist could make, from a simple procurement project to a common European defence policy. That is going a long and dramatic way, and I cannot go down the same road.

Senior Officers

11. **Mr. Anthony Coombs:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the current numbers of Royal Air Force officers of air rank, Army officers of general rank and Royal Navy officers of equivalent rank; and what were the comparable figures for 1988.

Mr. Hanley: The number of two-star appointments in the Royal Navy at 1 April 1988 was 60 and at 1 April 1993 was 51. The equivalent figures for the Army are 83 and 77, and for the RAF 60 and 56. These figures include officers in NATO appointments, on training courses and on terminal leave.

Mr. Coombs: Given the significant reductions in numbers that have taken place in service personnel over the past five years, does my hon. Friend agree that it is important for service morale that any future reductions are made on a proportional basis between senior and other ranks? What plans does he have up to 1995 to ensure that that principle is adhered to?

Mr. Hanley: My hon. Friend is right. The number of service posts at two-star level and above has already been reduced by 15 per cent. since 1990, and by 1995 that figure will have risen to 24 per cent. For all of the forces overall —in other words, for all ranks—the figure between 1990 and 1995 will be 22 per cent. For their part, the Government have, over the same time scale, reduced the number of serving Ministers at the Ministry of Defence from four to three—a reduction of 25 per cent. The Opposition's policy is unclear.

Dr. Reid: Can the Minister explain why the Ministry of Defence is about to spend £2·5 million to recruit soldiers immediately after putting thousands of soldiers out of work under "Options for Change"? Is it not bad enough that we should be building submarines to sell them and refurbishing tanks to get rid of them without spending millions of pounds more of taxpayers' money to replace soldiers who have been made redundant? For all his excuses about balance of age and rank, has he not merely got his sums wrong? While I am on that subject, perhaps

I should inform him that, with all its collective wisdom, the Ministry of Defence is still unable to figure out how many acres there are in a hectare: it is not 2·2, but 2·471.

Mr. Hanley: The hon. Gentleman's knowledge of European affairs is clearly deeper than mine and I am grateful for the lesson. It is nice that he can teach me that, at least. As to the hon. Gentleman's other point, he must know that every part of the armed services needs new people of varying ages, qualities and ranks. We need a continuing review of our recruitment. Therefore, what he says is quite wrong. Furthermore, it is vital that we keep equipment tailored to meet the threats.

Mr. Ian Taylor: Will my hon. Friend accept that the shrinkage of the armed services under the "Options for Change" package has been widely understood, although there has been some detailed resistance? Are not the most important factors in ensuring that the morale of the armed forces is kept up and that they are dedicated to the activities to which they are directed an exact understanding of the strategic responsibilities that our forces are asked to undertake and a proper appreciation among the forces of the various threats that may come from nuclear proliferation causing the use of our rapid reaction forces?

Mr. Hanley: My hon. Friend is absolutely right. If people were to dwell upon his words, they would find that they contain great wisdom.

Redundancies

13. **Mr. Janner:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the armed forces were made redundant in 1992; and how many he expects to be made redundant in 1993.

Mr. Hanley: In 1992-93, 3,957 people left the armed forces on redundancy terms, of whom 95 per cent. were volunteers. In 1993-94, 8,482 people will leave on redundancy terms, of whom 91 per cent. will be volunteers. Redundancy, restrictions on recruitment and normal early retirement or natural wastage are all being used to achieve the planned rundown in armed forces manpower which began in 1991. The Army will shortly be asking for further volunteers.

Mr. Janner: Will the Minister assure the House that he has consulted the Secretary of State for Employment before making redundancies on such a scale when, even on the Government's figures, there are nearly 3 million people unemployed? Will he please listen again to his hon. Friend the Member for Harborough (Mr. Garnier) and reconsider the proposed relocation of the Army records office from Leicestershire to Glasgow, which will cause nearly 200 redundancies in and around our constituencies if it takes place?

Mr. Hanley: If the Army personnel office were to move to Glasgow, there would be considerable joy among people on the unemployment registers in Glasgow. We are in constant touch with the Secretary of State for Employment. However, we must not run our armed forces on the basis of the social conditions outside, but on that of the threat that they have to meet.

PRIME MINISTER

Engagements

Q1. **Mr. Simon Coombs:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 20 July.

The Prime Minister (Mr. John Major): This morning, I had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in the House, I shall be having further meetings later today.

Mr. Coombs: Will my right hon. Friend confirm that today's report from the Confederation of British Industry, showing the fastest increase in retail sales for three years, is clear evidence of the recovery that is taking place in our economy? Are not those figures the results of an economic policy that is based on low inflation, low interest rates and falling unemployment?

The Prime Minister: It is a very encouraging report, and the sixth successive increase that retailers have reported. In the past week, we have seen inflation down, unemployment down, manufacturing up and now retail sales up. We have an excellent opportunity to build the lasting recovery that we all wish to see. I do not propose to put that at risk by burdening business with the extra costs that we have spent the past 14 years getting rid of.

Mr. John Smith: Does the Prime Minister accept the opinion expressed by the great constitutional expert, Professor Dicey—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. These interruptions use very valuable time.

Mr. Smith: I had thought that at least some of the hon. Gentleman and hon. Ladies on the Conservative Benches might have heard of him. Does the Prime Minister accept his opinion that

"the one essential principle of the constitution is obedience by all persons to the deliberately expressed will of House of Commons"?

The Prime Minister: By some time this evening, the European Communities (Amendment) Bill will have passed the Lords and Commons and will have Royal Assent. That is clearly the will of the House. Why is the right hon. and learned Gentleman seeking to obstruct it?

Mr. Smith *rose—[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. The House will come to order. There is a great deal of nonsense going on. *[Interruption.]* I shall remove some hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Smith: The right hon. Gentleman has answered a question that was not asked. It is a simple principle: does the Prime Minister accept the will of the House of Commons on whatever subject it is expressed? Can he say yes or no?

The Prime Minister: I might equally ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman—as I just did—exactly the same question, because the clearest possible way to express the will of the House is to pass an Act of Parliament, which will have been done with the Queen's Assent ratified by the close of business today. I repeat to the right hon. and learned Gentleman: after that Act has received Royal Assent, why is he seeking to obstruct it?

Mr. Smith: Does the Prime Minister not understand that the question before the House on Thursday night is required by the very Bill to which he has referred? Will he tell us whether the Government will accept the decision of the House whatever it is?

The Prime Minister: The right hon. and learned Gentleman knows that the House does not support the social chapter. The House genuinely wants the treaty that I signed, and I expect the House to reflect its genuine will in Thursday's debate.

Mr. John Marshall: Is my right hon. Friend aware that Hendon school in my constituency was one of the first schools to become grant maintained? Is he further aware that it is now heavily oversubscribed, and does he agree that what is good for Hendon is good for the country?

The Prime Minister: I think that up and down the country people have indicated that they are in favour of the principle of grant-maintained schools, which have shown that they are very successful. We believe that that choice should be available.

Mr. Ashdown: I understand why the Prime Minister will want time to study in full the Sheehy report on the police, but will he at least dispose of one of its recommendations now? Does he really believe that the battle against crime will be assisted by cutting our already undermanned police force by a further 3,000 as Sheehy recommends?

The Prime Minister: With respect to the right hon. Gentleman, he has misread the report. Sheehy does not recommend that. The Sheehy report is independent. We are examining it, and when we have examined it and consulted on it, we will reach conclusions.

Mr. Burns: Will my right hon. Friend join me in congratulating the Ministry of Defence on placing more than 90 per cent. of its defence procurement requirements with British companies to protect British jobs and British expertise? Will he please use his considerable negotiating skills to impress on the American Department of Defence that it is unacceptable that British companies are stopped by Acts of Congress from competing in the American market for the supply of items such as image intensifiers which are produced in Chelmsford, thus causing unemployment in a company whose product is the best in the country?

The Prime Minister: We believe in free trade and an open market in this as in other things.

Q2. **Mr. Roy Hughes:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 20 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Hughes: Does the Prime Minister recall his aim of a nation at ease with itself? His Government are imposing 17·5 per cent. VAT on domestic fuel and attacking those who are on invalidity benefit, and now there is a cloud over state pensions. How does he reconcile that contradiction, as a nation can never be at ease with itself when there are such attacks on the underprivileged in society? I suggest that it might have something to do with his family's circus background—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. This is Prime Minister's Question Time.

Mr. Hughes: I suggest that at an early age the Prime Minister was taught to stand on his head—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. As I have said, this is Prime Minister's Question Time; it is not an Adjournment debate.

The Prime Minister: I am afraid that I did not hear the concluding words of the hon. Gentleman's speech, but I heard the early part of it. He clearly neglected to mention that last week it was perfectly clear that VAT on fuel was also the policy of the official Opposition and the Liberal party. The official Opposition are still canvassing that. He also neglected in his catalogue many measures that have been taken to help people who are disadvantaged and to reduce tax levels for people on low incomes. Perhaps he should take a more rounded view.

Q3. **Sir Roger Moate:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 20 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Sir Roger Moate: Is my right hon. Friend aware that some of us are very much opposed to the Maastricht treaty, but still believe that he scored a great personal and national triumph when he secured the opt-outs from the single currency and from the social chapter so beloved of the Labour party? Quite apart from the costs to industry and the loss of jobs, does he agree that the social chapter would reintroduce the corporatism that did such damage to Britain in the 1970s and before? Will he confirm that he has no intention of ratifying a treaty which contains the social chapter?

The Prime Minister: I am well aware of my hon. Friend's long-standing views on the European Community and his disapproval of much of the Maastricht treaty. While I do not share his views, I respect the strength and consistency of his feelings. I entirely agree with him about the damage done by the social chapter. It is an unemployment charter which will destroy our future prosperity. It will prevent the creation of jobs. It is a socialist charter and we want nothing of it.

Mr. Hume: In the light of the clear evidence that Lord Tebbit publicly encourages terrorism, which emerged yesterday when he spoke on television advising loyalist paramilitaries in Belfast that if they wanted to achieve their objectives they should bomb Dublin, and when last evening those same paramilitaries bombed the homes of my hon. Friend the Member for Belfast, West (Dr. Hendron) and two leading members of our party, will the Prime Minister now ask the Home Secretary to implement Government policy, issue an exclusion order against Lord Tebbit and send him to Northern Ireland?

The Prime Minister: I think that the whole House knows my right hon. and noble Friend very well. He has suffered violently at the hands of terrorists. All his political life he has been a vigorous opponent of terrorism. I may not share his every view, but I believe passionately that he is one of the strongest opponents of terrorism this House has seen now or at any stage in the past.

Mr. Wells: Will my right hon. Friend take some time to read the leader in the *Evening Standard* last week which

ascribed to his leadership the low inflation, low interest rates and low unit wage costs which are leading Britain out of unemployment and into prosperity?

The Prime Minister: As my hon. Friend knows, I believe that our prosperity must be based on a low-inflation economy. It has not been easy to achieve; there have been many sacrifices made by many people and I repeatedly acknowledge that, but we have the lowest inflation rate for 29 years. We need to sustain it and build growth on that low inflation.

Q4. **Mr. Jon Owen Jones:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 20 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Jones: Did the Prime Minister find time to see last night's "Panorama" programme? If he did, he will have seen disturbing evidence suggesting that dental equipment can transmit the AIDS virus and that in America strong evidence suggests that it has already done so in some cases, and perhaps in many. As *The Lancet* states that more than 75 per cent. of all dentists in Britain do not routinely autoclave their equipment between patients, is it not time that we regulated and inspected our dentists in order to protect our dental reputation and our citizens when they go to the dentist?

The Prime Minister: The straightforward answer is no, I did not see the "Panorama" programme last night; nor has the hon. Gentleman's point been put to me previously. I have no doubt that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health will have heard about the programme and will be examining its findings.

Common Agricultural Policy

Q5. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will raise at the next meeting of the European Council the impact of the 1993 reforms of the common agricultural policy.

The Prime Minister: I have no plans to do so.

Sir Teddy Taylor: As Sir Simon Gourlay, the former head of the National Farmers Union, has condemned the common agricultural policy reforms as "terminal insanity with staggering costs and red tape", as common agricultural policy spending next year will be £29 billion instead of the £23 billion last year, as the mountain of cereals has broken all previous records, and as the average family is now spending an extra £20 a week on their food, might it be a possible compromise in a difficult week if the Government were to decide to postpone further transfers of sovereignty to Brussels until the common agricultural policy was scrapped or until individual member states could be excluded from it?

The Prime Minister: As my hon. Friend is a great expert on the European Community, he will know that breaking up the common agricultural policy would be incompatible with the treaty of Rome and with the completion of the single market. But the Government do believe that the common agricultural policy should reflect to a greater extent than at present the needs of the market, the interests of the taxpayer and the dual role of farmers as food producers and custodians of the countryside. In pursuing those objectives, of course we will listen to what Sir Simon Gourlay and many others have to say.

Engagements

Q6. **Mr. Lewis:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 20 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Lewis: Will the Prime Minister take this opportunity to reinforce statements that he has made in the past that he will not introduce VAT on children's shoes and clothing and other zero-rated essentials?

The Prime Minister: When the Leader of the Opposition was asked about his tax proposals some time ago, he said very clearly:

"Most Chancellors won't tell you that. If you ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what will be the range and bands . . . in his tax Budget he will say, 'Wait until the Budget'."

That was the right hon. and learned Gentleman's advice—the only wise advice that he has ever given the House.

Points of Order

3.31 pm

Mrs. Maria Fyfe (Glasgow, Maryhill): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Have you noticed that, yet again, the Scottish Office has dodged its responsibility to report directly to the Chamber, and that the Minister with responsibility for Scottish housing has instead notified the publication today of the long-awaited Scottish house condition survey by means of a written answer in yesterday's *Official Report*?

Will you look into the number of occasions on which Scottish Office Ministers have used that device to avoid criticism, in this case for the shocking extent of dampness in Scottish housing, which is causing widespread illness among our children, and consider how to put a stop to that abuse of our country's democratic proceedings?

Madam Speaker: The hon. Lady raises a point of order with me, but, as she knows, it is for the Minister to determine whether to make a statement orally or by means of a written answer. In either case, the information that is provided is available to the House.

Mr. Tony Benn (Chesterfield): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I seek your guidance. I sent you a message this morning about a major matter of constitutional importance, and I should like to know whether it is appropriate and necessary to raise it now because of its urgency, or whether it will be in order for me to come back to it?

Madam Speaker: I should be grateful if the right hon. Gentleman would not raise it until I have had an opportunity to look at his long letter and communicate with him.

Mr. Michael Connarty (Falkirk, East): Further to the point of order, Madam Speaker, by my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Maryhill (Mrs. Fyfe). I have tried to find in the Library a copy of the house condition survey, only to be told that none is available and none is in the Vote Office. I have been told that it was posted out to Members through the normal post, and we shall be receiving it shortly.

How can we get a debate in the House on the fact that £2·5 billion has been identified as necessary for repairs to Scottish homes that are below tolerable conditions? It would appear that the Minister is not willing to give time. Is there any other device that we can use to create a debate on that matter?

Madam Speaker: We have Adjournment debates, a Consolidated Fund debate and various other debates coming up which might allow the hon. Gentleman to raise the matter.

Mr. Bruce Grocott (The Wrekin): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Will you confirm that Prime Minister's Question Time is central to the operation of our week—increasingly so, now that millions of people watch it on television? Is it not time to reaffirm the basic principle that the point of Prime Minister's Question Time is that it allows right hon. and hon. Members an opportunity to ask questions and the Prime Minister to answer them to the best of his abilities?

At least three times today—I am sure that *Hansard* will show that the number was higher—the Prime Minister's tactic on being asked a question was to respond by asking another question. Can the right hon. Gentleman be informed that, as long as he is Prime Minister, his responsibility is to attempt to answer questions, particularly when they are so fundamental to this country's constitution in reasserting the doctrine that Parliament and the decisions of Parliament are sovereign?

Madam Speaker: It is not for me to answer rhetorical questions. I have noticed in recent months that questions to the Prime Minister and to other Ministers are becoming very long. They remind me of Adjournment debates rather than questions. I hope that right hon. and hon. Members in all parts of the House will take that to heart and will put questions rather than make long comments that lead to debate.

Mr. D. N. Campbell-Savours (Workington): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. You will be aware that European Standing Committee A will tomorrow consider European Document No. COM(93)167—a report on the illegal use of hormones and other substances in meat production, which is a matter of public concern. That document was produced following an inquiry by the European Commission into widespread illegal use of such substances throughout the Community.

Last week the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster assured the House that Whitehall would be opened up. Yesterday, an Agriculture Minister assured me that all the documents relating to the Commission's inquiry in the United Kingdom would be made available to me before tomorrow's debate in Committee.

Following repeated telephone calls today to the private office of the Minister of Food, I am informed that the Cabinet Office has intervened to block the necessary documents being provided to me—in particular, a letter dated October 1991, which is critical to proper consideration of the matters in question by European Standing Committee A tomorrow.

Is it acceptable conduct for Ministers to assure Parliament and individual Members of Parliament that documents will be made available but then for the Cabinet Office to intervene to block their distribution? Would you care to rule on that, Madam Speaker?

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman must take up that matter with Ministers again. Of course documents that are required for Committees should be available, and I shall certainly look into that matter.

Mr. David Winnick (Walsall, North): Successive Speakers have reaffirmed the long tradition of a separation between Parliament and the courts. We all have differing views on Maastricht, and some of them will be expressed on Thursday. However, is it not the case that the final decision on matters such as whether or not the treaty will be ratified by the United Kingdom must be taken by Parliament, not the courts?

Does not yesterday's High Court decision reflect on the authority and importance—particularly the authority—of this House? What authority do the courts have to decide matters that have always been decided by a majority vote of the House of Commons? We should have your ruling as soon as possible, Madam Speaker, so that we may clearly know that the authority that we have always believed this

House possesses, be it on major or minor issues, has not been changed and cannot be changed by the courts—unless the House decides otherwise.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman raises matters that are far too wide-ranging for me to make a ruling without having received any notice that he intended to raise them—and the hon. Gentleman gave me no such notice. As to Thursday's debate, the present situation is that no motion, and therefore no amendment, has yet been tabled. Later, I shall be aware of all the circumstances that affect the position. I will reserve my rulings until then.

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): When my hon. Friend the Member for The Wrekin (Mr. Grocott) asked you, Madam Speaker, about the Prime Minister refusing to answer questions at Question Time, because my hon. Friend wants the Prime Minister to get back to answering questions precisely, you proceeded to answer my hon. Friend's question, not in the manner that he wanted it to be answered but by answering a question that he had not asked. I have come to the conclusion that you have caught the disease that Major has got.

Madam Speaker: I hardly think that that is a point of order for me, but if hon. Members give me the opportunity to express an opinion, I am very willing to do so. I repeat that questions and answers in this House are far too long, and that questions that appear on the Order Paper are not reached because of the long questions and answers that precede them.

Mr. Paul Flynn (Newport, West): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I seek your guidance on the way that corrections are made to untrue parliamentary answers. An untrue answer was given to me on 23 June, when I was told that our troops had been informed of the dangers of depleted uranium. That answer was corrected on 13 July in a private letter.

At Question Time today the Minister of State for Defence Procurement said that I was informed the next day. Could untrue answers be corrected in *Hansard*? Could we urge Ministers not to double the offence by further untruths—by saying that an answer to an hon. Member was corrected the following day, when the correction was made three weeks later?

Madam Speaker: I noticed that the hon. Gentleman was anxious to put a question during Defence Questions. I think that he is now attempting to extend questions and answers on defence matters. Perhaps he will try at a later stage to table another question, so that the matter can be cleared up quickly.

BILL PRESENTED

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE TRUSTS (PUBLIC SERVICE)

Ms Glenda Jackson presented a Bill to clarify the duty of the Secretary of State to ensure that National Health Service trusts provide health services for health service patients; to make provision relating to services and accommodation provided by National Health Service trusts; to amend the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990, the National Health Service Act 1977 and the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978; and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First Time; and ordered to be read a Second time upon 23 July, and to be printed. [Bill 241.]

Young Offenders (Increase of Maximum Sentence)

3.41 pm

Mr. James Clappison (Hertsmere): I beg to move,

That leave be given to bring in a Bill to increase the maximum sentence of detention in a young offenders' institution for 15, 16 and 17 year olds from 12 months to two years; and for connected purposes.

I believe that this is a necessary Bill, which would bring about substantial improvements in the sentencing powers of the courts. Let me make it clear at the outset that I do not intend, by means of this Bill, to undermine the value of non-custodial sentences, or of short periods in custody. The Government have brought about substantial improvements in non-custodial sentences by means of the Criminal Justice Act 1991. I believe, however, that for the most serious types of offence—those which qualify for custody under the Criminal Justice Act—a higher maximum sentence should be made available.

Let me outline the present position. Since 1982, for 15 and 16-year-old young offenders, the sentence of dentention in a young offenders institution has been restricted to 12 months. Since the passing of the Criminal Justice Act, the restriction to 12 months' detention has been extended to 17-year-olds, too.

There is one exception, however: the powers of the court under section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. Under that section, the courts can impose a longer sentence of detention for the offence of murder or, under section 53(2), for very grave offences that carry a sentence of 14 years imprisonment or more on conviction —on indictment in the case of an adult.

The framework for sentencing young offenders in the 15, 16 and 17-year-old age group is not adequate. May I illustrate its inadequacy by referring to one aspect of criminal activity which, all too often these days, involves young offenders. I refer to offences involving motor vehicles, which can often cause great hardship and misery to our constituents, and which certainly need to be dealt with firmly by the courts.

The present levels of sentencing available to the courts are inadequate for those offences. It is impossible for the courts to impose a sentence of more than 12 months' detention for offences involving motor vehicles. In response to this serious problem, the Government rightly introduced the offence of aggravated vehicle-taking. That was a very desirable measure. It increased the sentence for that offence to a maximum of two years. But for 15, 16 and 17-year-olds, who are also often involved in that type of offence, the maximum sentence remains stuck at 12 months.

I can do no better than refer to the words of the Lord Chief Justice in considering this position when hearing the appeal of a 17-year-old against a sentence of 15 months' detention imposed under the law prior to the Criminal Justice Act 1991. The Lord Chief Justice's view—I pray in aid his words—was this:

"The appellant's driving was appallingly dangerous; it was a bad case. As the law stood when the appellant was sentenced, the sentence of 15 months' detention in a young offender institution could not be regarded as excessive. The Criminal Justice Act 1991 had since changed the law, so that the maximum sentence of detention in a young offender institution for a youth aged 17 was now 12 months. It was a remarkable situation that within one year Parliament had

[Mr. James Clappison]

passed an Act seemingly directed at punishing young offenders who commit this kind of offence, and then in another Act cut down the powers of the Court to administer the sort of punishment that that Act envisaged. Although Criminal Justice Act 1991 did not apply to the case before the court, since the court was laying down guidance for the future, the Court felt constrained by the fact that under the 1991 Act, the maximum sentence would have been 12 months' detention in a young offender institution. In those circumstances, the sentence would be reduced to 12 months' detention."

The situation is even worse than that in connection with other serious offences involving motor vehicles. A 12-month restriction applies to offences of dangerous driving and, even in the case of causing death by dangerous driving, the maximum sentence that the courts can impose on 15 to 17-year-olds is 12 months.

That is always a terrible type of offence, and the Government were absolutely right to raise the maximum sentence for adults from five to 10 years in the Criminal Justice Bill at present passing through Parliament. But for 15 to 17-year-olds, that sentence remains stuck at 12 months maximum. Furthermore, that sentence may often be reduced for a plea of guilty, and in any case an offender actually serves only half the sentence in custody. So six months maximum is spent in custody for that type of offence.

That is simply not adequate. I would not go to any one of my constituents, let alone the family of a victim, and seek to justify such a sentence—nor, I think, would any other hon. Member.

That is one illustration of the point that I seek to make, but I believe that there are others, and that the overall effect of this 12-month restriction is to leave the courts with an inadequate sentence framework for 15, 16 and 17-year-olds. It is time that, for the most serious offences and persistent offenders in that age group, a longer sentence was available.

I believe that the public will support this measure. They believe that, for serious and experienced young criminals —unhappily, there are some—the kid gloves need to come off, longer sentences than those at present available need to be passed by the courts, and the courts must be given those powers.

I strongly support all the other measures that the Government have suggested to improve the sentencing framework: the increases in maximum sentences for particular offences, the improvements to the Criminal Justice Act 1991, and the proposals for a sentence of secure training for 12 to 15-year-olds. I note that the maximum sentence under that proposal is two years.

There needs to be a longer sentence of two years for 15, 16 and 17-year-olds who commit serious offences, in order that the courts may have the appropriate powers to give punishments that fit the crime and have the necessary deterrent effect.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Clappison, Mr. Julian Brazier, Mr. David Lidington, Mr. John Sykes, Mr. Christopher Gill, Mr. Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, Mrs. Marion Roe, Mrs. Teresa Gorman, Mr. Barry Legg, Mr. Richard Page and Mr. Andrew Robathan.

YOUNG OFFENDERS (INCREASE OF MAXIMUM SENTENCE)

Mr. James Clappison accordingly presented a Bill to increase the maximum sentence of detention in a young offenders' institution for 15, 16 and 17-year-olds from 12 months to two years; and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time upon Friday, 23 July, and to be printed. [Bill 242.]

Orders of the Day

OPPOSITION DAY

[18TH ALLOTTED DAY]

Social Security and the Welfare State

Madam Speaker: I have to inform the House that I have selected the amendment standing in the name of the Prime Minister.

3.50 pm

Mr. Donald Dewar (Glasgow, Garscadden): I beg to move,

That this House condemns the social policies of this Government which have resulted in an ever widening gap between the rich and poor, and the destruction of opportunity, and which threaten the security and prosperity of countless individuals and whole communities; and calls upon Her Majesty's Government to abandon plans designed to dismantle the welfare state and to force the vulnerable to pay a high price for the Government's economic failure.

The House will be aware that the Government recently produced a survey, covering the period 1979 to 1990-91, of households on below-average incomes. It is a document of some interest. It shows, among other things, that the 10 per cent. of households with the lowest incomes, after housing costs, have seen their incomes fall by 14 per cent. in real terms during that period. That is a decline, not relatively but absolutely, into poverty.

It is interesting to note that that group's share of national income fell from 4 to 2·1 per cent. The numbers dependent on income support in Britain have risen dramatically—from 4·4 million in 1979 to an estimated 10·3 million in the current year, over one in six of the population.

I mention those facts not as a form of special pleading for the detached and deprived, or as representative of any unrepresentative interest, because there is a wider problem that affects a large section of the population. It is that households in the bottom 50 per cent. of the distribution have seen their share of total income drop from 32 to 25 per cent. under the Conservatives, while the share of the top 10 per cent. has risen from 21 to 27 per cent., by almost a third.

Exactly the same pattern emerges on taxation, direct and indirect. The top 10 per cent. paid 32 per cent. of their gross income in taxes of all kinds, while the bottom 10 per cent. paid 43 per cent. The rich get richer, while the majority fall further behind. The truth is that the fiscal traffic is moving in exactly the wrong direction.

I concede immediately that we do not get the kind of extremes that are to be found in some of the poorer and third-world countries—wealth amid squalor—but for all that, life chances, choices, opportunities and confidence for many people in our communities are being destroyed.

It is no good dismissing social evils, as Conservatives sometimes do, because exceptional individuals can escape. For many—I suspect that this applies not just to hon. Members on the Opposition Benches—anger over the statistics that I have quoted is based on the bitterness of constituency experience.

In my city of Glasgow, for example, 78·4 per cent. of local authority tenants are on housing benefit. That reflects not some fecklessness on their part but Government policy that has forced up rents—and then the Conservatives have the cheek to complain about the numbers receiving help.

In Strathclyde, which is half of Scotland, 28 per cent. of all primary school children receive free school meals, and 36 per cent. of all primary school children in that region —I stress that I am talking about half of Scotland— qualify for clothing grant. That pattern can be repeated in every part of the country. Many of our communities are horribly scarred by the problems of unemployment.

Mr. Jonathan Evans (Brecon and Radnor): I share the hon. Gentleman's concern about the large number of people on housing benefit. I remind him of some remarks of Patricia Hewitt, who yesterday said that there were some disincentives to people going back to work. Might not the operation of the housing benefit system be one of those disincentives, in the sense that people find that it is not worth their while seeking employment because they are receiving aid by way of housing benefit?

Mr. Dewar: I should be delighted if the hon. Gentleman were worried about the impact of the Government's policy. He might like to read the document on the growth of social security, on which I have no doubt he has been briefed by the Department. He will learn that the growth in the cost of housing benefit is one of three subjects picked out as being of particular concern.

To be fair—I want to be fair—the document also says that it is a direct reflection of the Government's policy of forcing up rents in the private and public sector. The hon. Gentleman is absolutely right to worry about the disincentive effects of the present system, a subject with which I shall deal later. He should recognise the truth of what I am saying, and should also worry—perhaps he already does but, if not, I certainly hope he will—about the fact not only that are we in this unfortunate postion but that the Government are introducing a raft of policies which will reinforce and worsen it.

I do not intend to spend a great deal of time on this issue, because the arguments are familiar, but anyone considering the impact of the introduction of value added tax on domestic fuel on low-wage families and pensioners, anyone considering the 300,000 people on low pay who will be brought into the taxation system by the freezing of personal allowances, and anyone considering the impact of a 1 per cent. increase in national insurance contributions—a tax designed to discriminate in favour of the wealthy—will know that we are reinforcing with an almost perverse determination the divisions that are already built in to our society.

On 4 March last year, during the election campaign, one of Scotland's leading newspapers, *The Herald*, which is based in Glasgow, carried an in-depth interview with the Prime Minister. It pointed out, very fairly, that many of the policies being followed by the Government were increasing poverty in our communities. The Prime Minister challenged that and asked for examples.

Homelessness was mentioned, and the Prime Minister said, "But there has always been homelessness." Poverty was suggested as another example, and the Prime Minister asked, "What poverty?" That will be remembered by everyone in my part of Scotland. It is also an explanation of why the trends to which I referred are being reinforced

[Mr. Dewar]

—we have a Prime Minister who, faced with the social realities, thinks it is adequate to answer, "What poverty?" and then give a leaden collection of excuses.

Mr. Peter Thurnham (Bolton, North-East): The hon. Gentleman was referring to the household survey, but is he not being selective? Is he not forgetting what it was like when the Labour party was in power? The survey shows that only half of the bottom 10 per cent. had a telephone in 1979, whereas now three quarters have a telephone. Half now have a car, and 60 per cent. a video. He is being selective, and the figures do not support his argument.

Mr. Dewar: No, I am not being selective. Apparently, the hon. Gentleman has been briefed by the defensive brigade. I have read the document with considerable care. As he will know, one of the defences offered by the Secretary of State for Social Security of the fact that the bottom 10 per cent. in terms of income distribution have seen their incomes fall by 14 per cent. in real terms after housing costs is that the figures are misleading because many new people in that group are self-employed.

By some chemistry, or with the magic of a good accountant, those people are able to return negative incomes to the taxman while enjoying a much higher standard of living than the average. That is perhaps one reason for the phenomenon to which the hon. Member for Bolton, North-East (Mr. Thurnham) refers, but it is a very odd explanation for the damning statistics that I have cited.

Of course I concede that the community's overall wealth and prosperity have increased, although not to such an extent that we can be complacent in relation to competitors. Almost uniqely in this age, however, the gap in Britain is widening. The gap between the highest and lowest paid is at its widest since 1886. If that is not a condemnation of what the Government have been doing, what is?

The Secretary of State for Social Security constantly tells us that we are engaged in a debate. I welcome that, and do not shirk that challenge. I am glad to question what is happening, but the debate should not be an invitation for the community or the Government to duck out of social commitments and responsibilities.

The Chief Secretary's review is, in a sense, an admission of failure. Whose fault is it that we are in such economic difficulties? It is a cause of endless argument.

The Secretary of State for Social Security (Mr. Peter Lilley): Can the hon. Gentleman name a single advanced country that is not reviewing the problems caused by the remorseless growth of social security spending?

Mr. Dewar: I shall come to that matter in a minute or two. [HON. MEMBERS: "Answer the question."] No. Let us look at our exact position, and we can then deal with that point.

Our present position is the departure point for the argument. We are undoubtedly in a financial crisis, and alibis have been coming forward in droves. The ex-Chancellor, the right hon. Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont), made an interesting personal statement in the House and blamed it all on Lord Lawson. Lord Lawson blamed Lady Thatcher. It took him 900 pages to do it, but he made a good case.

We have heard even more eccentric explanations. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury, who is unfortunately not present, said that it was all due to the yuppie revolution—the wheeler dealers in property of the 1980s, and the fast-move view that the best returns were to be found in trading financial assets. He went on to say that he now sadly recognised that all that was built on sand.

Everyone has someone to blame, which is particularly true of the Prime Minister, who blames everyone. I presume that, when he was Chancellor, he was merely obeying orders. He is now reduced to the most complete, but also the most desperate, legal defence: the refuge of every child in trouble, of merely saying "It wasn't me."

The problem—it is a real problem—is how to control the public sector borrowing requirement, which mysteriously inflated from a manageable, although not modest, election figure of £32 billion to a crisis-laden £50 billion-plus. I accept that the PSBR is too high, and recognise the need for a considered look at the DSS budget, but we must be satisfied that those who need help get it, and that the cash available is spent in the most sensible way. Above all, as a starting point we must ensure that the problem is in perspective.

We are helped in that matter—I pay tribute to the Secretary of State, because he has achieved one of his objectives. He published "The Growth of Social Security" at least ostensibly to ensure that the debate was well informed. I find it an extremely helpful document. Although it is helpful, it does not reveal the cataclysmic state of affairs in which the spin doctors and headline writers have invited us to believe.

There is always a featured figure, and in this case it was that the DSS budget would go up by £14 billion in real terms by the year 2000. That figure was prominent in the Department's press release, and I suppose that that is a triumph for the PR team. A PR team with the task of selling the Secretary of State for Social Security has a hard job, because of the product it is handling, but on that occasion it had some effect.

The test is that the percentage of GDP taken up by the social security budget is presently 12·3 per cent. The publication contains projections to the end of the century, the first of which, I freely concede, shows an increase in the percentage of GDP to 13·5 per cent. Naturally, that assumes that we continue to have 3 million unemployed and a low growth rate of some 2 per cent.

The second projection is of 2·25 million unemployed, which most of us would regard as less than a triumph, and a growth rate of 2·5 per cent. The percentage of GDP then remains stable. The third projection may be a little optimistic when we consider the Government's record, but other countries have managed to achieve it. It shows the GDP share dropping to 11·3 per cent.

Mr. Thomas Graham (Renfrew, West and Inverclyde): When my hon. Friend sums up, will he point out that none of those other countries had £100 billion from North sea oil? The Government squandered that to keep unemployment at its present high level, when they should have invested it in the country.

Mr. Dewar: My hon. Friend is right. That is a factor. No doubt there are special factors in every country. The Germans, for instance, have the problem of assimilating

the former East Germany, and that may be a negative factor. However, the British Government had the windfall of North sea oil, yet they still performed miserably.

The point that I am making is simple to those who have read what the document says about the growth of social security: if one makes anything other than the most gloomy assumptions, it is not true to say that social security spending is out of control.

Another piece of evidence with which the Secretary of State will no doubt be familiar—it was given to me late yesterday afternoon in a parliamentary answer—is the fact that this year, assuming a balanced national insurance fund that meets its outgoings from its income, without the 20 per cent. float from the Treasury, the Department reckons that the combined employee-employer contribution would be 22·6 per cent. On the assumption that present policies will continue, the estimate for the year 1999-2000 is that the figure will drop to 20·5 per cent.

In other words, we can afford present policies at a lower cost in terms of the percentage of incomes paid in contributions. That fact surely puts some of the more excitable statements into perspective. If we are to have a constructive debate, let us not assume a consensus about, or even significant evidence for, some of the more excitable suggestions that have been made.

The key is economic performance and the growth rate. I am not prepared to assume at the start of the debate that we shall continue the undistinguished trudge of economic mediocrity that this country has managed so far, especially under the present Government, but perhaps for even longer. After 14 years of what we are told has been prudent management of our affairs by a party that believes that it is uniquely blessed with financial competence, where are we?

The other day, the Department of Trade and Industry offered in evidence to a Select Committee a list of 24 countries graded according to their GDP per head. We came 18th out of 24. Yes, we beat Turkey and Greece, and we managed to edge out Ireland on the tape. But we were beaten by everyone else; even Italy was showing us a clean pair of heels. And that is after 14 years of successful magic by Conservative Ministers.

In the Secretary of State's Mais lecture—he will not be surprised to hear that I shall say more about that shortly—he said that spending in Sweden on public protection was

"the drag anchor that made it one of the slowest growing economies in Western Europe".

All I can say is that, according to the DTI, Sweden is still comfortably taking us to the cleaners.

Mr. Charles Hendry (High Peak): The hon. Gentleman said that we came 18th in a list of 24. Will he tell the House whether he thinks that we would be higher or lower in that list if we adopted the social chapter?

Mr. Dewar: I believe that, although it may be comforting in the short term for one or two people with primitive Conservative views, it is a dangerous heresy to assume that it is impossible to have social protection for our work force and decent conditions for our people as well as economic success. I do not believe that, in order to be economically successful, life has to be nasty, brutish and short, although that seems to be the underlying principle on which people such as the hon. Member for High Peak (Mr. Hendry) proceed.

Mr. Andrew Rowe (Mid-Kent): It is perfectly fair for the hon. Gentleman to remind us that we have been in power for 14 years. However, the time scale is interesting. It is not long since the dock labour scheme was finally abolished. The Labour party is struggling quite hard with the legacy of its trade union constitution, and such things take a great deal longer to shift than one might imagine.

Mr. Dewar: If the hon. Gentleman is going to explain the entire record of the Conservative Government by reference to the dock labour scheme, he will soon be in considerable difficulty, even in the fortress that he probably represents.

I want to be helpful to the Government. My case is that surely even they can do better. However, I know that confidence is in short supply. For example, in his Mansion house speech, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said:

"a degree of cautious optimism is far from foolhardy."

My goodness, that will put a spring in the step and set the pulses racing. Even the stuffed shirts and white ties must have been astonished that, in the Chancellor's 12-page speech, no page was spoiled by reference to anything so unpleasant as the unemployment rate. Having said that, the Chancellor surely would not accept the gloomy message of despair that low growth and high unemployment is to be a semi-permanent state in the country.

Let me move on to the debate itself, which has become somewhat chaotic. The headlines give an odd impression of the extraordinary volley of attack on single parents, which some of us found rather distasteful:

"Single Mothers Out Of Firing Line".

"It's U-Turn No. 6—Crackdown on single mums' benefits halted".

"Major Overrules Another Minister".

There have also been all sorts of headlines about pensions:

"Tory plan to axe state pensions for better-off".

"Lilley tries to calm pension fears".

"Lilley on defensive on pensions".

There is an enormous amount of misrepresentation and misunderstanding. I am unashamed that I do not always know what is happening in Government. Perhaps the Minister will be able to tell me what the Chancellor of the Exchequer meant when he was reported on the front page of the *Financial Times* on 13 July——

Mr. Hendry: The *Financial Times* is unreliable—it told people to vote Labour.

Mr. Dewar: The hon. Gentleman says from the Back Benches that the *Financial Times* is not reliable. There really is a rebel in the ranks.

The Chancellor was reported as saying:

"The reason why public spending is rising remorselessly is partly the aging population and partly the increasing take-up of benefits."

The article continued:

"The latter factor was a desirable thing, but had to be re-examined in the light of the public borrowing."

That is extraordinary. Did the Chancellor say what he meant?

Mr. Simon Burns (Chelmsford): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Dewar: I will give way to the hon. Gentleman in a moment, because perhaps he will tell me the answer.

Did the Chancellor say what he meant? Did he mean what he said? Are the Government really going to run a campaign against the take-up of benefits? I have written to ask the Chancellor, and I look forward to the reply. If the

[Mr. Dewar]

hon. Member for Chelmsford (Mr. Burns) is a keen young Parliamentary Private Secretary in the Treasury, or something important like that, I will gladly give way so that he can tell me the answer.

Mr. Burns: I must disappoint the hon. Gentleman, because I am not a keen young PPS in the Treasury. Are the views on pensions of his hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) an embarrassment to him?

Mr. Dewar: I may, on occasions, look embarrassed, but not at the moment. I agree with the basic premise on which my hon. Friend wrote his pamphlet—we want an effective and strengthened occupational pension sector that is properly regulated and that provides prosperity for those who participate in it. At the same time, we want to maintain—as my hon. Friend made clear—a state retirement pension scheme to which all contribute and all draw as an essential part of everyone's planning for retirement. On that philosophical basis, I totally agree.

Mr. Burns: And all the rest?

Mr. Dewar: I am not committed to all the detail in that document. It was a contribution to the debate. Of course, on the fundamental points, I have no quarrel with the areas that I have just outlined, which I have fairly summarised.

Let me ask about the Prime Minister in Tokyo. There were headlines as a result of what the Prime Minister said about the pensions nightmare. He said:

"The long-term trends were disastrous."

However, by the end of the century, which at least gives us some time to think, the cost of the basic state retirement pension is to increase from £25·5 billion to £25·8 billion in real terms—0·2 per cent. per annum. That is hardly a case for putting pensioners in the dock, as the Prime Minister tried to do today.

The Minister boasts about the rise in pensioner incomes. Of course I welcome that, but the Minister cannot take credit for it, because of his input on pension provision. There are 1·6 million pensioners still on income support, and every pensioner I know, including many experts, such as the actuaries Noble Lowndes and Partners Ltd., who published such figures recently, believe that the British pension is still at the bottom of the European league.

The one area in which the Prime Minister could have found it is in the growth in the state earnings-related pension scheme, which will rise by 14 per cent. in real terms by the end of the century. Surely not even the current Prime Minister can complain about paying out to people who have made prudent and proper provision for their retirement under such a scheme.

We are being misled in a wide range of areas, and the danger is that there will be an ill-considered conclusion that leads to an ill-defined and inappropriate package of cuts—an attempt to force vulnerable groups to contribute to a fund to bail out the Treasury for mistakes for which it was itself largely responsible.

May I move on to one or two points of importance? The first is what the Secretary of State for Social Security has been saying. I give him his full title, because in my view the objectionable nature of his theories is aggravated by the office he holds. He gave us an interesting lecture—the Mais lecture on 23 June—in which he advanced a new and harsh doctrine: do not argue that we cannot afford the present level of welfare spending because of our economic difficulties. He went on to argue that we shall never, and should never, afford the present level of spending, because a well developed welfare system is incompatible with economic success.

The Secretary of State went to Wales shortly afterwards, where no doubt he thought he would find a soulmate. The Secretary of State for Wales, proud of his new knowledge, may have been able to explain to the Secretary of State for Social Security how he got there. In any event, he went to Wales, and although I cannot obtain a text of his speech, he was widely reported as saying—this encapsulates the argument—that welfare spending at the present level throttles economic growth.

The Secretary of State may have been misrepresented, but I have read the Mais lecture, so I know that I have the thrust of it right. He lovingly spelled out his arguments. The Pacific rim was prayed in aid. It does not have well developed welfare services, which, we were told, is why it has been so successful. Perhaps Taiwan and Korea would put more emphasis on investment in new plant and machinery, in skills and in higher education, which makes even this Government's targets look ultimately inadequate and modest.

The Secretary of State went on to argue the secret of the success of job creation in the United States, which has out-performed Europe in the past 20 years, lay in the inadequacies of its welfare system. He instanced them. After all, he said, there is less generous unemployment benefit; there is no real equivalent of income support; and it is available to only a small group—ironically enough, single parents with dependent children. He went on to look admiringly at the right of American employers to hire and fire totally unfettered by the law.

That, we were invited to imagine, was the key to economic success. I think it is a digrace—I use the word in cold blood—that the man who is in charge of social security in this country has such a vision for the future of this nation. I wonder—it is, perhaps, a passing curiosity—whether he has considered the ultimate heresy in America of a minimum wage, and how on earth it can be so successful with a minimum wage.

When he talks about contracting out, has he considered why the Clinton Administration are desperately trying to solve the problems of a private insurance health service that is no longer serviceable? I accept neither his logic nor the politics of his position.

The other great cause, which I can mention only quickly in passing, came from what was hopefully described by those who took part as "brainstorming" at Chevening. The big idea is contracting out—contracting out of the state retirement pension and ultimately, we gather, from health and unemployment cover.

There are difficulties. We all know about the problems of exit control—the more people who contract out, the more today's income is reduced, while liabilities under the pension and benefit system remain unaffected. For the next 10 or 15 years at least—that will do fine for the sake of this argument—there will be an incompatibility between the long-term ideology of the Secretary of State and the short-term crisis management demands of the Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

As I have said before, and as the Minister knows, my objection is that, if we say to middle-income Britain, "Get

out of the health service, get out of unemployment cover and get out of all forms of pension provision," we are moving inexorably towards a two-tier system—a safety net provision, with all the implications of stigma that flow from it. We will be moving towards a world where the gear is ill divided and where applicants' applications for benefits will be a surrender and an admission of defeat in the eyes of a large part of the community.

I say to the Secretary of State that all this creates a good deal of alarm, and a great deal of despondency. I have sympathy for the pensioner who today watches the state retirement pension falling as a percentage of male average earnings from 22 per cent. in 1978-79 to 16·9 per cent. today, and which is projected in parliamentary answers to decline further to a mere 7 or 8 per cent. in 2045. I have particular sympathy for pensioners who are angry when that fact is not explained, and when the tie-in to the retail price index is paraded as a caring triumph.

I have doubts, which are shared well beyond the House, about a Government who have a prominent supporter who has characterised a single parent as a mother with six children by four different men who does not know which child is which. I worry when I listen to the Secretary of State wowing a party conference with a famous speech about women becoming pregnant to jump the housing queue, as though it were the fashion in our community to lie back and think of a council house in an unpopular area and of a life on income support. The truth is that only one in 25 single parents is a teenager while over 70 per cent. of one-parent families result from a breakdown in a long-term relationship.

I am concerned for those who receive invalidity benefit, who can be dismissed all too easily as scroungers and layabouts. Of course, if there is abuse, it ought to be stamped out, but there are genuine concerns about the apparent plans of the Government to bring the benefit into the tax system, to cut or restrict eligibility and to reduce the level of benefit.

I warn the Government that it will be hard on those who are genuinely struggling with the effects of ill health to contribute the £500 million that taxing invalidity benefit would produce. That would mean 900,000 people paying a higher tax bill of, on average, £500 a yar. It would mean also 200,000 people being brought into the tax system who have no benefit other than invalidity benefit.

I shall refer to some departmental papers that have reached the public domain that concern the government's proposed reform. Does reform mean that a 55-year old builder who has angina and is unable to walk on the flat for more than 200 yards before he has to stop because of chest pains should be disqualified from invalidity benefit? If that is a triumph of reform, I suppose that I am against reform. But I do not accept that it needs to take that shape. I believe that reform can be based on sensible social priorities and make an improvement in the system.

The Conservative party is keen to claim the family as its political property. I believe that it has done all it can to undermine the stability of family life—or perhaps its policies have done so unintentionally. Does unemployment add dignity to a family? Does an income below the household weekly average of £250 do anything for stability? Two thirds of British families are below that level. Does an increase in the number of children who are living in poverty do anything for the role of the family? That number has risen threefold under the Government. I say that with no pleasure, and I recognise that there are questions that must be asked and answered.

The Labour party does not want to defend the status quo as an act of faith. Too much is wrong with the benefit system as it operates today, and I could give many instances—for example, the position of women in the system, with millions working part-time for low wages who have no entitlement to national insurance benefits. The system does not recognise sufficiently the contribution that is made by many women in the home as carers and of course in the workplace.

The very existence of the Commission on Social Justice is a mark of our intent and seriousness of purpose. The commission is independent, and it does not make policy for the Labour party. I hope that its role will be to stimulate and innovate, and it has made a good start.

Unlike the Government's review, the commission recognises and expects that employment, unemployment and associated problems are major factors which are linked to poverty today. We have started to lay the foundations for reform—the equal worth of all citizens, the ability of a citizen to meet his basic needs, access to opportunities—by analysing the troubles that this country faces. Those principles are important and highly relevant to our country, where the gap between those who have and those who have not is constantly increasing.

The Labour party is committed to searching for solutions. We will look for change, but change does not mean the abandonment of principles. The Secretary of State may be surprised, but I agree that £6·6 million is more than any Government would want to spend on support for single parents. But that should not be because single parents are a marginal group who are beyond the pale, or because they have lost all priority in the system. It should be because of the tragedy that 70 per cent. of single parents are trapped on income support, when the vast majority of them want to earn and to be financially independent. How we achieve that, and how we emphasise affordable child care, training and job opportunities, is the test of how we should deal with the problem.

I believe that work is the key. There must be opportunity in our society. I was much taken by a comment in a recent pamphlet by the Commission on Social Justice:

> "Unemployment is not about why you lose your job, but about why you cannot get a new one".

It concluded:

> "Paid work for a fair wage is the most secure and stable way out of poverty."

I agree. So would 3 million other people.

I believe that the emphasis should be on lifting the restrictions and limitations imposed by the poverty trap and life on benefit. I want to break this unpleasant stalemate, and encourage and enable the many who are trapped in the system to gain financial independence. Why, when a married man loses his job, is the family often better off if his wife gives up her employment, which may be part-time, and joins him in the dole queue?

I believe that fraud and abuse should be eliminated whenever possible. There is a clear duty to do that fearlessly and impartially. I object to the exaggeration, machismo and posturing at party conferences, with the Secretary of State appearing as Action Man. Why is fraud such a problem after 14 years with the Tories in charge? My constituents are getting no answer to that question.

[Mr. Dewar]

I believe that occupational pensions make a major contribution to retirement. We look for early legislation based on the Goode committee report—it is patently necessary to increase the safeguards and to bring about a shift in favour of control by the beneficiaries. The present system demands that.

We believe that the basic state pension is a foundation on which all should be able to rely when planning their retirement. It should not be means-tested, certainly not on a grand scale by policies on contracting out designed to produce a walk-out by those schooled to think of a private purchase as better than, rather than complementary to, public provision.

We believe that the contributory principle should be honoured. It destroys confidence to know that Ministers have contemplated ratting on promises given to those who have paid over the years. Ministers have already done that on many occasions: the fixing of SERPS a few years ago, the disappearance of dependency additions for children in unemployment benefit——

Mr. Lilley: Is the hon. Gentleman disowning remarks by Patricia Hewitt of the Commission on Social Justice, made on the radio yesterday, to the effect that the commission is reconsidering the whole contributory principle and believes that it has led to absurd results?

Mr. Dewar: I have not read that quote—[HON. MEMBERS: "Ah!"] I am, however, glad that the right hon. Gentleman has mentioned it, because I do not think that a simple message has yet penetrated his head. [HON. MEMBERS: "Surely skull?"] I resisted the temptation, because I did not want to be offensive to the right hon. Gentleman.

He must recognise that, when I say that the Commission on Social Justice is independent, I mean that it is independent. So, although it may propose many things that we will want to adopt, there may be others that we will not want to adopt. We shall look at each recommendation on its merits. That may seem a remarkable fair-minded and independent way to proceed, and it may therefore be anathema to the political machinations of the right hon. Gentleman—but he must live with that.

Speaking of machinations and Machiavellian manoeuvres, I do not think there is a great deal of principle about a Minister who can cause a letter to be drafted to the Prime Minister saying that abating invalidity benefit at a rate of 50p in the pound above a given threshold raises difficult questions about the future of the contributory benefits system

"before we have fully thought through the direction that we want to take".

That certainly suggests that the right hon. Gentleman's constancy in defence of the contributory principle in public is not reflected in what is happening in private and in what may emerge from the desperate attempts to meet the Chief Secretary's targets for slaughter in the benefits system.

There is a fashionable heresy—one that many want to encourage—that there is no difference between the parties. I do not believe that that is true in the wider sense; I am certain it is not true of social policy, over which a major battle will be fought in the months that lie ahead. There is a real division between the parties.

I am not interested in reform based on the short-term dictates of the Treasury. We have a principled position, a clear view of the duty of the community to provide opportunity that allows the individual to flourish in a way that the unfettered market never will allow.

The Minister should talk to my constituents. I would not presume to judge the situation in St. Albans, but he can go to almost any large community in this country and talk to people who cannot buy into the marketplace—they could never get started up the financial ladder that would allow that. Such people have been deprived of educational opportunity; their talents have been lost to the nation because they have had to struggle with deprivation, a lack of income and the social pressures with which almost every Member of Parliament is familiar. I see it every day. I am ashamed of the record of all of us over the years, but I am more directly ashamed of a Government who, far from having struggled in vain, have not struggled at all.

We challenge the analysis that divides society into two thirds and one third: the syndrome of the underclass. We stand against the theory that those who are financially fortunate have no interest in helping those who are not. The truth is that two thirds of the families of this country have an income below the national average. For the great majority—I hope, for all—there is a common interest in acting together to raise standards and eliminate injustice. That fight is not being fought at the moment.

With today's weapons and tomorrow's vision, the Labour party will continue to struggle against want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness—the forces that still depress and destroy people. We must try, to the best of our ability, to liberate those people by providing them with opportunity and hope. We look forward to the challenge. With the support of the public, we will win where it matters most—at the ballot box.

4.30 pm

The Secretary of State for Social Security (Mr. Peter Lilley): I beg to move, to leave out from 'House' to the end of the motion, and to add instead thereof:

'supports the Government's approach to the reform of social security, which is designed to improve the system, protect the vulnerable and prevent spending outstripping the nation's ability to pay; and deplores the scaremongering tactics of the Opposition, who cause unnecessary alarm to the least well off, elderly and disabled people, yet fail to produce responsible alternative policies.'.

Several weeks ago, I called for a debate on the future of social security, and that call has been widely welcomed. I have already received a number of interesting contributions, and I particularly welcome those from individual members of the Opposition. The hon. Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett) has had some sensible things to say on single parenthood. The hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Field) has made some radical proposals on pensions. Even the Commission on Social Justice holds out the promise of constructive thinking, albeit postponed for another year.

I was delighted when I heard that the Opposition had chosen to spend a full day debating social security policy. I thought that at last we would hear some constructive proposals from Labour's official spokesman. Alas, my optimism got the better of my experience. What a disappointing speech we heard from the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar), what a wasted opportunity. He offered us not a single positive proposal.

He could not rise above his normal litany of sanctimonious humbug, tedentious statistics and scurrilous scares.

That is not just my verdict. Writing in *The Guardian* about the contribution by the hon. Member for Garscadden to the debate, Hugo Young said:

"Labour's instant responses to everything Mr. Lilley has begun to venture bear all the hallmarks of a party incapable of addressing a long term issue if there's an easy and destructive short term point to score."

The hon. Member for Garscadden has accepted that the public sector borrowing requirement is too high and that he needs to take a considered look at the Department of Social Security budget. Nothing that he has said today would avoid the path to higher spending and borrowing.

Yesterday, Labour's Commission on Social Justice produced its first interim report. It is the first time that any party has contracted out its policy preparation. As it is the Labour party's first venture into privatisation, the Government have a vested interest in its success, to vindicate our principles. Alas, I found its first report rather disappointing. I shall go back to see whether there is more to be gained from it, but on first reading I could not see one ounce of fresh thinking—only the old tedious obsession with equality, a preoccupation with attacking the wealthy rather than relieving need, a trawl of all the old leftish critiques of social policy and a shopping list with implied demands for extra spending worth billions of pounds. There is not a single explicit proposal for saving, and not even any clear recognition of the need to curb the remorseless growth of social security.

The report is keen on numbers. It contains four objectives, five principles, 10 propositions, but not a single concrete proposal.

Ms Angela Eagle (Wallasey): Does the Secretary of State really believe that the redistribution of income from the poor to the rich, which has been such a feature of his Government's period in office, is tedious?

Mr. Lilley: The hon. Lady should realise that almost every group in society has improved its well-being under the Government. For example, the income of an unemployed person with two children has gone up by 10 per cent. in real terms. Furthermore, the Social Security Select Committee believes that income support levels are now some 15 per cent. in real terms above the level that the previous Labour Government thought satisfactory when they were in power.

I am discussing the first interim report of Labour's Commission on Social Justice. I suppose that a commission including seven left-wing professors was bound to be a bit short on reality and long on rhetoric. Rhetoric without responsibility has been the privilege of zealots throughout the ages. The report is full of glib but meaningless phrases. My favourite is Gordon Borrie's assertion:

"We must stand in the future, and then work out how to get there."

I am not sure that that is quite a fair description of the shadow spokesman on social security. He stands in the past and still has not quite worked out how he got there.

Those who understand Labour-speak tell me that all the cryptic language in the social justice commission's report contains coded messages that are all quite encouraging. They say that I should not despair of the social justice commission. It is gently nudging Labour towards reality, acceptance of a market economy, recognition that expenditure cannot outstrip the nation's ability to pay and all the other things that I have been saying in rather boring uncoded English.

I reaffirm that I shall be only too happy to consider any constructive contribution that it may make to the public debate for which I have called. One thing is certain: we shall not get any constructive contribution to the debate from the Labour leader, shadow Chancellor or shadow spokesman on social security, all of whom have shown themselves to be incapable of radical thought.

The hon. Member for Dagenham (Mr. Gould) writes in this week's *New Statesman and Society*:

"Smith is the prime exponent of the school that believes that Governments . . . should be harried—but on no account should the Opposition divert attention by offering anything positive of its own."

The hon. Member for Dunfermline, East (Mr. Brown) is assiduous in ensuring that his attempts to harry are devoid of any positive comments. That is why he has become universally known among the press corps as "Mr. Faxascare". He has devalued the currency of political debate so much that his words are now losing their value faster than the pound would were he ever to become Chancellor.

The future of the social security system is vital to millions of people. Nearly all of us depend on it to some extent at some period in our lives. Reform of the welfare state is most in the interest of those who most depend on it. The hon. Member for Garscadden, by rejecting constructive debate in favour of negative criticisms, as he did today, neglects the interests of those whom he claims to want to help. I shall not respond in kind.

We need a constructive debate on the future of social security, not just for financial reasons or because of the growth of dependency, but because the world has changed enormously since the Beveridge system was established. New needs have emerged that were scarcely considered when Beveridge wrote. The nature of old needs has changed as society has altered dramatically.

Mr. Graham: Does the Minister realise that many of our postbags are full of letters from people writing about this subject? I can give a number of examples, but will use only one. A constituent of mine receiving mobility allowance was suddenly turned down, although it was apparent that she was desperately ill. She managed to get to my constituency surgery with a great deal of help from her neighbours. After I had written, we eventually got an appeal, which she won and got her money back.

I have seen numerous cases where people have been turned down for invalidity benefit, mobility benefit, attendance allowance and so on; yet when we start scrutinising, we get the money for those folk restored. There must be a better system, which would not knock people off benefits when they are quite entitled to get it. However, since the Secretary of State has come in to run the show, our constituents have been suffering deeply. The Government have given the message to social security offices to make cuts. That is worrying. I shall give the figures to the Secretary of State. He has received many letters from me, and I shall continue to send them to him.

Mr. Lilley: I shall certainly look at any individual cases that the hon. Gentleman cares to bring to my attention. I am sorry if individual constituents received wrong decisions. I am glad that those decisions have been put right by the independent adjudication officers and

[Mr. Lilley]

procedures. If those procedures need improving, the House will say that it is right that they should be improved. No edict has gone out to suggest that such wrong decisions should be given, and that would not be possible. The law has to be followed. The law on social security is laid down by the House and by the regulations that we, in turn, lay down under that law.

An informed debate needs information. That is why I have spelled out the facts in "The Growth of Social Security", and I am glad that the hon. Member for Garscadden found it useful. The Social Security Select Committee urged me to publish it and I was happy to respond to its request. The document makes the position clear. The social security budget is more than £80 billion a year. That is twice the size of the budget of the next largest Department. It is nearly one third of total Government spending. It is one eighth of gross domestic product. It means that, on average, it costs every working person £13 every working day to finance social security. Moreover, social security spending has been rising. It has risen by two thirds since 1979.

That growth has not been primarily due to the rise in unemployment. If we exclude all expenditure on unemployment, there was still underlying growth of spending on social security of 3 per cent. a year above inflation since 1979. The projections suggest that the underlying rate of growth—again, excluding unemployment—will be 3·3 per cent. a year in real terms up to the end of the century.

Mr. Malcolm Wicks (Croydon, North-West): Does the Secretary of State agree that, according to his useful document, unemployment benefit expenditure is now more than £9 billion compared with £3·7 billion at the beginning of the Conservative Administration 14 years ago? Does he further agree that that represents a great deal of benefit expenditure but also a great deal of social insecurity? Will he spell out his assumptions about full employment and unemployment in the future? Does he agree that we need economic policies to create social security and not always so-called social security policies?

Mr. Lilley: If the hon. Gentleman cares to read my Mais lecture, he will recognise that I accept that there is an important two-way link between social security and economic policy. It is important that they work in harness, and it is absolutely essential that we do all in our power, as we have been doing, to get unemployment down and deal with the real underlying problem, to which I shall come—which is the tendency for people to spend longer and longer on that benefit, rather than increasing the number of people to come on to it in the first place. I shall come to that issue later.

Mr. Dewar: Will the Secretary of State give way?

Mr. Lilley: No. The hon. Gentleman has had his chance.

Since I published the document, the Opposition have continued, as the hon. Member for Garscadden did today, to deny that there is any basic problem. I wish that they were right. It would be an immense achievement if the Government had managed to secure the absence of any problem in social security, as every other major industrial country faces such a problem, even though the hon. Gentleman appeared to be utterly unaware of it. They all freely admitted that at the G7 meeting in Tokyo.

Indeed, other countries that did not take some of the steps that we introduced in the 1980s, such as linking benefit rates to the cost of living rather than to earningss, face even tougher problems than we do. France has had to cancel a pension increase that was planned for this month. Three weeks ago, Germany announced a package of measures to cut £7 billion off its social security spending next year, including a 3 per cent. reduction in unemployment benefit rates, and a reduction in their duration.

Sweden, which had by far the most generous social security system, has found it a crippling burden. Public spending on social protection was more than a quarter of its gross domestic product. Few doubt—it is not just me—that that was the drag anchor that made Sweden one of the slowest growing economies in western Europe over the past two decades. Finally, last year it was faced with financial collapse and all parties agreed to a programme of wholesale reform. The Lindbeck report was commissioned and came up with some of the most radical proposals for the state's scaling down its activities in the social security sphere that any country has yet seen. Sweden was forced to announce an increase in the state pension age to 66, beginning almost immediately for both men and women and phased in over the next four years.

In this country, we have been able to avoid such arbitrary cuts in benefits because we have thought ahead. By means of this public debate, we intend to continue looking ahead so that we can make sure that we get it right.

Mr. Dewar: I hope that I did not say that there were no problems in the longer term, but I did say that the problems were overstated. The Secretary of State will be familiar with table 6, to which I referred earlier. It says that, in case 1, there will be an increase, until the end of the century, in the percentage of gross domestic product going to his Department. As he knows, that is based on the assumption that unemployment remains at 3 million and growth at 2 per cent. Does he accept that there are two other projections—one producing stability and the other a cut? Is he ruling out the improved economic performance that would result in either of those two projections?

In case the right hon. Gentleman does not let me intervene again, let me ask a second question. I understand that his personal position is that we have to cut, not because of financial difficulties—as many countries have done—but as part of economic policy, because he believes that it makes for a leaner and more efficient economy. What does he think that the proper percentage of GDP should be?

Mr. Lilley: I have no desire to cut. I wish to curtail growth in the system to ensure that it does not outstrip the nation's ability to pay. It manifestly has been doing that and, if we do nothing, it will continue to do so in the future.

The hon. Member for Garscadden says that we can ignore the underlying growth because of the underlying reduction in unemployment, which will dampen that growth. I maintain that we should look at the underlying growth. We should not allow a return to lower levels of unemployment, which we all wish and expect to see, to conceal that underlying trend. Indeed, we exclude

expenditure on unemployed people from the Government's new control total because we believe that it is right, in the downswing in the economic cycle, to finance a rise in unemployment, and we rightly accommodate that rise for both economic and social reasons.

Therefore, it would be wrong to use a decline in unemployment as the economy recovers as an excuse to relax restraints on public expenditure during the recovery. It is clear that the underlying position of spending outstripping national income cannot be sustained indefinitely and that we ought to take action sooner rather than later.

The other reason that the hon. Gentleman gave us as to why we can evade any need for serious reforms is his claim, made also by the hon. Member for Croydon, North-West (Mr. Wicks), that we can curb the growth in social security spending by action elsewhere. Invariably, that means extra spending on training, investment in the infrastructure and similar measures. All those are desirable in themselves and they would have desirable consequences for social security. We should certainly continue to foster them by all the means at our disposal. However, on any reasonable prospect, they cannot be a substitute for structural reform of the social security system.

If social security spending continued to grow too fast, it would throttle economic growth—I said that it would, not that it had in the past—and pre-empt private and public resources for training, investment in the infrastructure and other desirable programmes. It is sheerest fantasy to suggest that we can significantly expand public spending in other Departments in the fond hope that that will reduce social security spending some time in the future. There is no escaping the need for structural reform of the social security system, both to contain spending and to ensure that the money is spent to the best effect.

Mr. Nick Raynsford (Greenwich): The Secretary of State said that it was fantasy to believe that one could reduce social security spending by increasing expenditure in another Department. Does he recognise that reductions in spending in other Departments are increasing social security spending? What has been the increase in expenditure on housing benefit as a result of the direct policies of the Department of the Environment to cut grants and to force up rents? Will he assure us that the Government will not attempt to penalise tenants through cuts in housing benefit as a result of that shift in expenditure from the Department of the Environment to the Department of Social Security?

Mr. Lilley: I did not say that it was impossible for the impact of spending in one Department to influence that in other Departments beneficially or adversely. I said that it is fantasy to suggest that there is scope for avoiding any need for reform of the social security system by spending more now in the hope that it will produce a reduction in future. Of course I acknowledge in the document that there has been a transfer of subsidy from bricks and mortar to individuals. That is sensible, because ultimately it means a better working housing market, and that means that individuals have more choice as to where they live and where they get the help, rather than being anchored to one building.

To make sensible structural reforms we need to understand where the growth in social security is coming from and why. The analysis that I published makes that clear. First, the growth since 1979 is not principally due to the growth in unemployment, as is repeatedly alleged. Total spending on all benefits to the unemployed is only 13 per cent. of the Department of Social Security budget. The rest of the budget has been growing at 3 per cent. per annum since 1979.

Ms Eagle: What about low wages?

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. The hon. Member for Wallasey (Ms Eagle) must either try to catch my eye to make a speech or remain quiet.

Mr. Lilley: Unemployment is falling, and as the economic recovery gains momentum we can expect it to fall further. In addition to the cyclical movement, however, there has been a longer-term trend in the length of time that people spend on unemployment benefit. Until the mid-1980s we were paying unemployed people to spend longer and longer on benefit. Arrangements for paying benefit had been divorced from job search. Rules requiring people to look for and accept available work had been enforced with declining vigour. Between the early 1970s and the mid-1980s the number of people referred for refusing available work and then denied benefit had declined by about 50 per cent.

Starting with the restart programme in 1986, however, successful policies have been introduced to keep unemployed people in touch with the world of work. During the 1980s the Government also sought to lighten the obligations imposed on employers. It was felt that, rather than protecting jobs, such burdens discouraged employers from taking on extra staff. As a result of those changes, Britain has had markedly greater success in generating private sector jobs in the 1980s upswing than previously or on the continent, and we are the only European Community country in which unemployment has fallen in recent months.

I am astonished that the Labour party should want to put that success at risk by imposing the social chapter on the United Kingdom. It is even more astonishing—but not surprising—that the Liberals, who have one representative in the Chamber, should join them, given that the Liberal leader has roundly denounced the contents of the social chapter root and branch.

We have shown the value of easing burdens on employers, of freeing up the labour market and of making unemployment benefits conditional, while providing active help to people to return to work. In doing so, we were acting in the spirit of Beveridge, because he foresaw making receipt of benefit

"subject to the requirement of attendance at a work or training centre after a limited period of unemployment".

The second clear conclusion from the document that I have published is that the expected growth in spending to the end of the century will not be due to the growing number of pensioners. The hon. Member for Garscadden was correct about that. Indeed, there is not expected to be any increase in the number of pensioners this century. There will be an increase in the second and third decades of the next century, which will obviously influence our decision on equalising the state pension age. That was what my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister referred to in Tokyo.

Claims that the Government are forecasting an increase in the number of pensions, and that consequently we shall target benefits to pensioners, are unfounded and are

[Mr. Lilley]

demonstrated to be so by the document that I published. I know that that will probably disappoint the Opposition and particularly the Liberal party, in their campaigning in Christchurch, but they cannot say that the document suggests that we shall focus adversely on pensioners in any way as a result of the review that I have initiated.

The Government have always attached the highest priority to improving the position of pensioners. Our policies have been outstandingly successful and we are determined to build on our achievements. First, we recently channelled to the least well-off pensioners an extra £1 billion over and above annual inflation increases since 1989. That included a £2 a week increase for single pensioners and £3 for a couple, above inflation, last October. This April, poorer pensioners gained a further £2·90 a week for a couple from abolition of any liability to the council tax.

Secondly, we have protected pensioners' savings by tackling inflation, which is now running at 1·2 per cent. a year, whereas we uprated benefits by three times that amount in April. Thirdly, we have kept interest rates above the level of inflation, so that pensioners get a real return on their savings—not a bogus income while their capital was being wiped out, as happened under the last Labour Government. Finally, we have encouraged individual provision for retirement, over and above that provided by the state. About 70 per cent. of new pensioners now have occupational pensions and nearly 80 per cent. have additional income from savings and investments.

New figures published today show the cumulative success of those policies in improving incomes in pensioner households. Average incomes in 1990-91 were about 42 per cent. higher than in 1979, after allowing for inflation, and incomes after housing costs were worth more than half as much again as they were in 1979—about 54 per cent. more in real terms.

The analysis that I have published shows that the growth in social security provision between now and the end of the century will come primarily from three main sources: invalidity and related benefits, expenditure on lone parents and housing benefit. Opposition Members may not like those facts to be spelt out but a sensible debate must focus on the facts, and those sources are where the growth is coming from.

The number of people receiving invalidity benefit has grown from 600,000 in 1979 to 1·5 million now and will have trebled by 1995-96. Yet the nation's health has been improving during that period. I challenge the hon. Member for Garscadden to clarify his remarks and tell the House whether he believes that we should ignore or accept that—or will he and the Commission on Social Justice review the future of that benefit?

Mr. Dewar: I made it clear that we want to build hope and incentives into the lives of those trapped on invalidity benefit and that we do not want abuse of the system once we have decided what the eligibility principle should be. That includes single parents as well. Has the Minister recently re-read the evidence given to the Public Accounts Committee by Sir Michael Partridge, his permanent secretary, which made it clear that he believed that there was a strong link between the level of unemployment and the number of people on invalidity benefit? Is he now repudiating Sir Michael's opinions at that time?

Mr. Lilley: We have spelt out clearly the relationship between invalidity benefit and cyclical forces in the very document whose publication the hon. Member welcomed —obviously Sir Michael Partridge had his input into it —but he has not answered my question. We all want to improve and lighten the lives of those on invalidity benefit. but does he believe that the present tests are acceptable, or would he review them and consider reforming them?

People are not trapped on invalidity benefit; they are meant to be on it because they are incapable of working. That is the basic criterion laid down by Parliament, and if the hon. Member does not agree with that——

Mr. Dewar: I certainly agree. I am genuinely open to correction, but my understanding is that the outstanding feature is not the number of people who have gone on to invalidity benefit but the length of time that they have remained on it. Of course I accept that invalidity benefit is for those people who are unfit to work and are genuinely ill, and no one would object to that. I object to rewriting the rulebook, not because of any wish to deal with genuine social and personal problems but simply because the Chief Secretary tells the Secretary of State for Social Security what he must do.

Mr. Lilley: The hon. Member continues to wriggle. The number of people on that benefit will have trebled from 600,000 to 1·8 million by 1995-96. I know of no other reason for examining whether it is being applied in quite the right way.

It is right to consider whether we can develop a more objective test of medical incapacity for work. I recognise that any objective measure is bound to be controversial. Wherever the threshold is set, it will be possible to highlight difficult cases that fall just short of it. However, it is implicit in any test, including the present one, with which Opposition Members seem to be satisfied, that some people will be found to be capable of work while others will be found to be incapable. It is surely better to have as objective a test as possible rather than to rely on an element of subjective assessment.

Mr. Rowe: Is not one of the problems with invalidity benefit that some people on it have convinced themselves that they are incapable of improvement? They need to be given the opportunity to test themselves in some way without losing their eligibility for benefit. When challenged with work that they can manage, many people find themselves getting better physically and mentally.

Mr. Lilley: My hon. Friend has hit on what may be a genuine problem in some cases. We want to encourage disabled people who can return to work to do so. That is why we established disability working allowance. We are keen to see how that benefit develops as the economy recovers and work opportunities increase. It is reasonable for disabled people to receive extra help to enable them to compete effectively in the marketplace.

As I have said, it is right to develop, if we can, an objective medical test. I certainly do not blame doctors for the apparent inadequacy of the present system of invalidity benefit. The rules are complex and doctors often feel themselves placed in an invidious position. Since we began tightening the way in which the current rules are

administered, 300 doctors have contacted us to express their support for changes. It was not the Government but the magazine *Monitor*, which goes to 35,000 general practitioners, which carried out a survey of doctors, two thirds of whom said that they had given claimants sick notes knowing them to be capable of work. Hon. Members may rest assured that any proposals that we develop will be brought before the House for consideration.

It was also right to raise the issue of lone parenthood. For too long it had been deemed politically incorrect even to discuss the facts, let alone to reaffirm the value to children of being brought up by two committed parents. The number of lone parents rose from 570,000 in 1971 to 1·3 million in 1991, and 1 million of them depend on benefit. Fewer than one in four of them receive a penny of regular maintenance from the absent parent.

Total benefit expenditure on lone parents and their childen has trebled since 1979 to £6·6 billion. The hon. Member for Garscadden and his hon. Friends have tried to close the shutters on debate by condemning anyone who mentions lone parents of advocating

"Victorian morality and bully boy tactics".

Those are the words that the hon. Gentleman used when my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales and I raised the issue. That is nonsense.

We know perfectly well what a raw deal many lone mothers get. They are in that position through no desire of their own. They have perhaps been deserted by their husbands; they have been subjected sometimes to violence; and they are struggling to bring up their children without any support from the father. That is why we set up the Child Support Agency, which is dedicated to securing payment of maintenance from the absent parent. That objective has received widespread support from the general public, from lone mothers and from responsible absent parents. I remind the hon. Member for Garscadden that he has also supported it, although grudgingly.

Mr. Dewar: It seems that I cannot do anything right. I feel like one of the victims of society. The right hon. Gentleman knows that I have always defended, sometimes under some pressure, the principle that a parent ought to contribute to the maintenance of his or her child. I am listening with interest and with some sympathy to this latest, and perhaps uncharacteristic, passage from the right hon. Gentleman. Does he agree that it is important, for the family's benefit and especially for the benefit of children, that some sort of disregard of income support is considered for single parents?

Mr. Lilley: The hon. Gentleman has just demonstrated what I meant when I spoke about sanctimonious humbug. His assumption that no one else has any regard for the difficulties faced by people such as lone parents is offensive, and most people would find it hypocritical.

Mr. Dewar: What is the benefit to the family?

Mr. Lilley: The benefit is that maintenance payments are portable and help the mother to go back into work, which is what the hon. Gentleman said he wanted. It is right that in the first instance payment for supporting a child should be made by both parents. The taxpayer should step in only if the parents do not have the means to support their child. To suggest that such help should be additional is extremely perverse.

Mr. Dewar: I should like to be quite clear on this important statement by the Secretary of State. He says that it is perverse to suggest that we should follow the example of Australia and some other countries in which there is some gain for the lone parent on benefit. At the moment, for 70 per cent. of those on income support, there is a straight pound-for-pound clawback. Is the Minister ruling out any change to that? If he is, he will increase the difficulties surrounding the system, which in principle is right. However, many of us have grave reservations about its practical impact.

Mr. Lilley: It is right that in the first instance the parent and not the taxpayer should pay. To suggest that both should offer support and that it should be cumulative will not go down well with those who have written to me in droves and who overwhelmingly support what we are doing. The hon. Gentleman always tries to criticise and is muted in his praise of the system because the Labour party conference voted overwhelmingly against the Child Support Agency. The Opposition would prefer mothers to be dependent on the state and the responsibility of fathers to be taken over by the state. The hon. Gentleman would do better to condemn his party rather than trying to use moral blackmail on those who raise the issue while we are trying to be constructive about it.

Mr. Barry Jones (Alyn and Deeside): Will the Minister please give way?

Mr. Lilley: I will, but for the last time.

Mr. Jones: The right hon. Gentleman seemed to be glancingly critical when he spoke about the Secretary of State for Wales. Notwithstanding his response on that matter, does he accept that the Secretary of State for Wales caused a great deal of anger by his now famous speech about a housing estate in Cardiff? People of all parties in that part of Wales were greatly offended by the ill-informed and rather arrogant way in which his right hon. Friend sought to deal with the problem. Will the Secretary of State say specifically whether he intended to criticise his right hon. Friend?

Mr. Lilley: I intended quite the reverse. I associated my right hon. Friend and myself with our common attitude to the problem, which is to recognise that there are different categories of lone parents. As my right hon. Friend said in his speech, many such parents did not bring their circumstances on themselves and their situation often reflects discredit on their husbands or partners. It is to my right hon. Friend's credit that he helped to raise the issue. I suspect that the overwhelming response in his mailbag, as it certainly was in mine, was to welcome the fact that the issue has been raised and that it is no longer treated as taboo.

The growth in lone parenthood is not primarily the result of more generous social security benefits. The ratio of benefit relative to earnings has not risen markedly in recent decades. More significant factors are likely to be the availability of housing. The hon. Member for Brightside has called for positive housing policies that do not encourage the belief that the only way to a home is having a baby. Does the Opposition spokesman on social security endorse or disown that statement?

Mr. Dewar: My position is perfectly clear.

Mr. Lilley: No doubt the hon. Gentleman's remarks will be obfuscating.

Mr. Dewar: I find the personal remarks that the Secretary of State makes rather unfortunate; however, I shall take them up on another occasion, because he has raised an important point.

There has to be housing for families who find themselves without a roof. I would strongly object to the removal from the priority list, under the homeless persons legislation, of a family with a child simply because it happened to be a single-parent family, rather than what we all consider desirable—a two-parent family. The housing situation has to deal with social realities. [HON. MEMBERS: "Wriggling."] I am not wriggling out of anything, I am answering a question.

I do not believe that, in saying that I am giving any positive encouragement or assuming that anyone would take it as encouragement to have children—although there appears to be a mythical band of people who look at our convoluted housing allocation systems of our country and say, "We must have a child to get another 20 points on the list." It is a destructive myth.

Mr. Lilley: I was correct in saying that the hon. Gentleman's clear statement of his position would be followed by obfuscation, which left it totally unclear.

The hon. Gentleman singularly failed to endorse the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Brightside that the present system encourages the belief that the only way to a home is to have a baby. If people do not respond to that encouragement, it is not clear why it is a matter of importance. The hon. Gentleman suggests that the present system has no influence on behaviour, and I suspect that he is dissociating himself from the comments of the hon. Member for Brightside—however, they will have to continue that debate among themselves.

It is also important to recognise that economic and social forces play a part, as do changes in divorce laws and changing attitudes in society towards the family, personal responsibilities, adoption and the claiming of benefits. Consequently, growth in lone parenthood is not likely to be checked primarily by changes in the benefits system. Changes in attitudes will be far more important and there is a distinct limit to what Government can do in achieving that. Governments can give money; only parents can give love and commitment to their children.

Mr. Matthew Taylor (Truro): The Minister is making an important point and there is no real disagreement with the concern that he expresses, but he has to make an important decision on how it is tackled. He stressed his concern that people feel they are likely to get social housing provision only if they have a child. That is inevitable so long as the system can provide only for those with children; it wants to put a roof over the heads of children who are protected by the system. Either that protection has to be taken away or social housing provision has to be extended to provide for people without children. Which option is the Minister suggesting we should take?

Mr. Lilley: There is not necessarily always a choice. Local authorities are constrained by the law and it is only right that the review should take into account suggestions, such as that from the hon. Gentleman, that the law be reviewed. If he has any specific proposals, we will be happy to consider them during the review.

The third main area of growth is housing benefit.

Mr. Thurnham: I am grateful to my right hon. Friend for giving way. I wonder whether he had time to see an article in *The Times* in the form of a memorandum to him asking him to visit Wisconsin to see the developments in social security systems there. It was suggested that grandparents contributed to the upkeep of children of single parents where the father and mother were not able to pay for it themselves. Would he consider the Child Support Agency looking to the four grandparents to contribute if the absent parent was unable to contribute?

Mr. Lilley: I did not see the article, although any invitation to visit Wisconsin in the coming recess will be looked at favourably. I shall rush back and read it with interest.

Mr. Graham: Will the Minister give way on that point?

Mr. Lilley: No, I have given way to the hon. Gentleman already.

The third main area of growth is housing benefit. This is partly the result of growing numbers claiming and partly the result of the switch from subsidising bricks and mortar to subsidising people. There is little doubt also that it has been particularly prone to fraud. Until recently, housing authorities had little incentive to discover fraud. Indeed, they faced a disincentive. Councils were reimbursed by central Government for 100 per cent. of the value of housing benefit properly paid out, but if the benefit was found to have been wrongly disbursed, the council was reimbursed only a fraction. Consequently, they had no incentive to discover abuses. Since April we have altered all that. Councils are now fully reimbursed for housing benefit paid out before uncovering a fraud; moreover, they are allowed to keep a share of the savings which result from identifying and stopping a fraud.

Last year, I set a target of £500 million for fraud identified and stopped by the Benefits Agency. I am happy to say that that target has been surpassed. This year, I have set a target for the Benefits Agency and local housing authorities combined to identify and save nearly £1 billion of fraud. I believe that that can be achieved. It is vital to do so, since every pound stolen from the social security system is a pound less for those in real need.

At the end of the day, the best adjunct to any social security system is a vibrant, free-enterprise economy creating jobs, wealth and opportunities for people to save.

Since we left the exchange rate mechanism, we have been better placed than any other European Community country to grow again. We have the lowest interest rates in the European Community, the lowest inflation rate for a generation and a competitive exchange rate. As a result, the European Commission forecasts that the United Kingdom will be the fastest growing economy in the Community over the next two years.

The Opposition parties refuse to recognise that growth will be undermined if we fail to tackle the deficit and if social security is allowed to outstrip the nation's ability to pay.

As the hon. Member for Dagenham has admitted, the Labour party has

"nothing to say across the whole range of macro-economic policy, on exchange rates, interest rates, fiscal policy, demand management and public spending."

That must a fortiori include social security spending.

Mr. Dewar: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Lilley: No.

In conclusion, it is time for the Opposition to acknowledge that informed debate must now take the place of their party political point scoring. There is an urgent need

"for a public debate on the left about which objectives a welfare state should pursue. That is a task that the left has conspicuously failed to address."

Those were not my words; they were the words of the hon. Member for Birkenhead and, I suspect, show greater wisdom than the reactions from the Opposition Front Bench today. Even they should now recognise that reforms of our welfare state are essential, above all in the interests of those who most depend upon it.

All parties have a responsibility to help to ensure that our social security system in future is fair, secure and sustainable. All will bring forward ideas based on their own priorities. The Government's priorities are to guarantee the position of the most vulnerable, to reduce dependency, to encourage self-reliance, to boost savings and to give people greater control over their own resources. We welcome new thoughts and new ideas and we welcome constructive debate. One day, I hope, we will also welcome those on the Labour Front Bench to participation in it.

5.17 pm

Mr. Alfred Morris (Manchester, Wythenshawe): Seasoned observers of our proceedings will note that this debate takes place in the tiny allocation of parliamentary time the Opposition are allowed and that it would not be taking place at all but for the successful advocacy of my hon. Friends the Members for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) and for Redcar (Ms Mowlam).

The Secretary of State may pretend to welcome the debate. Indeed he has described himself today as "delighted", but it is to my two hon. Friends and my right hon. and learned Friend the Leader of the Opposition that we owe this timely opportunity to debate the Government's social policies and the now rampant and still increasing public concern about them.

The right hon. Member may also want to pretend that his speech was a worthy reply to the powerful case for the motion made by my hon. Friend the Member for Garscadden in opening the debate, but he can realistically so pretend only to himself.

The Secretary of State persists in saying that we must not criticise the Government's review of public expenditure because Labour has set up the Commission on Social Justice. That is nonsense. Labour's commission is about modernising, not dismantling the welfare state. Our purpose is to perfect and put forward policies for the 21st century, not to return to those of the 19th century. The Government's review is happening in secret; the work of our Commission on Social Justice is happening in public.

At last year's election, the British people were systematically deceived by Ministers about their intentions, which is why there is such widespread bitterness against the Government now. When the Prime Minister was asked, 10 days before the election, whether there would be spending cuts if he won, he said:

"I see no reason to do that at all . . . If we were going to cut public expenditure, we would have done it before and I don't believe it is economically right. I have said that in the past and there is no need to do it whatsoever. So you can rule out any expectation of that."

Only after the election did Ministers find that there were what they now call "deep structural problems" with Government spending. Suddenly there were too many old people, too many disabled people, too many single mothers, too many homeless people of whose existence the Government were previously unaware. The truth is that social security expenditure has ballooned, not because of deep structural problems with Government spending, but because their economic policies so disastrously failed.

In May 1979, when the Conservative party took office, just over 1 million people were unemployed. Now there are 2·9 million, and every unemployed person costs each of those still in work £9,000 a year. In 1979, 4·4 million people were dependent on supplementary benefit, or what is now called income support. Today, as my hon. Friend the Member for Garscadden said, the figure is an estimated 10·3 million.

Other increases in the social security budget are due to expenditure being transferred to that budget. For example, as my hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Mr. Raynsford) knows so well, and as the Minister has acknowledged, housing subsidy cuts mean higher rents, higher housing benefit payments and a switch in expenditure from the Department of the Environment to the Department of Social Security. Another example is that changing from child tax allowance to child benefit means not only more tax revenue for the Exchequer, but an increase in the social security budget. Thus, Ministers themselves are responsible for the ballooning of that budget.

I turn now to issues of particular concern to long-term sick, severely disabled and other vulnerable people. First, there is the recent decision of the Independent Living (1993) Fund no longer to help people with terminal illnesses. Today's debate is the first opportunity that this House has had to debate that deeply shocking decision. Ministers knew of the independent living fund decision and that it was due to inadequate funding by the Government, but made no oral comment to the House. When challenged about the decision, the Minister for Social Security and Disabled People referred in a written response to the need to target the fund's resources

"on the most severely disabled people in order to allow them to live as full a life as possible in the community, rather than on terminally ill people".—[*Official Report*, 17 June 1993; Vol. 226, c. *720*.]

Pauline Thompson, director of the Disablement Income Group—DIG—than whom, as the Minister knows, no one is more qualified to comment on the cold inhumanity of the independent living fund decision, condemns it as "obscene". She states:

"It is difficult to imagine a more severely disabling situation than that of someone who needs intensive personal care and who is also dying. Yet by distinguishing between disability and terminal illness it is now being suggested that they are mutually exclusive."

Like everyone else who has seen the Minister's comment, Pauline Thompson is amazed by his suggestion that a person can be severely disabled or terminally ill, but not both.

[Mr. Alfred Morris]

Nick Partridge, chief executive of the Terrence Higgins Trust, whose work assists a great many people who are terminally ill, speaks of his deep concern that those

"in the most pressing need of help from the fund are to be excluded in order to save money."

He adds:

"This will remove choice, create hardship, fear and insecurity for the most vulnerable group of people—those who are severely disabled *and* terminally ill."

The Secretary of State was urged urgently to intervene to protect the interests of terminally ill people, but he has not done so. I challenge him now to defend in the House a policy condemned everywhere as heartless, for which ultimately he and no one else is responsible. The reason for disqualifying the terminally ill from help is that the independent living fund has insufficient money to go on helping them; but it is the Minister who determines its budget and I ask him now to explain what possible justification there can be for targeting the terminally ill for that unkindest cut of all.

The second issue that I want to raise is the Government's clear determination to cut spending on invalidity benefit, a subject on which the Secretary of State has said a great deal today. Anyone who has read the right hon. Gentleman's letter about that to the Prime Minister, sent to the press "by mistake" on 10 June, will be in no doubt that, for many recipients of invalidity benefit, the autumn this year will be a season of cuts and ministerial ruthlessness.

It is claimed that huge numbers of recipients are "swinging the lead", but those who make that claim should study a recent analysis by Richard Berthoud of the Policy Studies Unit. He reports:

"The increase has not been caused by excessive ease of entry into the system, but by difficulty of exit. What is perceived as a problem for the Government (increased costs) may actually be a problem for the claimants (inability to find work)."

As the Disability Benefits Consortium points out, a humane and effective way of decreasing expenditure on invalidity benefit is to improve the employment opportunities of disabled people. As of now, they are stuck at the back of the longest queue in Britain—the queue for jobs. Only 31 per cent. of disabled people are in employment. There is blatant discrimination against them by many employers, and the Government's own record as an employer of disabled people is heavily and justifiably criticised.

Far from giving disabled people more help to achieve the independence and dignity of becoming taxpayers, the Secretary of State for Employment has now announced changes to the special employment schemes for disabled people that will impose, for the first time, an obligation on employers to pay 50 per cent. of the cost of any special equipment that a disabled employee needs to do her or his job.

People with disabilities point out that this will reduce their employment prospects even further and make them even more dependent on invalidity benefit; yet the Government are hell-bent on reducing the availability of the benefit and subjecting it to tax. That would be an increase in taxation, of course, not a cut in public spending, and if increases in direct taxation are to be one of the means of reducing the Government's huge budget deficit, what possible justification can there be for starting with people who are chronically sick and disabled? Whatever happened to social fairness?

Ministers say that they are determined not to "burden" top taxpayers with high income tax, yet they have no objection to taxing invalidity benefit; nor do they hesitate to make Britain's pensioners pay value added tax on domestic fuel. All of us can see the hardship that that will inflict on pensioners. Forcing elderly people to skimp on heating can be dangerous as well as cruel, and no one can doubt that this is what the new policy will mean.

Fewer people have yet to see that the new tax is also a threat to the health and even to the survival of many babies. At a recent meeting in Manchester, Ruth Ashton of the Royal College of Midwives made it clear that new babies in the first few months of life could be put at mortal risk by the new policy. She told the meeting that the babies of parents struggling to pay heating bills will be exposed to a fatal condition—neonatal hypothermia—if their homes are inadequately heated.

The midwives that Ruth Ashton addressed are planning a national campaign to inform the British people of that threat to the lives of the children of poor families. I ask the Secretary of State to say how he will respond to that campaign and if he will meet the Disability Benefits Consortium to discuss its anxiety and concern about the right hon. Gentleman's intended cuts in invalidity benefit as they will affect disabled people.

Finally, I refer to mounting criticisms of the Government's much-heralded "new" policy for community care and, in particular, the recent findings of the Alzheimer's Disease Society, of which I am a vice-president. On 5 July, the society published a report, "Deprivation and Dementia", based on a wide-ranging survey of carers. It revealed that 41 per cent. of carers have to draw on their private savings and assets, take out loans or sell property to meet the cost of caring. It revealed also that 42 per cent. of carers need more professional help or respite care.

"Deprivation and Dementia" bears deeply disturbing testimony to the hardship inflicted on carers of people with dementia by a community care policy that is now shown to be failing carers and those for whom they care alike. For tens of thousands of carers, the reward for caring is penury as their savings disappear, their property is sold, and they have to go into often heavy, long-term debt. The report shouts the need for less ministerial sloganising about community care and for more adequate practical and financial support for Britain's carers.

There is no public saving in denying carers the help that they need, and to refuse them the right help at the right time is self-defeating. If carers can no longer cope, those whom they look after have to go into institutional care at far greater cost to the taxpayer. Not infrequently, the carer also must go into care. But to date, the Government have offered no meaningful response to the Alzheimer's Disease Society's report.

In fact, the plight of carers is more serious now than before the survey on which the report was based. I give just one example. The Independent Living (1993) Fund, as well as excluding from help people who are terminally ill, has perversely decided that everyone over the age of 65 will be ineligible for help. That, too, is a shocking decision, and one on which the Secretary of State should comment before this debate concludes.

Each of the specific issues that I have raised concerns demonstrable social unfairness by a Government who have lost not only the confidence of the electorate but all credibility. They demean not only themselves but this House by persisting with policies that cause anguish and anger among more and more of those who elected them to power only 15 months ago.

5.34 pm

Mr. Peter Thurnham (Bolton, North-East): I was surprised that the right hon. Member for Manchester, Wythenshawe (Mr. Morris) began by criticising the Government's arrangements for the independent living fund, which my right hon. Friend the Minister for Social Security and Disabled People introduced in June 1988. It was criticised then by Opposition Members and others for being unworkable, privatising provision for the disabled, and moving away from legal entitlement to discretionary help. In fact, the scheme has been outstandingly successful, helping 22,000 people at a cost of £97 million. To criticise the Government's arrangements for ensuring continuity comes poorly from the Opposition after they criticised the fund's establishment. It would be kinder if the right hon. Gentleman gave more credit to the Government for that scheme.

Mr. Alfred Morris: The hon. Gentleman will recall that the case made by the Opposition at the time of the fund's creation was that the disabled wanted benefits as of right. They argued that they lost them when the supplementary benefits system was terminated. My right hon. and hon. Friends merely echoed the views of the disabled. We know that the fund has done marvellous work, especially as Pauline Thompson and Sir Peter Large were involved. However, I am sure that the hon. Gentleman—as someone who takes a great interest in the disabled—joins me in regretting profoundly the decision that the terminally ill should no longer qualify for help.

Mr. Thurnham: There is no doubt that more people are helped by the ILF than were ever helped under the old arrangements. The right hon. Gentleman should acknowledge the fund's positive achievements and the money spent by the Government on residential care in general —which has grown from £24 million in 1979-80 to £2·4 billion today, which is a hundredfold increase

I am sorry that the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) is not in his place. I share with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State the regret that the Opposition, having requested this debate, made such poor arguments. I did not hear anything new from them or from the Commission on Social Justice. From reports that appeared in newspapers yesterday and today, I am unaware of any new recommendations. The commission apparently spent a long time analysing the situation, but decided that the thing to do is to have some cake in the first place, before worrying about how it should be shared out.

Given Labour's record in government, one can understand why that was one of the first conclusions that the commission reached. Under the last Labour Government, a married couple on average earnings, with two children, saw an increase in their income over four years of 0·6 per cent., whereas under this Government, their average weekly earnings have risen 40 per cent. That shows the difference between the way that the two parties have worked.

A number of remarks by the hon. Member for Garscadden highlighted other differences. He spoke of a real divide between the parties. There is a divide in philosophy. The hon. Gentleman seems rooted in the past, whereas we are looking to the future, to see what changes can be made. The hon. Gentleman said that he wanted to see individuals flourish in the way that the market cannot, but the market allows individuals to flourish and to use their talents to create wealth to the benefit of themselves and the whole of society.

The hon. Member for Garscadden said that two thirds of families have incomes below the national average, but I wonder how he would have it otherwise. If two thirds of families had incomes above the national average, that could only be statistically true if an extreme of poverty existed.

It is because there are extremes of wealth that we find that two thirds of families are below the national average income. If it were the other way round, we should have a desperately poor society, with some people in the greatest depths of poverty. I do not know how the hon. Member for Garscadden can criticise the fact that two thirds of families are below the national average income when talented people are using their talents to produce high incomes which they enjoy and which also provide, through income tax, support for others.

I am sorry that the hon. Gentleman is not here, for I should like to know what he thinks is wrong about a society in which two thirds of families are below the national average income. Would the hon. Gentleman like everybody to be on an average income? That is the usual way that the Labour party likes to look at things.

Ms Marjorie Mowlam (Redcar): If the hon. Gentleman is looking for assistance, he ought to return to the point in my hon. Friend's speech where he referred to the growing gap between the very rich and the very poor during the past 14 years. My hon. Friend was not emphasising one statistic in isolation.

Mr. Thurnham: The point is that every group is growing wealthier. As I have just said, there has been a 40 per cent. increase in average earnings.

The hon. Member for Garscadden quoted at length the household survey statistics. It is worth looking at that survey. It shows that the average growth in household income was 35 per cent. above inflation between 1979 and 1990-91. It also shows that pensioners have done particularly well—average incomes of pensioner couples have risen by 48 per cent. ahead of inflation and fewer pensioners are now in the bottom 10 per cent. of income distribution.

Furthermore, the household survey shows that those in the lowest income groups have considerably more consumer goods than they had when the Labour party was in power. The percentage of households in the bottom 10 per cent. of income distribution that have central heating has risen from fewer than four in 10 in 1979 to almost seven in 10 in 1990-91, nearly three quarters of households have a telephone, compared with less than half in 1979, half have cars and 60 per cent. have videos.

Those statistics are at odds with the figures shown for income. That is why we have to look with some care at the income statistics. They appear to show that the average income for this group has fallen and then remained constant, but we must also note that a considerable

[Mr. Thurnham]

number of people in this group are not declaring any income at all. Statistically, I doubt whether that is absolutely the case, unless some are living on gifts or, perhaps, criminally.

One needs, therefore, to look much more closely at the statistics. They include self-employed people. If they are just starting up in business, they may, of course, be living on their savings, and income will not show up for some years. Considerably more people are self-employed under this Government than when the Labour party was in power. That is another example of the way in which people can use their talents and flourish in the marketplace.

Some may assume that the bottom 10 per cent. includes most of the people who are claiming income-related social security benefits, but it does not. The percentage of people on income-related benefits who are in the bottom 10 per cent. fell from 31 per cent. in 1979 to 26 per cent. in 1990-91. We can therefore conclude that those in the bottom 10 per cent. of income distribution are not always in the bottom 10 per cent. when any objective measurement of living standards is made.

I am sorry that the hon. Member for Garscadden did not look more closely at the household survey. Had he done so, he would have a better understanding of it.

Mr. Wicks: I support the need for a careful look at the data, but does the hon. Gentleman agree that if we look carefully at that, we find that to use central heating as an indicator of well-being and affluence can in some cases be misleading? For example, in council tower blocks there may be very expensive under-floor electric central heating. That is no longer necessarily an indicator of well-being; it can lead to people falling into debt.

Does the hón. Gentleman agree that, if somebody is made redundant, after having been in a job that led to a feeling of security and well-being, when he or she enjoyed the benefits of central heating and all the other commodities that the hon. Gentleman described, it will not be surprising if that person, who then falls into the bottom 10 per cent. income band, still has those things but is nevertheless genuinely poor? I put it to the hon. Gentleman that a more thoughtful interpretation of the statistics reveals conclusions that he has not yet given to the House.

Mr. Thurnham: We could debate for some time the points that the hon. Gentleman has raised. There are probably fewer people living in tower blocks with under-floor electric heating now than there were when the Labour party was in power, because the Labour party was very much keener on building tower blocks, whereas we have been demolishing them or providing smaller and more individual homes. Many people in my constituency now have central heating systems that they can control themselves.

I have already referred to the fact that I am disappointed that the Commission on Social Justice has made so few real recommendations. I am surprised that the hon. Member for Garscadden did not know what Patricia Hewitt had said. If thought is being given to moving away from the contributory principle, it shows that the Labour party is beginning to think more clearly about it.

It is difficult to know where the Labour party stands on the Child Support Agency. It opposed its establishment. I should like to know what the Labour party thinks about the scheme in Wisconsin, which I mentioned to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Social Security.

Is it not better for grandparents to accept some responsibility for the children of teenage single parents? Surely that is a means by which they can contribute to the welfare of their grandchildren and simultaneously exercise some influence over a child who may still be living with them when she becomes pregnant.

Mr. Dewar: I must plead my ignorance of the situation in Wisconsin, south or north, but the hon. Gentleman has obviously done some research on it. Does he think that there should be a legal duty on grandparents and that their income should be chargeable? Would it be an enforceable duty?

Mr. Thurnham: As I read yesterday's article in *The Times*—I have done no more research into the United States position than that—I understand that that is the case. It is an established fact now that parents have a responsibility for their children, not just up to the age of 16 but up to the age of 25, if they are students. If a young girl is living with her parents and becomes pregnant and decides to set up house on her own, I do not think that she should be able to look just to the state to house her and pay all the benefits to her without the grandparents making any contribution whatsoever.

If there were a legal duty on the grandparents to make a contribution, it would lead to the exercise of some influence over, and some sanctions on, the behaviour of couples who start a family in those circumstances, which, as I think all hon. Members agree, is not the ideal way to go about it.

The Labour party may, I believe, have come round slowly to the idea that the Child Support Agency is a good way of ensuring tht contributions are made by the father towards maintenance of the family, but I do not see why we should not look for contributions from the grandparents when the parents are unable to make a contribution.

That is one means by which we could help the children. I believe that all of us accept that the children are entirely innocent and deserve to be helped. One could therefore help the children without encouraging, at the same time, more single mothers to take a route that we all agree they should not be encouraged to go down without having given considerable thought to it.

I have already referred to the increase in the money that is being spent on residential care. Under the care in the community arrangements, a much greater variety of provision can be made available. A pilot scheme in my Bolton constituency, the neighbourhood network scheme, was undertaken. I am delighted that provision is more varied now. The new Grosvenor house, which is to open shortly, will provide day care and respite care for people who are disabled.

Nearby, in Bury, the voluntary group Brookvale runs an excellent home. It costs less than many of the neighbourhood network schemes. I know from the experience of my own son, who is there, how good the care is. It is provided at approximately half the cost of the Bolton neighbourhood network scheme. The Government

should therefore look carefully at voluntary group schemes that can provide value for money and also better care for their residents.

We should be grateful to the Opposition for having provided us with the opportunity to debate this subject. I am certain that my hon. Friends will make sure that their motion is defeated and the Government amendment carried. I have paid particular attention to its wording, which is to "protect the vulnerable."

5.50 pm

Mr. Matthew Taylor (Truro): The debate has been drawn very widely in terms of the motion and amendment, and I welcome that. It is important that the House has a chance to address the effect of Government policies on the social fabric of the nation, the sense of community on the nation and the shared burdens.

With regard to the speech just made by the hon. Member for Bolton, North-East (Mr. Thurnham), the Secretary of State had some very carefully crafted words to say on the subject of pensioners. I am not sure that pensioners in Christchurch, or anywhere else, will welcome the idea—though it certainly is an idea, and that is what the Secretary of State asked for; indeed, it is a very radical idea—that, in addition to liability for VAT on fuel, they should also be burdened with direct financial liability for their grandchildren. It is a principle that could be extended, but I doubt that it is a popular one. Nor do I think that it will solve the immediate problems of society at the present time.

We are holding this debate at a time when, partly because of some of the ideas that have been raised by Ministers, some of them now batted down again by the Secretary of State, the Chancellor and others, the Government are deeply unpopular and the Prime Minister's ratings are lower than any since polling began.

That will not, I suppose, unduly worry hon. Members on this side of the House, but I believe that there should be general concern about the decline in trust and faith in the political process in dealing with the kind of problems that we are addressing in this debate and the very real issues that have been raised in all parts of the House.

As the leader of my party said in a speech to Charter 88 last week, there is not just a crisis in Government, policy or leadership; there is a crisis of lack of faith in the system to overcome these problems. Indeed, in all fairness to the Prime Minister, successive Prime Ministers have fallen to the lowest ever ratings of popularity as time has gone on, reflecting not just an attitude to their individual policies, but a long-term decline in belief in the ability of the system to sort out these problems—a sense of the break-up of social cohesion, a sense that the system is not capable of delivering solutions.

I accept, therefore, that it would be foolish to hold the Government solely responsible for that situation. But, with a record in government stretching back 14 years now, and with the decline perceived to have occurred over those years, the continuing threat of the Government's policies must be judged to be significant.

Is it surprising, after all, that the most vulnerable in society, those who are dependent on the benefits system, find it hard to trust politicians when, within 12 months of getting elected, the Government are coming forward with a set of policies—some of which we heard from the Secretary of State for Social Security earlier—that directly contradict much of the platform on which they fought the election?

There was no mention then by the Prime Minister of the imposition of VAT on fuel, which will hit those people in particular and for which the Government have been unable to promise full compensation. The Prime Minister said that he had no need to extend the scope of VAT. Yet that is exactly what he did, and now we learn that he is contemplating going further.

Mr. Hendry: The hon. Gentleman referred twice to trust. Given the fact that a year or so ago a Liberal party document argued specifically in favour of ending the anomalous zero rate of VAT on fuel, and that the Liberal Democrats have now voted against that policy because there is a by-election going on, what contribution does he think that his party has made to improving trust in politics?

Mr. Taylor: There is a very simple difference between what the Liberal Democrats said and what the Government said. The Liberal Democrats, in a green paper policy document, raised the possibility that one way of tackling environmental problems was by the imposition of VAT on fuel. That went to conference, was not accepted by the party, and was rejected specifically in the manifesto. Indeed, in the manifesto we specifically proposed using carbon taxes to cut the rate of VAT. The Government, on the other hand, specifically rejected the possibility of putting VAT on fuel in the run-up to the election, and then did it in practice.

I feel no embarrassment about this; the embarrassment should surely be felt by those on the Government Benches for having said that they would not do something which they subsequently did, rather than having discussed something, as we did, that we subsequently rejected through the democratic processes of the party. We saw that it was not a good idea. It is a pity that the Chancellor did not come to the same conclusion.

This extension of VAT to domestic fuel in the form in which the Government are undertaking it will cause most distresss to the most vulnerable: the elderly, those with disabilities, and those on low incomes—precisely the groups which the Secretary of State made it clear that he was targeting for cutbacks.

What I believe has most astounded people is that, when they said an overwhelming no to the VAT plans in the county council elections and at Newbury, the Prime Minister sacked the Chancellor who had implemented the policies that he had set, yet made it clear in the same breath that he was sticking by the policies that had led to the Chancellor's downfall, and indeed proceeded to whip this through the House——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. This is very wide of the motion or the amendments on the Order Paper.

Mr. Taylor: I am happy to take your advice, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but the Opposition motion,

"Government policies, the social fabric and the security of the individual",

is framed in terms of

"the social policies of this Government which have resulted in an ever widening gap between rich and poor, and the destruction of opportunity".

Surely, the imposition of VAT is precisely in line with that. I may misunderstand what is written on the Order Paper,

[Mr. Taylor]

but that is what it says. The Government amendment is framed in terms of social security specifically, but the motion before the House is not. I am happy to take advice on this.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: As the hon. Gentleman knows, we had a full debate on VAT policy only a week ago. Until now, I have heard hardly a word this evening about VAT on fuel. It is appropriate to refer to it, but it seems to me that the whole thrust of the hon. Member's speech so far has been on that.

Mr. Taylor: I am making the point that this is falling hardest on those who are in receipt of benefits and are the poorest in our society. If we are to look at the benefits system, we have to see what those people are having to pay. I am not quite sure how we can make the point without looking at the costs. The Secretary of State for Social Security ranged as wide as housing issues, children, and so on. I seek only to do the same, and if you will allow me to continue, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will see the way the argument develops.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am enormously grateful, but the hon. Gentleman has had eight minutes in which to develop this.

Mr. Taylor: The perception is that the Chancellor, in introducing policies and refusing to give a guarantee that people will be fully protected from those policies, is continuing the process in which those who are at the bottom of the scale—those on benefit, including invalidity benefit, and those on pensions—are having to bear the consequences of the Government's policies, while those who benefited through tax cuts at times when the economy was doing well remain protected. This goes to the very heart of the social fabric of our society.

It is a set of policies and a position which the Secretary of State for Social Security reflected again this evening. It will widen the gaps and the divides, and destroy the faith of those most dependent on Government policy that the Government have any real intention of defending them.

Our position has been very clear. The Government seek to cut invalidity benefit and talk in terms of changes to the pensions system and reviewing the basis on which benefits are awarded in order to close the Government's financial gap. We argue that while, of course, where there is fraud or wastage, it should be tackled, the primary responsibility of the Government in tackling their financial problems is to look to those who benefited most over the last 14 years from Government tax cuts, not those who have already been so squeezed by policies which have continued to increase the burdens on them.

The same is happening in other areas, with those mostly dependent on the benefits system being hit by the changes that are taking place. Rising prescription charges and the imposition of charges for sight tests are having a great effect. Opticians in my county of Cornwall have written to me in recent weeks referring to people having lost their sight as a result of their inability, because of low incomes, to meet the cost of sight tests, or at any rate their belief that they could not pay for the tests.

The recession, which has done so much damage to the economy, has without doubt increased the jobless level. The Secretary of State's figures reveal that the financial problems that he highlighted would be met by growth of 2·5 per cent. and a reduction in the unemployment total to 2·25 million, which even at that level would be more than double the figure that the Conservatives inherited in 1979 and which they claimed they would reduce.

The Government talk about ways in which benefits that are now received by those who most rely on them can be cut, with scarcely a word—just as in the Chancellor's speech there was hardly a word—about how the Government could tackle the fundamental financial problem of unemployment. The degree of unemployment has resulted in an insufficient number of people being able to earn the money to pay for the benefits of those who most need them in the social security net.

The Secretary of State referred to the problem of homelessness, a problem that is now faced country wide, in inner cities and rural areas. I asked the right hon. Gentleman what he proposed to do about the present state of affairs when young people looking for affordable social housing are told by housing officers that their only chance of getting the necessary points to make them eligible is to have children. That does not mean having just one child, as those with one child are often told that they will need two or three children to have any hope of obtaining social housing.

I am not saying that officers are advising people to have children. They are simply clarifying the situation in relation to the impact of the shortage of housing and the way in which the points system works. The Minister rightly said that it was not a sensible system. That being so, he must clarify the choices because the system is designed to protect children by ensuring that they have a roof over their heads. I stress that the system is designed to protect children, not parents. Either the Secretary of State is suggesting that we should no longer offer that protection to babies and children in that situation—they are in it through no fault of their own—or he must accept that we should expand the availability of affordable social housing so that those without children have a realistic chance of obtaining homes.

It is a simple choice, but the Minister ducked it when he was questioned about it. It was a bit rich for him to duck it, when he criticises other parties for not putting forward policies to tackle the problem. In fact, both Opposition parties have put forward policies to deal with the matter. Liberal Democrats in particular have been clear about the policy and how it should be funded. The Secretary of State, who now has responsibility for the issue, has failed to put forward sensible ideas to deal with it. He hides behind reviews and refers to the need to listen to radical ideas, but without so much as putting a finger into the wind to see the way opinion is blowing.

If the right hon. Gentleman continues to fail to announce the necessary action, or if he will not take action because he prefers the option of not providing a roof over people's heads, of cutting back on invalidity benefit and support for the unemployed, of reducing pension provision and, as he hinted, of making women wait longer to become eligible for pensions, he should say so and not criticise others for raising scare stories, as he put it, all of which have arisen through the comments of his hon. Friends.

When I was in the west end a few nights ago, I came across a couple of teenage girls sitting in a doorway. They were both clearly homeless. They were begging. Some people walked past them, averting their gaze, a few gave a

little cash and others stopped to talk to them, probably to ask how they came to be there. They were certainly too young to be in that situation late at night. I recall that they were examining each other's arms, comparing flea bites. I imagine that there is no chance of any of the daughters of hon. Members finding themselves in that situation. Most people are insulated from such events happening to their families. Buts some are not. Those youngsters are among the people who look for social housing. In most cases, for the reasons I have given, they are unlikely to get it.

Can those people hope for financial support from the state? They will certainly not get it automatically because the Government have removed any automatic entitlement to financial support in such circumstances. What chance do they have of obtaining employment? Without a place to live, they have little chance. Indeed, an employer would take one look at the flea bites and probably decide that it would not be a commendable idea to employ such a person.

The Government may suggest that youngsters in that position should return home, but the statistics show that, by and large, the homeless come from broken families, that they have often suffered abuse or that they have been brought up in care by the state or local authorities. In other words, they have no homes to which to return.

By dodging the basic breakdown in the community that has occurred, the Government are causing a rift in the social cohesion. By so doing, they are dodging the real agenda that must be set. They talk simply of cuts. We have made our position clear. We have said that where the choice is between invalidity benefit and fair taxation, or between VAT and fair taxation, our choice is for fair taxation. After all, such taxation falls on the community as a whole. That is far preferable to cuts which fall on those who can least afford them. The same applies to additional VAT burdens being applied to the poorest in the community. The choice is clear, and I know which way my vote will be cast.

Mrs. Angela Browning (Tiverton): I am interested to hear that the hon. Gentleman has a taxation proposal to cover the cost involved. I should like to know how it would be spread across the burden of taxation, the figures that would relate to that, how much revenue would be raised and how it would be spent to solve the problems that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State identified.

Mr. Taylor: The hon. Lady has posed many questions and I fear that it would take a considerable time to answer them all. I am loth to do that as I come to the end of my remarks. At each Budget we have set out our proposals in detail, including what we would spend and how the revenue would be raised. I am sure that we shall repeat the exercise in November.

The principle of our proposals is not that we would impose burdens—for example, through VAT—on those least able to afford them or that we would cut benefit to the disabled. We would ask the country as a whole to share the burden. I suspect that, if the hon. Lady knocked on doors in her constituency and asked people what they preferred, they would reach the same conclusion. Her constituents of all political persuasions would support our policies in response to the financial problems that have arisen as a result of Conservative policies.

6.8 pm

Mr. Charles Hendry (High Peak): I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the debate, although I am surprised that the subject should have been chosen for this Opposition day debate. I can think of only two reasons for that. The first is that it is a bit of cheap public relations activity for the Commission on Social Justice.

As the Secretary of State said, it is the first time that an Opposition party—or, indeed, any other party—has decided to contract out its policy-making activity—*[Interruption.]* The leader of the Labour party said that nothing would be ruled out when he set up the commission. Apparently, the only thing that has been ruled out is the concept that the party in opposition should have any ideas of its own.

The cat is now out of the bag, because, much as the Labour party would like to keep people quiet, some Opposition Members have ideas of their own and are willing to express them. An entertaining sight this afternoon is watching them scurrying around looking for new arguments and ways of saying that they do not disagree with each other, at the same time as making it clear, by their choice of words, that they do not agree with each other either.

The second reason that I assume the Opposition chose this subject for debate is that we are near the end of the Session and they are running out of ideas because the ground is shifting. A few weeks ago, they would have suggested debating the economy, but it is turning around so fast that they would not dare to do so now. They would have suggested debating unemployment, but unemployment has fallen for five months in a row. They might have said, "Let's debate manufacturing productivity," but only this week there has been the biggest leap in manufacturing productivity for many years so they would not dare to debate that either.

I therefore have some sympathy for the Opposition as they scurry around trying to find new ideas to debate. One feels that they have no choice but to descend from the real world into the gutter in order to find a debate in which they can spread fear and scare stories.

We heard such a story from the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar), who spoke about the base rate pension but did not mention the fact that the people who receive only the base rate pension receive income support to top it up. Targeting more help on poorer pensioners has been one of the Government's priorities.

The hon. Gentleman also omitted to mention the dramatic growth in recent years in the income and earnings that pensioners receive from sources other than their pensions. If he wanted to be fair and honourable—I am sure that it was genuinely his intention to be so—he should not have overlooked such factors.

I warn the Opposition that, if one descends into the gutter, one should be careful not to trip over the Liberals who have already been there for some time. I was astonished by the speech of the hon. Member for Truro (Mr. Taylor). This is the first time in my 15 months in the House that I have heard a speech that bore no relation to the subject for debate and which was not directed at the House

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. Gentleman's speech did bear a relation to the debate. One part strayed a little, and I drew his attention to that fact, but, thereafter, I thought that it was well in order.

Mr. Hendry: I accept your guidance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, although I fear that, even as I speak, a press release is winging its way to the Christchurch *Bugle and Echo*, because the speech was perhaps directed not at the hon. Gentleman's constituents or the House but at the electorate in the forthcoming by-election.

I was grateful, however, for the attention that the hon. Member for Truro paid to the problem of homelessness. I am joint chairman of the all-party group on homelessness, which would welcome any Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament who cared to come to one of our meetings. We have had representation from another place but, in the year that I have been joint chairman, I cannot recall one Liberal Member of this House coming to our meetings.

The true scandal of today's debate is the fact that the Opposition should have chosen for debate the subject of the breakdown of our social fabric. It is rather like King Herod asking why the number of children in primary schools has dropped off. No one has done more than the Opposition to undermine this country's social fabric. They make great play of the fact that the Conservatives have been in government for 14 years but, in order to trace the roots of the decay and the problems which have been undermining this country, one must go back not 14 years but 20 or 30 years beyond.

I accept that various parties were in government during that time. It is easy for the rot to set in, but it takes a great deal longer to stop it and then to turn things around. I shall deal with those issues directly.

I believe that the greatest crime of socialism was to take away from people the responsibility for their own affairs. It took a terrible arrogance to say that people could not decide matters for themselves and that we, the elected officials and the Government, knew better how to run their lives than they could possibly ever know.

It was the patronising approach. People were told not to worry about education or health, because all the decisions would be made for them. They were told not to worry about housing because wonderful tower blocks would be built in which they could live and be happy. They were told that they would be looked after when they were young and old, well and sick. The problem was——

Mr. Stuart Randall (Kingston upon Hull, West) *rose*——

Mr. Hendry: Let me finish this point.

The problem was that socialism created a society in which more and more people became reliant on benefits. Only a few days ago, one of my hon. Friends said that the benefits society was a Santa's grotto in which everyone expected a handout, but Labour's grandiose plans broke the bank, and the people who have suffered most are those whom Labour purported to be helping.

Mr. Randall: Does the hon. Gentleman not accept that Baroness Thatcher's philosophy that there was no such thing as society and that one therefore had no responsibility for others revealed a terrific irresponsibility?

Mr. Hendry: If the hon. Gentleman listens to the remainder of my speech, he will hear what I have to say about rebuilding a sense of social cohesion, which requires the Government, local authorities and the people to work together.

One of the areas in which the social fabric has been most challenged in the past 30 years is the inner cities. Thirty years ago, they were the powerhouse of our economic activity and the driving force behind much of our growth and wealth creation. Then, for various reasons, they began to decline. In every case, the decline can be traced back to socialist policies—*[Laughter.]* Hon. Members may laugh, but it is true.

Labour's high rating policy drove out of the inner cities those who could afford to move to the suburbs. My constituency, positioned between Sheffield and Manchester, is a case in point. Many people moved to the peak district, to Derbyshire, because they wanted to escape the high rating policies of Sheffield and Manchester.

They were often those who ran the businesses, and their next step was to decide that, rather than commute into the city every day, they would move their businesses. If they built a new factory, they did so in the suburbs so the jobs moved too. Very often, their wives taught in the local schools and, instead of teaching in the cities, they taught in the suburban areas. The fabric of the cities was completely undermined, and they gradually fell into a cycle of decline, deprivation and despair.

Some of the sink estates in the inner cities began as paradise but ultimately became prisons. If Opposition Members want to know why some of the people living there turned to crime, drugs and prostitution, they should not look at what has happened in the past 14 years but have the courage to go back further, to the policies they advocated, which the Commission on Social Justice itself will challenge. That is where the seeds of decay were sown.

One might have assumed that the Labour party has chosen today's topic for debate because it had some constructive policies to rebuild social cohesion in the cities. It is startling, however, that, each time in the past 14 years that the Opposition have had an opportunity to support a policy to tackle decline, they haved voted against it.

They voted against urban development corporations and, in some cities, they made things as difficult as possible until they realised that the corporations were here to stay. They voted against the Government's inner-city task forces, and Labour local authorities often refused to co-operate with them. They voted against plans to develop derelict land and bring back life to inner-city areas; they voted against city technology colleges and training and enterprise councils, and against a range of policies designed to bring hope and to reverse the decline. Every time they have had the opportunity to do something constructive, they have backed away.

Ms Mowlam: The hon. Gentleman spent some time saying that decisions should not be dictated from the centre, and that the Government should not be heavy-handed. He says that people should decide for themselves, but to whom are the training and enterprise councils and the development corporations accountable? They are controlled centrally from Westminster and Whitehall.

Mr. Hendry: I had hoped that the hon. Lady and her party had learnt something over the years. The TEC in my constituency offers the best training available in Stockport and High Peak. There is a cast-iron commitment that

every 16 and 17-year-old who cannot find employment or a place at university will have a place on a training scheme. The system works. Businesses are actively involved——

Mr. Graham: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Hendry: No, I am answering the hon. Lady.

Businesses are actively involved in assessing their own training needs and ensuring that those needs are met. The development corporations have revitalised parts of inner-city Sheffield and Manchester. For the hon. Lady to try to undermine their work once again shows how little the Labour party has learnt from its 14 years in opposition.

Another issue of concern to my constituents and people throughout the country is crime. Every time the Labour party has had a chance to show that it wants to take a stand against crime, it has backed away from doing so. People would not be surprised to learn that Labour Members are, in many ways, the criminals' friends. In my county council, the police have been undermined. Labour party policies too often ensure that accused people have all the cards.

The Opposition take a soft line on sentencing. If we followed their policies, our present crime problems would be infinitely worse. If Labour Members would vote with the Government now and then to support an integrated and cohesive approach to tackle crime, we would make further inroads into that serious problem.

In my capacity as joint chairman of the all-party group on homelessness, I want to concentrate for a moment on the issue of housing, which is crucial to our social fabric. In the past 14 years, 2 million new houses have been built in this country. But even more are needed, partly because people are staying alive longer and partly because of the social breakdown. However, I am sceptical about how many new houses some people say need to be built every year. Sometimes that figure rises to 200,000, but that would be excessive if two steps could be taken.

First, we need to make better use of existing housing stock. It is scandalous that 75,000 empty properties are owned by local authorities.

Ms Mowlam: Here we go.

Mr. Hendry: The hon. Lady is familiar with the list that I am about to cite, but somehow the figures do not change.

In Liverpool, 9·6 per cent. of the local authority's housing stock is empty. In Manchester, that figure is 6·5 per cent., and in Brent it is 5 per cent.

Mr. Randall: What about the Government's housing stock?

Mr. Hendry: I shall discuss the Government's housing stock in a minute.

We are then told that the houses are empty because those local authorities do not have the money to repair them. In those same local authorities, rents are not being collected. Brent, Liverpool and Manchester each has £15 million of uncollected rent arrears. If they bothered to act as good landlords, they would have the money to return their housing stock to a good condition.

Labour Members mentioned the Government's empty houses. They will be aware that some 10,000 Government-owned properties are empty and, if they have read the *Official Report*, they will know that I have tabled some 20 parliamentary questions to my hon. Friends in the Ministry of Defence, encouraging them to do more to free some of their empty houses for homeless people. I would welcome support on that issue.

Mr. Graham: Will the hon. Gentleman give way on that point?

Mr. Hendry: I wish to finish my sentence before giving way to the hon. Gentleman.

Under my right hon. Friend the Minister for Housing, Inner Cities and Construction, the Government have set up a task force that is determined to crack down on that problem and ensure that every Department does all that it can to reduce its housing stock. I hope that the hon. Member for Renfrew, West and Inverclyde (Mr. Graham) will say that he will encourage his local authority to cut down its housing stock in the same way.

Mr. Graham: I assure the hon. Gentleman that I help the local authority in every way possible. He is probably not aware that members of the armed forces and their families, and people who work in, say, the royal ordnance factories for the Government, do not receive the discount allowances granted to council house tenants. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman could agitate to ensure that Ministry of Defence employees get the same discount that is available to local authority tenants. If he does so, he will be doing them a service.

Mr. Hendry: If the hon. Gentleman reads tomorrow's issue of the *Official Report*, he will see the answer on that question, which has been given to me today. It does not directly address that point, but deals with the number of sales that have gone through. Of 70,000 applications, 1,500 sales have been completed. So I shall table a question further to that one to find out why the number is so small, and I look forward to the hon. Gentleman's support on that matter.

Another problem is empty private houses. The total number of local authority, Government and private houses amounts to some 800,000 empty houses—which, on a simple mathematical basis, amounts to five empty houses for every homeless family. We need to bring many of those houses back into use if we are to make significant strides in tackling the problem.

We also need to consider the allocation of those houses to different people. I wish to comment on some of the areas on which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State touched in relation to single-parent families. I shall begin by considering what is in the best interests of young single parents, particularly teenagers, and their children.

I can think of nothing worse than a 16, 17 or 18-year-old with a young baby being shoved in a council house, perhaps in a part of town that he or she does not know well, without friends in the neighbourhood, and without social or other support to give the child a good start in life. It would be much better to see whether different forms of support for single parents could be established.

The knock-on effect is that, in my constituency and elsewhere, many families have been on the waiting list for three, four or five years, yet they scarcely seem to move up the list. Their children are growing up and need more space, but they can never move because other people are always popped in the housing list as priority cases and go to the top.

[Mr. Hendry]

I do not suggest that mothers become pregnant deliberately for that reason. I was intrigued when the hon. Member for Hampstead and Highgate (Ms Jackson) referred the other day to mothers "making themselves pregnant". That is an interesting biological concept, but she is a lady who knows more about those matters and can probably enlighten me on how it can be done.

We should be able to do more to help families on the waiting list. First, local authorities should question the genuine eligibility of people who say that they have been evicted from their homes, to ensure that it is true. Secondly, we should see whether we can make greater use of shared accommodation. Hostels have a negative connotation, but shared accommodation in which we could bring together four, five or six single parents, for whom social support can be provided, or who can provide it for one another, must be better than leaving them in isolation.

We could also see whether more could be done to encourage young people to stay at home with their parents. It might be worth looking at the idea of paying parents a contribution to recognise the costs involved. Although I accept the Secretary of State's comment about not wishing to incur greater expenditure now in the hope that, in years to come, we may reduce it, such a policy would significantly reduce expenditure this year, because single parents would no longer have to claim housing benefit. They may be more able to go out to work, and would require less income support. Moreover, another family could be moved out of bed-and-breakfast accommodation, thereby saving the huge costs involved.

Mr. Michael Stephen (Shoreham): Will my hon. Friend comment on the position in my constituency, which is not an isolated case, where a father came to my surgery and said that he had a five-bedroomed house where he lived with his wife and daughter? His daughter would not accept the reasonable rules that he and his wife laid down, so she went off to the social services to declare herself homeless. She is now accommodated in a council flat, having been made a priority case and put on the list above people who have been waiting for a long time. That not only deprives people of a home but undermines parental authority.

Mr. Hendry: My hon. Friend raises a point that is familiar to many of us, and the ideas that I have outlined would go some way towards tackling the problem. First, we should question whether the person is genuinely homeless and evicted; secondly, we should try to find more attractive ways to support single parents.

The most startling aspect of this debate is that the new ideas come not from the Opposition but from the Conservative party. Those include the flats-above-shops initiative; the rough sleepers initiative, which has reduced the number of people sleeping rough by two thirds in the past two years; the concept of private sector leasing, which has reduced the number of families in bed-and-breakfast accommodation by nearly 40 per cent. in the past year; the pilot schemes for concepts such as foyers, with an integrated approach towards accommodation, training and getting young people into work; and pilot schemes on rent deposits.

The ideas are being generated by the Conservative party, specifically from my right hon. Friend the Minister for Housing, Inner Cities and Construction, which is why we are, for the first time, seeing such a welcome drop in the number of homeless people. The same applies to the wider issue of social security. The policies that the Government have pursued and the ideas that have come from the Conservative party show that we are the party that is looking to the future.

More support is being given in social security than ever before. Over the past 14 years, the sum has increased by 75 per cent. to £80 billion. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has given the figures clearly. Above all, rather than spreading the money thinly—the hon. Member for Garscadden said that that was his approach to the basic rate of the state pension—the Government have tried to give more help to the people who need it most, by giving £1 billion to less well-off families, and an extra £1 billion over the past four years to less well-off old-age pensioners.

The Government have also targeted more attention on creating better incentives to work. There is still a small poverty trap, whereby people may earn more money without being much better off, but at least people now make some gain, whereas, before the Government's social security reforms of 1986-87, people were significantly worse off when they went to work. The Government have now removed that disincentive.

The Government are also taking a lead in encouraging personal responsibility. Five million people are now investing in personal pensions, and, through the Child Support Agency, absent fathers are being encouraged to take responsibility for their children.

All those ideas have come from the Conservative party. We, rather than the Labour party—even with their Commission on Social Justice—are the party trying to generate policies for the rest of the decade, policies that will take us into the next century.

When we talk about help for those who need it, and about the social fabric, it all comes back to economics. The Conservative party will tackle the problems better than the Labour party, because we have a better understanding of how wealth is created. We believe in stable rates of tax, rather than in increasing taxes, which would snuff out the recovery. The Labour party talks about an investment-led recovery, but at the same time plans a super-tax on the privatised utilities that would kill off their investment plans for several years to come.

We know that, if we want more jobs in this country, we should reject policies such as the social chapter, and adopt policies that reduce bureaucracy and red tape. That is why the economy is now turning round. My local experience tells me that it is turning around much faster than the official statistics suggest—*[Interruption.]*

The hon. Member for Garscadden may laugh, but he should come to my constituency and visit the heavy engineering factory making industrial cranes, where production has increased by 20 per cent. since last September. Two of my four largest employers have taken on more people this year than they laid off last year. Unemployment is falling, because there is a manufacturing-led recovery.

If we wish problems such as those mentioned in the motion to be tackled, we must have economic recovery, and the policies being pursued by the Government will bring that about. Moreover, we must look to the future, and we must have the vision and the courage of our convictions to develop policies, rather than contracting that out to some independent commission.

6.32 pm

Mr. Tony Benn (Chesterfield): The social fabric of this country is being destroyed by unemployment, which is ruining the lives of millions of people and denying the country the wealth that those people could create if they were employed. Unemployment is creating terrible hardship not only for individuals but for whole families. It leads to the breakdown of marriages and to many of the crimes that worry us as Members of Parliament.

If the debate can perform any function at all, it is to try to explain to the people who may hear it or read it why that has happened. The truth is that unemployment is Government policy. It is no good saying to Ministers, "If only you did this, that or the other, you would get back to full employment." Ministers do not want full employment. Unemployment lowers wages, undermines trade unions and creates a dependent society in which everybody is terrified of his or her employer.

I appeared on "Newsnight" on the BBC the other night, and the woman who did my make-up, whom I have known for some time, is on a one-day contract. What security does she have?

Conservatives talk about a dependent society as if claiming social security when one is unemployed after having worked for 30 years and paid for it were a sign of a dependent society. Yet the Government want to pursue a political strategy, not an economic strategy.

If they had had an economic strategy, they would have spent the North sea oil revenue re-equipping our industry. I was Secretary of State for Energy when the Forties field was discovered, and it was so rich that British Petroleum, which discovered it, amortised the entire debt—at a cost of £700 million—in 18 months. This country has had £100 billion in revenue from the oil. Where has it gone? It has all been spent on unemployment pay.

When one travels around talking to people and listening to them, one finds many skilled engineers working in shops, driving taxis or unemployed. We are the only country in the world that has used oil revenues not to train taxi drivers to be tool makers but to turn tool makers into taxi drivers. That has been a deliberate policy, and it has created exactly the society that the Government want. Their policy has not been an economic strategy for growth.

The other day, somebody showed me a copy of "Business" magazine from 1986. Its leader said:

> "British business is getting better . . . If you decide to set up on your own, you would be well advised to avoid manufacturing. The big bucks are almost all in importing and marketing".

Over the page the magazine cited two brilliant business men, Octav Botnar and Asil Nadir. Those were the examples for the 1980s.

The Government are engaged in something that they never admit; they are taking us back to a Victorian society in which the people who create the wealth are on their knees from fear, and those who have the whip hand can impose anything that they like on them. Having been in Parliament for 43 years, I am not surprised that that is what Tory Members want. For my sins, I am paid to watch them, and I have watched them from the beginning—although they were a much nicer bunch in 1950, in the days of Winston Churchill. Conservative Members have always made speeches such as the one which we have just heard from the hon. Member for High Peak (Mr. Hendry).

What worries me, and what should worry my hon. Friends and others listening to the debate, is not why the Tories do that to us, but why people let them do it to us. That is the real question. I have never been in favour of attacking individual Ministers; they do that to each other more effectively than I can. Nor am I in favour of the habit of demanding the resignation of a Minister every day, because I do not think that resignations make much difference. The Ministers go, but the policies continue. However, the House is part of the media, in a way, and I am in favour of trying to get to the root of the question, if that can be done. What is it that leads people to accept a policy so grossly unjust and so massively wasteful of human resources?

The answer is that, for the past 14 years—although I believe that what is loosely called Thatcherism began earlier than 1979—people have been told that profits matter more than people. That idea has been implanted, spread and endlessly repeated. During the election campaign, I met a lad in Staveley, in my constituency, who said, "I am not voting Labour this time, Mr. Benn." I asked him why and he replied, "I have got some British Gas shares." When I asked him how many shares he had, he said that he had £100-worth. I asked him whether he had a job, and he said no. I said, "If you had a job, you might get £100 a week." But because he had some shares, that lad had become a Conservative.

The idea that that is what life is all about is constantly repeated. An example that comes to mind is the use of the word "customers". We get on the train and we hear, "Will customers who boarded the train at Derby please take care of their baggage?" I said to the ticket collector, "I am not a customer; I am a passenger." He said, "No, you are not; you are a customer." If I go to hospital, am I a customer for an operation? If I am hauled up before the magistrate, will he call me "customer at the bar"? Does the Archbishop of Canterbury talk about "dearly beloved customers"? Does the Queen, in her Christmas broadcast, refer to "our customers here and abroad"? *[Laughter.]*

Hon. Members may laugh at that idea, but I can tell them one thing about a customer: one cannot be a customer if one has no money. By turning people into customers, we depersonalise the poor, whose poverty has been created by the policies in which the Conservative party believes. The BBC does that more than anyone else. Do hon. Members listen to Dominick Harrod on "The Financial World Tonight"? He gabbles on night after night about the value of the pound sterling to three decimal points against a basket of European currencies. Next time I go on holiday to the continent I shall take a basket of European currencies; it sounds a handy thing to have.

Then we hear that, because the pound has dropped by three decimal points, the Government say that we have to close a hospital to restore confidence. Witchcraft has been propagated. It has nothing to do with the real economy whatever. I have never seen pensioners hurrying out in the morning to sell their deutschmarks and buying krugger-rands because Dominick Harrod has told them what has happened to the Dow Jones industrial average. Such poison has been injected into the Government.

I have never been frightened of what legislation Prime Ministers can get through, because if there is a large enough majority, all the legislation can be repealed in 24 hours. However, the ideas outlined in recent speeches from Conservative Members have done enormous damage.

[Mr. Tony Benn]

Those ideas have spread to the public services. I recently visited the beautiful new Royal hospital in Chesterfield, and was taken round by the unit manager——

Mrs. Browning: Who paid for that?

Mr. Benn: It was authorised by the Labour Government, by my predecessor Lord Varley, who has now moved from sharing our opinion to Lloyds bank, which is his problem.

I was shown around the hospital by the unit manager, who is a chartered accountant, and we arrived at the premature baby unit. The nurse and the sister were present and the unit manager leaned over and said, "Mr. Benn, this is the most expensive end of the business." If premature babies are a business, they are all uneconomic units, because I have never met a premature baby who has contributed any wealth at all. Pensioners are all uneconomic units, too. Before one knows it, the young and the old are also non-persons because they do not create wealth. The people who create wealth cannot be asked to pay any more tax, so the people who are dependent will be the victims of the policy that has been outlined.

The Government are doing the same in schools. Head teachers must now decide whether to hire a teacher, have the school cleaned or get the windows repaired. A whole new bureaucracy has been created.

If one rings up a doctor, he will say that he is afraid that he may have exceeded his budget for the current quarter. When will the day come when, on ringing the fire brigade, it says, "Don't tell us about the fire, because we have used our quota until the end of March"? If business principles are applied to public services, those services are destroyed. Of course, that is exactly what is happening.

I was invited not long ago to a school in Chesterfield where there was a class on business studies. I thought that it would be interesting. When I got there, the teacher, who was rather shy, said, "In the old days, I taught social studies, but, as you know, Mr. Benn, that is illegal now, so I teach business studies."

I asked the teacher what project the children were studying. She told me that the project was that the school was closed by the local education authority and the class had to try to maximise the profit from the sale of the school. She pointed at one youngster and told me that he was an "estate agent"; she pointed to a young girl who was a "property developer"; she pointed at somebody else who was "the head of a construction company"; and then she pointed at the most miserable child in the class and said that he was the head teacher and that they were trying to improve his redundancy pay.

I asked the class, "Is it about the maximisation of profit?" "Yes, yes," they said, hoping that the teacher would notice. So I asked them, "Have you considered prostitution, because that is very profitable? Have you thought about making flick knives in the school laboratory for the football fans of the country? Why not open your playground to toxic waste from all over the world? You would make much more money from those schemes."

The teacher's face fell a mile, so I asked the children if they wanted the school to close. "Close the school? No. We love it," they said. "My grandfather was here, my auntie was here, I enjoy it and my sister is hoping to come." I asked them why they did not drop the whole damn silly thing and instead campaign to keep the school open. They could lobby in Matlock, ring up Radio Sheffield, get on to the *Derbyshire Times* or come to London to see hon. Members.

Then I realised that a whole new generation of young people are being infected with a vicious, lousy virus that profit is more important than their education. It is like going to Pakistan, where the Islamic republic idea is pumped into the children, or it is like Moscow under Joe Stalin. That is what is happening, and that is the cause of the trouble we face. Such ideas have infected the whole of society—they are the values of capitalism.

I am proud of being a socialist, and I will always remember one of the most socialist things that we ever did was also the most popular—creating the national health service. I am the last remaining Labour Member in the House who heard Aneurin Bevan, as Minister of Health, make his resignation speech. He resigned because the Government put charges on teeth and spectacles.

The health service was socialist not because of who owned the buildings but because people had access to medical care on the basis of need, not wealth. The Government are utterly resolved to destroy that principle by trusts, by fund holders, by pushing it out to private practice and by destroying the national dental service. Do not think that is popular, because most people in the country believe that health is a national interest.

I remember my dad saying to me once that the pre-war Liberal Government of 1910 made the nation's health a national interest, and long before the health service. I thought that that was silly and that everybody knew that, but that is no longer true. The nation's health is an optional extra like white-walled tyres. People buy treatment if they can afford it, and if they cannot, they go down to a lower grade. [HON. MEMBERS: "That is not what it is all about."] Of course that is what it is about. People who wait for medical treatment are told that, if they go private, they can jump the queue.

What about dental care? I do not know who Conservative Members meet. I met a man who was waiting for months for a prostate operation. If he had had the cash, he would have had it done tomorrow. Do not tell me that the Government are not destroying the national health service.

The only way in which we can change such a course is to rid society, the voters and any remnants that may appear in the Commission on Social Justice or anywhere else, of the idea that the problem is resolved by taxing and punishing the poor and by continuing to enrich the rich. That is what the Government's policy is about.

Unemployment in the pre-war years was ended by public expenditure. It took 3 million or 4 million people off the dole in the 1930s and put them in the arms factories. Those unemployed people made sten guns, and built Spitfires and ships. My dad never had a Spitfire in the garden and my mum never had a tank—it was public expenditure. To get out of unemployment, it must be recognised that public expenditure on public services is the engine of social renewal for the 1990s.

There is £16 million in the Chesterfield council area alone from the sale of houses that the council was forced to sell that it cannot spend on building new ones. On Friday, I heard four or five tragic cases of people who cannot get a house, yet the council has the money. I met an unemployed, homeless building worker outside the

unemployment office the other day. Give him the money to build his house and he would not be homeless or unemployed.

Why do such things happen? Is it because the poor cannot afford houses? They are not customers for houses. Ask beggars on the streets of London at Embankment if they would like a house. They would love a house, but they do not have the money for a down payment. They are the under-class, the poor, the people who must be kept down as a warning to others not to get engaged in conflict with their employer.

Full employment is built up through schools, health and pensions. Economies would be enormous if that happened, because huge amounts of money would not be spent on unemployment benefit and income support. Those policies captured the imagination of an awful lot of people.

Over 50 years ago, when I was in the Air Force, the Beveridge report was published. "Full employment in a free society" and "social security" opened a new world and took people away from dependence on their employer. So in 1945, there was a huge swing in the general election and the Tory party was totally thrown out of office. Why? Because people coming back from the war vowed that they would never return to the means test, to unemployment, to rearmament and fascism. They said that they wanted to build a new Britain.

From travelling around the country, I suspect that that feeling is returning. I do not think that it has penetrated the House much, and it has certainly not penetrated the Conservative party. We will never resolve the problems that we are discussing today by targeting the deserving poor, for God's sake. What does "targeting" mean? It means that somebody who needs something has to go on probation to prove that he needs it, instead of receiving it as a right. The Beveridge report was about people receiving benefits as a right.

We must recognise that we are in a community and not a jungle. If the British public made up their mind that they wanted to be a community and not a jungle and made that clear, any Government would have to respond. One cannot be born without two parents, and one cannot be buried without the help of someone else. The idea of individualism—clambering to the top on the back of somebody else—is a wicked, evil doctrine that we must exorcise from our society; otherwise, its fabric will break down and we shall be left with people who are strong without being rich because they have a pick-axe handle and take action that, historically, people have taken when they have been denied justice. History shows that that is how many injustices were dealt with, but that is not the right way to deal with them. The right way is to represent arguments with force and passion here and in the country and to get policies changed.

I am glad that this debate has taken place, because it has touched on philosophy instead of being an opportunity to bash a failed Minister—and there are plenty of them. When all of them have been destroyed, the media put them on every television programme to apologise for having destroyed them in the first place.

6.50 pm

Mrs. Angela Browning (Tiverton): I am grateful for the opportunity to follow the right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn), who apparently spoke on behalf of the Co-operative Society from the cradle to the grave. Perhaps I could make his day by beginning my speech by quoting Churchill's appraisal of the welfare state, which he described as a safety net through which no one should fall, from which all can rise and on which none can lie.

I should like to deal with that statement, because the problem that we face today in needing to review social security payments and the welfare state bears inspection based on Churchill's original assessment. Despite the £80 billion of public money that is spent, some people fall through the safety net—not, as Opposition Members have suggested, as a result of a deliberate Government ploy.

I recently attended a meeting in the House with the Carers National Association, whose survey of people with disabilities and special needs identified a large number of people who are living at home but are unknown to social services. Many of them live with their parents. It is only when their parents become ill or die that they come under the auspices of the social services, who then have to assist them with living and provide for them. Those people could genuinely be described as people who have fallen through the net. We must be more vigilant in ensuring that we identify the needs of such people.

Much attention has been paid in the debate to the single parent. I know from speaking to constituents that many women are single parents, often as a result of marital breakdown, and would like to rise from the net by returning to work and becoming financially independent. Despite the safety net of benefits and other moneys such as maintenance, it is often extremely important to such women that they regain their sense of independence and control over their lives and that they feel that they can make a contribution to their family's well-being. In reviewing the social security system, perhaps we could consider how we can assist that group to rise from the net and allow more women, particularly single women, who want to work to support their families to do so.

Another problem is people who lie on the net and take advantage of the system. I am sure that hon. Members will have heard from constituents who can clearly identify people in their local communities who lie on the net—those who take the money but moonlight and have undeclared earnings, which give them a considerable income when added to state benefits. Such people work the system.

It is appalling not only that they do so but that the nation is deprived of that money which could be better targeted on those who are in genuine need. People who see that going on have often made provision for old age, have lived frugally, have worked hard and have a passionate sense of injustice at people being allowed to abuse the system. I know that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will carefully consider fraud by people who claim and receive a range of benefits, which so affronts those who have worked hard.

One or two remarks made in the debate suggest that Opposition Members do not believe that there is a problem with public money being prioritised to the single teenage mother. Hon. Members should not be judgmental. When a teenage girl has had a baby, there is a statutory obligation, not only on us as legislators but on the local authority and the local benefits agency, to ensure that mother and child are cared for and that they have a warm, safe and clean environment in which to live.

I used to think that my constituents' grievance resulted from a generation problem, because many of the people

[Mrs. Angela Browning]

who complain about provision for single mothers are of my own generation or a bit older. A case came to my attention a little while ago that I hope my right hon. Friend the Minister will take on board because it had a quite profound effect on me.

I was asked to see two constituents—a woman aged 21 and her husband, who was 20. They have a baby who is just over a year old. They live in a private rented one-bedroom house, which has one living room downstairs. They explained that the child was getting older and that all three of them slept in the bedroom upstairs. There was no room in the room downstairs for a cot or bed. They were on the council waiting list and were subject to the points system for council accommodation.

The husband worked, and they received family credit, so they were already in touch with the benefit system. The wife went to her housing office to inquire how they were progressing on the list for council housing—they had married when she was four months pregnant—and was told that if they had not married the council would have been able to find her much better accommodation.

She said to me, "I thought conservatism meant that if you worked hard and did things the right and proper way eventually you went up the ladder and got things that justifiably were yours; I see around me young single unmarried girls who have gone above me in the housing list—not only do they have an independent life in a flat, but they have had help with buying essentials for the baby whereas we have bought second hand and have been grateful to receive things from the family."

I feel that there is a generation problem here, because my generation did not worry too much about having hand-me-downs from relatives. We were usually grateful for a second-hand cot or pram. The culture now, which is more apparent among people who are dependent on the benefit system, is that everything must be just right and brand new.

I must tell my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State that I did not know what to say to that young woman and her husband, because she was right. There is something fundamentally wrong with a system that allows such a young couple to be overtaken on the housing register when they are trying to bring up their baby in a loving home environment. Such cases must be considered in the review.

I said that we should not be judgmental, but must accommodation be suitable to an independent life style? Could we not consider providing warm, clean hostel accommodation? I am not talking about a ghetto, but about something adequate that meets the need of mother and child and our statutory obligations. Working people should not be overtaken in the queue by people who obviously have a clear understanding of their rights and entitlements under the current legislation.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, who has left the Chamber, mentioned the case of a teenage girl who, although she was not pregnant, received generous benefits. I have heard of similar cases. The general public have become sick and tired of seeing people who use and abuse the system getting away with it while others who are doing the right thing and have worked hard. The public feel a sense of injustice about such cases. The House debated fraud last week and I hope that in the review my right hon. Friend will look carefully at how benefits are prioritised.

My right hon. Friend said in the introduction to the document "The Growth of Social Security":

> "The aim is to improve the system; to make it better focused to protect the vulnerable, to ensure that we all have the means to cope with the needs and contingencies of modern life."

Life in the 1990s is perhaps rather different from what it was in the 1940s and 1950s. Perhaps it is a good thing in many ways that we have moved on. Nonetheless, we must study those situations and take into account the public perception of how we manage and prioritise the £80 billion of expenditure.

An area which hon. Members and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State have identified was that of pensions. The hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) mentioned the time at which the burden of state pension payments would become onerous because of the sheer number of pensioners in relation to the number of people working and contributing to the national insurance and taxation system. He said that that date would be about the year 2030. We should not be too dismissive of that, and I endorse and support the fact that the Government are looking in the 1990s at the long-term implications of pensions on the country and the individual. Let us face it —people now in their early 20s and paying into the system through national insurance and taxation will be looking to draw a state pension in 2030. It is not so far in the future as it may sound. In reality, it affects people who are currently working and paying national insurance contributions.

The Government have been right to encourage private pensions. The tax treatment of pensions in terms of the contributions from employees and employers has been generous and helpful. I hope that that will continue. It is important that as many people as possible are encouraged to maximise their income in retirement, particularly as this is an escalating problem which will be more challenging as time goes by.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: The hon. Lady perhaps will mention a subject for which I did not have time in my speech. There is a problem for some pensioners that arises from the increasing differences in charging levels by public utilities. I know that the hon. Lady is concerned about South West Water. Ofwat has estimated that, in the year 2000, pensioners on the basic level of income support in the area served by South West Water will face bills equivalent to 14 per cent. of their pensions. Pensioners in other areas will face a level of only 5 per cent. The Government must examine the matter if bills are to rise in that way.

Mrs. Browning: The hon. Gentleman has identified a matter about which people in the west country are concerned. We have drawn the attention of my right hon. Friends the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the Environment to the problem, and they are working on it as we speak. The hon. Gentleman is right to identify the difficulties faced by people who do not have help additional to their basic pension or available to them through the benefit system.

That is why the matter is increasingly important. It concerns not only things such as water, but the life style of people who are dependent only on the state pension. There will always be people who, for one reason or another, have been unable to make an input during their working lives.

The Government's encouragement through the tax system for people to make provisions if they are able to do so is helpful.

The hon. Member for Truro (Mr. Taylor) has intervened on my speech, so perhaps this would be a good opportunity to refer to one or two things that he mentioned. He declared that the Liberal Democrats will produce their own budget in the autumn showing how they would pay for such provisions through the tax system. I am aware that it is a policy of the party to identify individual policy areas of expenditure and to attach to each a certain tax.

We know that during the general election campaign —I believe that it is still a policy statement of the party —the Liberal Democrats declared that a penny on the basic rate of income tax would be specifically targeted to improve the requirements for spending in education. It rather sounds as though the hon. Gentleman is pursuing that claim. I shall watch with great interest to see how the other demands on all areas of policy expenditure would be met. I wonder whether a penny for education would be followed by a penny for social security. I am sure that the hon. Gentleman knows that the latter measure would raise only £1·5 billion of revenue, which does not sound like enough for that policy area.

Perhaps there would be a penny here and another penny there, which would mount up to a high level of taxation. I will follow with great interest how all the pennies amalgamate and what that would do to the basic rate of tax. An increase in tax would affect my constituents, particularly those who are on low incomes but are taxpayers.

Perhaps even more important would be the effect on pensioners who are just within the tax threshold, because they would be affected if taxpayers were required to make a contribution through the system of funding advocated by the Liberal Democrats. I will wait in suspense until the autumn to receive the figures, as the hon. Member for Truro was unable to give them this evening.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: I am happy to take the hon. Lady's knock-back, and she is right about our education policy. To be fair, however, I must say that we have consistently published our proposals at the time of each Budget. Like the Chancellor, we cannot publish in between because we do not have the figures.

Mrs. Browning: I take the hon. Gentleman's point, and I do not want to be too brutal to him this evening.

Before I turn away from the Liberal Democrats, I wish to mention an intervention by my hon. Friend the Member for High Peak (Mr. Hendry) during the speech of the hon. Member for Truro about how Liberal Democrat policy is decided. Naturally, that is a matter of great interest to many in this House. It may be a matter of great interest to the hon. Gentleman. It may be something of a mystery to him also.

The hon. Gentleman seemed to say that the matter of VAT charges on fuel had been put forward by the Liberal Democrats in a policy document, but had been put to vote and overturned at a party conference and was therefore no longer official Liberal Democrat policy. I wanted to raise that, because I am aware that the policy for a 50 per cent. cut in expenditure on defence was carried by a Liberal Democrat party conference, yet I know that the hon. and learned Member for Fife, North-East (Mr. Menzies Campbell) has consistently tried to persuade the House that decisions taken at Liberal Democrat party conferences are not quite so binding as we had been led to believe. Therefore, he suggests, we should not hold them to that 50 per cent. cut in expenditure on defence as a binding policy.

I not want to get involved in an internal struggle about how Liberal Democrat policy is decided, but the hon. and learned Member for Fife, North-East often challenges the Government on their policy, and we often ask what his party would do. It is a matter of some interest and there seems to be confusion as to where the decision making lies in terms of the type of debate that we are conducting tonight.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: The point about the 50 per cent. is that we came up with a range of possibilities immediately after the cold war ended, and 50 per cent. was the maximum suggested cut. With hindsight, as our defence spokesman said, we think that that was wrong. Indeed, it was corrected in later policy documents and in our manifesto. The Government are in no position to preach about consistency in view of some of their policies, such as the poll tax.

Mrs. Browning: We all travel the road to Damascus occasionally—and the Liberal Democrats rather more frequently than most. I hope that the hon. Gentleman will convey the message that he has just given us to the delegates at the next Liberal Democrat conference in the autumn. I am sure that they will be interested to hear how much power they have when they vote at the conference.

I have been grateful for this opportunity to tell my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State about some of my concerns about the review of social security policy and, in particular, about the way we treat single parents in the benefits system. Single parents are not to be penalised by what I suggest; it could often be an opportunity for them, getting them out of the safety net and back into work. Many of my constituents, especially women, would welcome such an opportunity.

7.10 pm

Mr. Malcolm Chisholm (Edinburgh, Leith): There have been many splits in the Conservative party during this Session of Parliament. I hope to see another one before the week is out. There will, however, not be a split in the Lobbies tonight. The modern Conservative party is united in its belief that public expenditure is too high—partly because Conservatives just believe that and partly because, as the Government of the day and of the past 14 years, they cannot face up to the real reasons for the public sector borrowing requirement. Those reasons are unemployment and the shrinkage in the tax base, both created by the Government.

Earlier, my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) reminded us that the bottom 10 per cent. of the population are 14 per cent. worse off in real terms than they were in 1979; largely because of unemployment. We were also told that the income support bill stands at more than £10 billion, whereas in 1979 it was £4 billion, at constant prices. The main reason for that is also unemployment.

As my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) said, unemployment also has other effects, such as causing more and more people to be low-paid.

[Mr. Malcolm Chisholm]

That is another reason for the shrinkage in the tax base and for increased social security spending on family credit and other benefits.

At the other end of the tax system, there are other reasons for the shrinkage. We know from recent figures that the top 1 per cent. have gained £33,000 from tax cuts in each year of this Conservative Government's tenure. We also know—the former Chancellor reminded Conservatives of this the day before he was sacked—that corporation tax evasion is a massive problem. A survey in the 1980s showed that only two of the top 20 companies paid mainstream corporation tax. The Conservative party should be thinking about the shrinkage in the tax base and about doing something about unemployment; it should not be trying to implement cuts in public expenditure.

This evening we have heard the predictable litany from the Secretary of State, who pointed to three chief categories of people to serve as scapegoats for the mess that the Government have created. He mentioned invalidity benefit recipients, housing benefit recipients and lone parents. I want to speak mainly about the last of those three, but, first, I wish briefly to mention invalidity benefit and to invite the Minister to answer the question that I put to the Prime Minister four or five weeks ago. I have been lucky enough to ask him three questions recently, none of which he has answered. Perhaps this evening the Minister will answer my question about invalidity benefit.

Apart from the sort of people mentioned in the leaked document—the builder with heart disease, for instance —who else is to be excluded from invalidity benefit? Why on earth should people like this be the ones to pay for the Government's economic incompetence?

As for housing benefit, we have already been told by my hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Mr. Raynsford) that the real reason for the increase in the benefit has to do with the reduction in Government support for council housing and with deregulation of the private rented market. I will say no more about housing benefit except in so far as it relates to my main subject this evening—lone parents.

The first myth perpetrated about lone parents in the course of the terrible attacks on them by Ministers in the past three weeks has had to do with housing. I draw the attention of hon. Members to the interview with the Secretary of State for Wales, in which James Naughtie of the BBC asked him where he got the idea that teenagers were having themselves impregnated to get council houses. The right hon. Gentleman said that he had read several newspaper stories about the subject. So that is that; the matter is settled.

By whipping up these myths, the Government are creating a climate in which people are seriously beginning to talk about moving young women into hostels or forcing them to stay in the parental home. Both ideas should be ruled out immediately—I hope that the Minister will rule them out tonight.

Myths about crime are also to be heard. A week ago, in a terrible article in *The Sunday Times* about three young criminals, the author commented, "Needless to say, they were from single-parent households." Yet research by the Home Office in the mid-1980s showed that there was no difference in delinquency rates between children of two and one-parent families. In Edinburgh, the criminologist Richard Kinsey has done research on Scotland that comes to exactly the same conclusion.

The third myth is that lone parents are somehow to blame for the public expenditure and deficit problems of the Government. As I have shown, that is not true.

What is really behind all these myths is the age-old Tory trick of dividing people who should be united against them. As lone parents become the scapegoats, the Government are trying to turn two-parent families against single-parent families so as to distract people from the real reasons for their problems.

There are only two families in the world—the haves and the have-nots. As everyone knows, lone parents predominantly belong to the latter group; indeed, 70 per cent. of lone mothers are on income support, as are a slightly lower percentage of the much smaller number of lone fathers. Most lone-parent families are living below the poverty threshold and are caught in the poverty trap.

It is utterly obscene that people should seriously suggest reducing the already inadequate income of these people. Are Conservatives saying that lone parents are squandering the £70 that they get on luxuries like food, clothing and fuel taxes? They do not have enough money as it is. They are frequently reduced to approaching the social fund if they need anything beyond the bare necessities of life. It is intolerable to suggest cutting their incomes.

Dr. Green of the Institute of Economic Affairs—he seems to have the ear of the Government—suggests that mothers under 24 should receive only basic income support and no more. I hope that my hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mrs. Mahon) will shortly explain to the House that people aged less than 24 are living on less than £5 a day. Is it seriously suggested that lone parents, too, should exist on that? No; we should be talking about increasing their incomes, and I hope to show how that can be done.

This whole debate has had an air of unreality about it. When the Secretary of State for Wales started it rolling in a housing estate in Wales, it was a local policeman who had to inject a note of reality into the situation. He said that, because of domestic violence, injunctions had been taken out against many fathers on the estate, who were not allowed near the women. That was not taken into account by the Secretary of State for Wales.

In Edinburgh, there has been a pioneering campaign against domestic violence. I hope to speak about that in the debate tomorrow. It must be realised that many lone parents are the victims of domestic violence. The Secretary of State for Wales cannot seriously be suggesting—although he seemed to be—that he would like such men to return to those families. We cannot say, in blanket fashion, that two-parent families are always better than lone-parent families. In many situations, it could be the reverse. There cannot be a generalisation of that kind.

The Child Support Act 1991 is another cause of concern for lone-parent families who are subject to domestic violence. As the Act begins to operate, we are hearing that men are told that they are being asked for money because their former partners have specifically asked for it. We all know that women have no choice in the matter. I hope to raise several related issues in more detail tomorrow.

Contrary to what the Secretary of State has said, the majority of parents on income support are not helped in

any way by the Child Support Act. Any money they receive from former partners or husbands is deducted from their income support.

There is an absence of reality in the statistics. Who are these lone parents that the Government have lumped together and created myths and prejudices about? Some 70 per cent. are separated or divorced. Only 45,000 of the 845,000 people on income support are teenagers, and of that fairly small number only one in 10 actually planned the pregnancy.

The Government say they are very concerned about teenage pregnancies, but what have they done about it? What has happened to family planning clinics over the past few years? I have the figures for England and Wales, which were given to my hon. Friend the Member for Bristol, South (Ms Primarolo) on 7 June. They show a drastic decrease in the number of people referred to family planning clinics, which were not in any way balanced by an increase in people going to their GPs.

One in four family planning clinics has been shut over the past few years. Why do not the Government address that problem? Why do they take such a soft and pathetic line on sex education, as in their Bill yesterday, which denies teenagers the right to sex education if their parents do not wish it? Why are they talking about making contraception even more difficult by extending the selected list? If the Government are concerned about teenage pregnancies, these problems must be addressed.

Something must be done to help lone parents in respect of child care. This is at the very heart of the debate. Surveys show that as many as 90 per cent. of lone parents would like to work if they had child care. In my constituency, I have been involved with a child-care action group, which has carried out similar research and come up with similar figures. It is a key issue which the Government should address if they are concerned about getting lone parents off benefit.

Considerable research has shown that if child care were provided and we had an economic policy that created more jobs, the returns to the Exchequer would be greater than the amount currently spent on social security. Only two weeks ago, the Daycare Trust issued a report that proposed specific ways in which lone parents could be helped. I asked about that at Prime Minister's Question Time, but did not receive an answer. I have written to the Prime Minister and may get an answer in due course, but perhaps the Minister can comment on my proposals tonight.

At present, it is very difficult for lone parents because, even if child care were available, there is no way that people in low-paid jobs could afford to pay for it. I suggest that the money that anyone on income support or family credit spends on child care should be discounted or disregarded when assessing their income. That would be one small way in which to get lone parents off benefit and into employment.

Far more than that has to be done about child care; the whole question of supply has to be addressed. The Labour party is beginning to make the issue of child care one of the key arguments, not only in terms of helping women but in terms of economic policy. Much research has shown that that will benefit the country economically, as well as benefiting a large number of women.

Why do not the Government do something to help lone parents, rather than criticising them and making them scapegoats? Lone parents in my constituency are sick and tired of hearing what we have heard from Ministers over the past few weeks. Labour Members are sick and tired of that as well; we are particularly disgusted that it should come from Conservative Members who know very little, if anything, about the kind of conditions in which lone parents have to live. It is appalling that we should hear such things from Ministers and Conservative Members, whose idea of deprivation is limited to missing the occasional lunch.

7.26 pm

Mr. Quentin Davies (Stamford and Spalding): I listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Edinburgh, Leith (Mr. Chisholm) with great interest. It was an exposition of the classic Labour view of benefits, which is that benefits are good and more would be even better. If there are problems, it is because there are not enough benefits. I hope to persuade the House that that is an inadequate response to the issues with which we are faced, but the hon. Gentleman set out Labour's traditional case with forcefulness and lucidity.

I will make four points; then, unlike the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar), I will address the issues that I have raised and make practical suggestions. In that way, we may make progress. The hon. Member for Garscadden was long on complaints but very short indeed on any practical or constructive suggestions. That once more demonstrated the fundamental intellectual bankruptcy of the Labour party that we have seen in so many contexts recently. The Labour party has acknowledged that by contracting out further thought on this subject to some "independent" body that it has set up.

A point that has not been made this afternoon, but that all hon. Members surely acknowledge, is that the welfare state is a very remarkable and positive achievement. It is a great advance of civilisation that we no longer accept a position in which our fellow citizens can be left to starve in the street. It is a positive achievement of civilisation in this country, in this century, that we have removed the appalling horror of old age and widowhood that beset so many families 100 years ago.

All parties in the House can take their share of the credit for the construction of the welfare state. It owes its origins to the beginning of the century, and then to the great Beveridge report, which—rightly—has been referred to with reverence and respect many times this afternoon. That report was commissioned and accepted by the wartime coalition Government, led by Winston Churchill.

The welfare state that was subsequently constructed was laid on the foundation of the staple contributory benefits: old-age pension, sickness benefit and unemployment benefit. Those benefits have proved their worth. They are now part of the political consensus, and I am delighted that my right hon. Friends on the Front Bench have made it absolutely clear that the Government will continue to be committed to them. Scare stories to the contrary can be dismissed with contempt.

My second point may be controversial. The hon. Member for Leith would not agree that there is a major problem, but the whole system has now become excessively expensive. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State set out the figures, which are, or should be, well known, this afternoon—social security expenditure is

[Mr. Quentin Davies]

more than £80 billion, or one third of total Government expenditure, and one eighth, or slightly more, of gross domestic product.

It is a mathematical certainty that one cannot go on indefinitely increasing the share of GDP spent on social security. For it is a logical impossibility in any society that everybody should be subsidised. And there must be a point at which the burden becomes intolerable. If we have not yet reached that point, we must be extraordinarily close to it. Now is therefore the right time to take a hard and thorough look at the system, and I do not think that we can responsibly avoid that challenge.

My third point is that there is frequently a superficial attitude towards the whole benefits system, which was well set out and represented by the hon. Member for Garscadden this afternoon. He said that the social security system must deal with social realities. As a preliminary remark, that is an unexceptionable platitude. However, anybody who believes that that is the end, or even the essence, of the problem is taking a superficial view.

The social security system has now reached such a scale, in terms of the proportion of national resources that it consumes and redirects, and of the number of people who are dependent on it, that it largely influences and moulds that social reality. We must deal with that problem. Behaviour patterns can be, have been, and are being substantially changed and distorted by the existence of the social security system.

My fourth point is that the system, without the slightest doubt, is riddled with all kinds of anomalies, contradictions and perversities. One of those was mentioned earlier by the hon. Member for Garscadden, for which I give him credit. In many circumstances, if a man loses his job and his wife has a part-time job, it may be the financially rational solution, to maximise benefit and family income, for his wife to leave her part-time job so that the household qualifies for the full range of benefits—mortgage interest, housing benefit and so on. That is surely crazy.

Another obvious anomaly that springs to mind is that, if someone is made unemployed and decides to spend his or her enforced leisure time learning a new skill to provide for future employment, he or she will be deprived of benefit if that training course is considered to be a full-time course. It belies all common sense that society should be more ready to subsidise someone who, having lost his or her job, simply sits at home and does nothing, rather than someone who makes an effort to go out and use that time usefully by developing a new skill.

I have encountered another anomaly frequently in my constituency. If somebody is made unemployed, he or she will qualify for payment of mortgage interest. If he or she decides to go back into work, but at a lower salary—it may be an extremely useful job; a lower wage or salary does not make it necessarily less useful—he or she will lose all support for mortgage interest. It requires a considerable sacrifice in those circumstances, and a considerable commitment to the principle of hard work, to override the financial rationality and for that person to go back to work. What in the world are we doing putting in place a system that has such a thoroughly perverse effect?

And what in the name of heaven are we doing paying housing support to keep teenagers—who may have had an adolescent tiff with their parents and walked out of home, perhaps precipitately—in some hostel, perhaps in an inner-city area where they are exposed to all kinds of dangers, moral and otherwise, at the expense of the taxpayer, when they have good homes and loving parents who desperately want them back? I have encountered that in my constituency. That is not merely the economic policy but the social and moral policy of the madhouse. There are a great many such things that need to be looked at and radically changed.

I said that I would not confine myself simply to analysing or criticising the system or bringing forward complaints about it, but, rather, that I would make one or two practical suggestions. My first conclusion is that our system of contributory benefits has proved its worth. It should not be fundamentally altered except in one respect, which I shall propose in a moment. Indeed, it should be strengthened wherever possible. I regret the tendency that has sometimes emerged from the Department of Social Security to tinker with the contributory basis of those staple benefits.

The one sector at which we should take a fresh look is where there may be some scope for encouraging people to opt out of the system voluntarily and use alternative private insurance. I do not think that one can easily insure oneself privately against the economic hazards of unemployment, but one can insure against hazards such as disability and sickness.

There is no reason why we should not look carefully at the possibility of providing inducements, either in terms of a front-end payment, as we did when we were encouraging people to opt out of the state earnings-related pension scheme, or a continuing tax break, or combination of the two, in such a way that the net cost on public funds could be reduced while people could provide themselves with an equivalent, or even better, level of private insurance cover for those hazards of life. I hope that my right hon. Friend the Minister, who is flatteringly taking notes during my speech, will look at the possibility of doing that.

I also take the view that we should look carefully at workfare. The Prime Minister bravely said a few months ago—with the predictable outcry from the "bien pensant" section of the media—that this was not a matter which we could exclude from a review of social security policy.

Workfare in different forms is practised in civilised countries from Sweden to the United States. It seems to me entirely reasonable that somebody who finds that he or she has fallen on difficult times and requires support from the community should spend his or her involuntary leisure time doing something useful for the community in return for obtaining a new skill by going through a proper training programme.

I accept that there would be an enhanced cost to the present system if workfare were implemented, and it may be sensible to limit it to certain age categories—perhaps 18 to 24-year-olds or the under 30-year-olds—or to introduce it, at least initially, voluntarily or regionally. I hope that my right hon. Friend the Minister of State is considering that carefully and that we shall hear before too long of some concrete proposals.

The introduction of workfare would deal with some of the anomalies in the system that I have mentioned. In contradiction to the attitude that I think right and proper towards the traditional contributory benefits, I believe that we should be sceptical about means testing, which is at the

root of some of those anomalies and many others, of which hon. and right hon. Members on both sides of the House are all too well aware.

We risk the social security system having a perverse impact on people's values and behaviour patterns and ultimately on the future shape of our civilisation, and that is not a literary hyperbole. If one targets benefits in such a way as to erode steadily the difference between what the average man or woman receives by staying at home unemployed and what he or she obtains by going back to work, there will be a greater disinclination to go back to work for every pound by which the gap is reduced.

Increasingly, people will feel that one is a fool to go back to work. Who wishes to admit that a whole week's leisure is worth only a tiny amount—perhaps £10, £15 or £20? Everyone sets some positive value on his or her leisure, and it is dangerous to send a signal to society that people make fools of themselves when they go back to work because they receive only a small, almost derisory, marginal increase in their income.

Equally, if old people's benefits are means-tested, that will erode the difference between the disposable incomes of those who receive benefit and those who have made some small private provision or who benefit from private savings or a personal or private occupational pension. People will ask why they made a sacrifice to save a small amount out of a modest income for all those years, when they are only a few pounds better off than the people next door, who did not bother to do so, and when the return on that sacrifice is derisory and insulting.

If we go down that road, we send people a perverse signal about values, because we are telling them that there is no great credit to be had from saving or from work. We send a perverse economic signal to society because unemployment levels are likely to be higher when people are less prepared to supply their labour. We cannot afford to ignore that example of how a perverse social security system can exacerbate the very problems and social malaise that it is designed to counter.

In his Mais lecture, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has produced a first-rate agenda for a thorough review of the system. He has not attempted to pre-empt the debate by setting out any conclusions—that is right—but he has asked all the right questions. He has provided some of the essential facts, and if we do not take the opportunity that he has created, by having a serious, rigorous and constructive debate on the subject—as serious, rigorous, and essential as the debate that followed the publication of the Beveridge report, 50 years ago—it will not be the Government's fault. We Back Benchers will have been remiss in our duty if we do not take the opportunity to reconsider the system humanely, positively and responsibly.

7.44 pm

Mr. Thomas Graham (Renfrew, West and Inverclyde): After hearing the hon. Member for Stamford and Spalding (Mr. Davies) speak, I realise that there is absolutely no hope for the Tory party. I have never heard such drivel in my life. Does the hon. Member live in the real world?

Come with me to my constituency; come with me to my home; come and meet my neighbours. Those folk want to work. They want the right to work and they are not getting it under the Government. I know thousands of people who are looking for work. They want the right to a decent wage and to look after their home without begging for charity. They want jobs. Come to Linwood and meet the many decent, God-fearing folk who want the right to work but have not had that right since the factory closed 10 years ago. Think of that—10 years of Thatcherism, 10 years of Toryism.

The Conservatives have been in power for 14 years. They have been 14 long, hard years for people in Britain —for the unemployed, the pensioners and the disabled, who have seen the fabric of life dismantled before their very eyes and have seen the Government squandering incredible opportunities, as my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) said.

Let me take the House through some examples. Will hon. Members tell me if this is the type of Britain that we are about? I intervened during the Minister's speech and asked him about a woman who came to see me, who could hardly walk or crawl. She heart problems and arthritis. She was nearly walking dead, yet her mobility allowance had been stopped. That woman nearly had a heart attack because the resources that were needed to keep her alive were savagely taken away from her. With practically no rights, she did not know where to turn and went to her Member of Parliament. It is a sick society if people have to ask their Member of Parliament to look after their circumstances. They should be looked after in a humane society and a humane system. As I said, we ensured that people fought her case for her, and she eventually got her money.

A family woman, suffering from arthritis and heart problems, also came to see me. Her invalidity benefit had been stopped and she did not know what to do. It took her 12 weeks to get as far as me. The Minister will tell me that big signs are up on the walls and if she had read them she would know how to go about it. I know that a debate took place about having big signs. Anyway, it is absolute nonsense. That woman is suffering because the Government unilaterally cut off her invalidity benefit.

Another example was that of a man who was also denied mobility allowance. He can hardly walk. When he walks five yards he has to wait about 50 minutes to walk the next five yards. It looks as though the Government have a hidden agenda of cuts in social security and as though, to save £80 billion in expenditure, they will have to take money from the people who are least able to defend themselves.

Here is the sickest example. A man was taken off mobility allowance. He then had to go to a doctor, who asked him to walk 100 yd. The man walked 100 yd and the doctor said, "Now you're fit you don't get mobility allowance. You're denied it." The man died two days bloody later. That is the sort of stress and strain that we are putting on our sick and disabled folk, and they are honest and have integrity.

Can I go further? The Secretary of State should be called the "Minister of Misery". He has not given happiness or security to people on state benefits or on low pay, and he used insulting language of a kind that I have not heard here for a long time to my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar). I am sure that my hon. Friend is tough enough to fight his own battles, but I come from a different school: if anyone accused me of sanctimonious humbug I would dig them right up.

That is not the type of language that we are used to hearing from Ministers on whom millions of people rely to

[Mr. Thomas Graham]

have a bit of heart instead of a hard head and a stupid tongue. The Minister should get his language right because personal attacks do not do any of us any good. They are for outside. *[Interruption.]* If any Conservative Member wants to intervene I shall be delighted to let him in. He might learn something.

Terms such as "sanctimonious humbug" in a debate in which we are trying to be constructive and give the Government some enlightenment and show them the path of sanity are wrong. Their ears are plugged, their eyes are blind and their tongues are used only as whiplashes on folk who desperately need a decent Government.

The hon. Member for Bolton, North-East (Mr. Thurnham) read out a wee bit from *The Times*. I did not read it. He said that the Minister should visit Wisconsin where grandparents help single parents. it is absolutely disgraceful to suggest that that does not happen here. I know lone parents who get support from their grandmothers and grandfathers. It happens all the time. Do the Tory Government think that grandparents do not assist their families? Do they sincerely believe that grandchildren are ignored?

There has been talk about the fabric of life. Five of my years were unemployed and I know what the Government's fabric of life consisted of. For five years I experienced the difficulties of Christmas time and kids' birthdays, and what it was like when they had a cold or the 'flu.

Mr. Nigel Evans (Ribble Valley): The hon. Gentleman says that he knew about the difficulties of unemployment, especially at Christmas time. How did he feel when the last Labour Government twice stopped the pensioners' Christmas bonus of £10? Did he feel any shame when that Government did that to the pensioners who needed that money, particularly at Christmas time?

Mr. Graham: I will take time to give the hon. Gentleman a lecture within the debate. In those days the amount was related to earnings. However, at that time there were fewer than 1 million unemployed. People were happier and they had money to go on holiday. In my area, since 1979, since the great miracle movement called the Tory party took control of this country, 166,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost in Strathclyde. That is an assault on the fabric of life because it is taking away the right of men and women to earn a wage.

The Minister would not be able to talk about £80 billion of welfare expenditure if the Government had supported some of our manufacturers. They should have invested and reinvested and modernised those companies. If they had done that, those companies would still be there. We know what unemployment is like, and we know the sickness of having no wages, no pay. The Government should never mock the men and women of this country who have to face that suffering every week.

Not long ago a Conservative Member tried to live on dole money, but he gave up after five days when the money ran out. As I have told the House before, if he had tried to live on it for a year he would have been dead after seven months when the money ran out. Look at what the Government have done to the country: they have privatised everything and anything that can move to save their bankrupt policies. They have sold oil, gas, coal, electricity and telephones. You name it—they have sold the lot. As one of their noble Friends said, they have sold the nation's silver. Now they want to sell our soul, the caring part of Britain, because they do not want to look after our people.

A Conservative Member said that they would take a hard look. What do the Government mean by a hard look? Does the mean that Chancellor saying, "We will have to make hard decisions"? Do such hard decisions mean that the elderly, the lone parent, the unemployed guy and the disabled lad will have their benefits cut? Will they attack the people who need our help and who need good governance of our economy?

I am utterly disgusted at the total mismanagement of North sea oil. Some £100 billion was squandered while in Strathclyde hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs went to the wall. That £100 billion was used to prop up men on the dole. That was absolute nonsense. Any thinking Government would have used that money to buy new machinery and equipment and to finance computerisation—all the things that are needed in a high-tech country. But not this Government: they go the wrong way, bury their head in the sand and put our people into deeper deprivation.

One of the most ridiculous policies was the privatisation of water. At least in Scotland there is a guarantee that everybody is entitled to a basic supply of water without having it cut off, but not here in England and Wales. How many times have they cut off the water? Thousands of people have been cut off. When I was at school, a wee bit of time ago, we used to read the books and get a wee history lesson. I remember the days when if you heard "Gardez l'eau" you ducked because if you did not you got covered in muck.

Who would believe that any Government would go down the road of ensuring that, because of water privatisation, people could not afford the water that is needed to cook, clean and do the necessary? The Government went down that road and did not provide safeguards so that folk could be assured of a basic commodity. My hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Provan (Mr. Wray) has fought for many a month against the privatisation of Scottish water and could probably tell the House more about that than I could.

The Government are now in the business of being desperately wrong. A few days ago, there was an exchange between hon. Members about this bankrupt Government having no plans. It is incredible.

Mr. Jimmy Wray (Glasgow, Provan): Does my hon. Friend realise that when he talks to this Government he is talking to a brick wall? They are responsible for the misery and poverty. They have had no strategy for investment but have followed a short-term policy of selling the nation out, creating misery among the unemployed and putting 16 and 17-year-olds on drugs. That is the sort of policy they have followed. Yet Conservative Members sit and laugh at my comrade who has the facts and figures. They do not know what poverty is, but those who invested in Lloyd's will shortly know what it means when they are out of here and on the dole and trying to live that kind of life.

Mr. Graham: What can I add to that? After 14 years under the party of law and order, we have seen crime in Britain escalate to an unbelievable level. People are frightened to walk the streets, elderly people cannot go out

even in the daylight and are terrified of going out at night. What have the Government done about that? Nothing. Unemployment is raging. We have seen countless bankruptcies and companies are shutting down all the time. The Government have absolutely lost their way. They are not just hard-headed; they are hard and callous, because they do not have a policy or a plan either for the economy or for the social fabric of life. They have led us from crisis to crisis and created crises.

The Labour party is correct to support the Commission on Social Justice. The House should listen to one of its key statements, so I will read it:

"No Government can solve the problems of the benefits system without solving the problems of unemployment. Instead of an increasingly tattered safety net, the welfare state must be a springboard for economic opportunities".

So long as we have a Government committed to unemployment, we shall see young folk languish in the doldrums and go early to their graves. If there were a general election tomorrow, there would be no Tories on the Government side of the House. I believe that the people of Britain have had enough. The people of Newbury will show the rest of the country the road. I watch the laughing smiling faces of Conservative Members. I look forward to seeing them on the day of the Newbury result.

8.2 pm

Mr. David Willetts (Havant): We, too, are looking forward to the Newbury result in the next general election when we can be confident that a Conservative Government will be returned for a fifth term.

The hon. Member for Renfrew, West and Inverclyde (Mr. Graham) spoke powerfully about the subject of unemployment, but failed to take any account of the very clear speech by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Social Security.

The main point of my right hon. Friend's speech was that we should not have any illusions that the growth of social security expenditure was caused by cyclical unemployment and would disappear as unemployment fell, or was caused by an increase in the number of pensioners. The point of his argument—which is supported by the informative document produced by the Department of Social Security—is precisely that we have a problem of underlying growth in social security expenditure which is independent of changes in unemployment or the number of elderly people.

The problems driving the increase in social security expenditure are in three areas: first, the increase in housing benefit expenditure; secondly, the increase in expenditure on single parents because of the dramatic increase in the numbers of single parents; and, thirdly, the increase in the number of people claiming invalidity benefit. That is where the upward pressures are to be found.

It is easy to say that as unemployment falls the pressures on the social security budget will disappear, but the figures show that comforting illusion to be wrong.

Mr. Wray: The hon. Gentleman is talking about changing the fabric of society. Surely we cannot change the fabric of society by taking away benefit from 16 and 17-year-olds or by allowing standing charges on heating and fuel. It has nothing at all to do with our policy; it is the Government's policy. It is their mess which they have created. They have turned the Department of Social Security into a loans board. People are begging because they run out of money after three months. What can people do when they have done away with the single payment? There is no money to give them.

Mr. Willetts: We have heard another strong bid for membership of the Labour party's Commission on Social Justice. I look forward to the hon. Gentleman serving alongside miscellaneous left-wing professors in that commission's deliberations.

The radical change in the social fabric was the guaranteeing of a training place for people aged 16, 17 and 18.

Mr. Graham: I remember when the Prime Minister stated in the House that every young person was guaranteed a place. The hon. Gentleman knows that in my constituency that did not happen. Does he know that between 5,000 and 8,000 young people in Scotland are still waiting for that guarantee to be delivered?

Mr. Willetts: Of course there is a problem, which the Government are obliging training and enterprise councils to address, of ensuring that that guarantee is met. Meanwhile, any person waiting for a place on a training scheme is entitled to a payment in lieu of his or her attendance on a youth training scheme programme. That policy is agreed between the Department of Employment and the Department of Social Security.

Before the hon. Gentleman diverts me too much from my speech, I should like to address the big question on which the Opposition touched—what is the social fabric? The social fabric extends way beyond the social security system. We must not think of the social fabric in terms of social security expenditure; nor is it something provided only by Government. The Labour party sometimes talks about the social fabric as if one could get it by the metre from department stores, with the Government buying it. It is not like that. The social fabric is what political theorists call the framework of the civil society. It is the principles and values of voluntary associations, people helping themselves, the neighbourhood, and people helping their fellow employees in the firm. That is what social fabric is all about.

A welfare state is part of that social fabric and can sustain people through times of difficulty. That is why the extraordinary overblown claims in Labour's motion about the dismantling of the welfare state are false. We have a clear commitment to a role for the welfare state, but we have to ask whether the welfare state sometimes acts as an agent for weakening the social fabric. It creates an attitude of not wanting to get involved in local organisations because that is a job for the welfare state. People imagine that they can discharge their obligations to their fellow citizens by paying their taxes and the social security system shelling out the money. That does not enrich the social fabric; it can be a threat to it.

The Government's policies to strengthen this social fabric range way beyond social security. As I have spoken before of changes in the social security system, I want to take this opportunity to address some of the other aspects of the social fabric.

First, there is the need to give genuine power and responsibility to local institutions. The process whereby in the post-war period all the local institutions that really mattered—such as the school and the hospital—were gradually brought under centralised bureaucratic control did not strengthen them; it weakened them.

[Mr. Willetts]

If one takes the train from Waterloo or Victoria through south London and looks at the 19th-century terraced houses with Victorian schools towering above them, one can see that the Victorians who often built those schools with voluntary money, knew the importance of the school in the local community. They knew it had to be locally run and under the control of local governors.

The purpose of the Government's reforms in health, education and elsewhere is to give back to those institutions the powers that they have slowly lost. That policy became known in its early stages as opting out, but that is rather a misnomer. It gives the wrong impression of what the policy is about. I remember a marvellous cartoon showing a schoolmaster leading a troop of schoolchildren up the steps of a spacecraft saying, "When Grimethorpe grammar school opts out, it does it properly." That is not what opting out is supposed to be about. It is not about leaving society but about returning hospitals and schools to the local community and away from the control of distant bureaucracies.

Today, there has been an important meeting at Downing street on the burden of regulation. One of my concerns is that so much of the debate during the past few years has been preoccupied with the amount that we spend on the welfare state that insufficient attention has been paid to the way in which changes in the regulatory burden on voluntary organisations and other providers of welfare services have made their job more difficult. There is a direct connection between the Government's obvious concern with maintaining the social fabric and the burden of regulation. Perhaps I might give some examples.

We have recently passed important new legislation regulating the work of charities, but some local charities find their new legislative burdens are too onerous. I see my hon. Friend the Minister for Social Security and Disabled People in his seat. Last week, at a conference of people involved in charitable work, I was told that, if a charity proves to have been mismanaged in any way, its trustees now face considerable financial responsibilities. Several charities have been trying to involve groups such as benefit recipients in their managing bodies, making them trustees. The financial risks to which those people are exposed as a result of becoming trustees under the new charity law has been a source of concern to them. We do not want becoming a trustee of a charity to be like becoming a name at Lloyd's—a venture embarked on at considerable financial risk.

There is a marvellous network of provision in Britain for the under-fives. However, we need more provision for them—more voluntary playgroups. Often, the provision for the under-fives is the result of mothers getting together and hiring a church hall or a spare school classroom. But, as my hon. Friend the Minister will know, the Children Act 1989, often over-zealously interpreted by individual local authorities, has put an extra burden on the providers of services for the under-fives which they sometimes find themselves ill placed to bear. As a result, some providers of child care have, for example, stopped giving lunches or allowing children to play in the playgrounds.

Another example that arose during a conversation in my constituency at the weekend concerned someone who was providing meals for elderly people through a local charitable group. In order to meet the new food regulations, the variety of food offered to the elderly people had been limited. There is a regulatory problem here.

Instead of looking back, let me now look forward. The Government will soon be receiving the report of the Goode committee concerning the regulation of occupational pension funds. Of course the lessons of the Maxwell affair must be learned. Of course, where there have been failures of regulation and supervision, they need to be addressed and the supervisory regime needs to be improved; but I hope that the Goode committee will not simply impose a new over-elaborate framework of form-filling on many well-managed occupational pension schemes which do not need that extra bureaucratic burden.

Bearing in mind the review of social security now going on in the Department of Social Security, I hope that the Goode committee will ease the regulatory burden on private pensions. For example, it is too difficult to go through the incredibly elaborate procedures necessary in order to contract out from the state earnings-related pension scheme. Can those procedures be simplified? Do we really want a position where, I am reliably informed, it is impossible to market a group personal pension scheme giving people the benefit of personal pensions, but with the added bonus of the employer himself or herself contributing to the cost of that group personal pension scheme because companies then find themselves hit by the Financial Services Act 1986? There is a regulatory aspect to the encouragement of future pension provision which will, I hope, be addressed in the review. Therefore, as we think about the social fabric, we have to think about regulation, not just expenditure.

The reports prepared by the Labour party's Commission on Social Justice make a variety of claims about poverty and inequality to which I want briefly to refer because they contain extraordinary misconceptions which need to be clarified. The average British citizen on average income has experienced an extraordinarily dramatic increase in his or her real living standards since 1979. Not even the inventiveness of Opposition Members will make it possible for them to deny that fundamental assertion.

Mr. Wray: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Willetts: We have an inventive Opposition Member who is about to try. I happily give way to him.

Mr. Wray: Can the hon. Gentleman explain to the House the reason for all the "for sale" signs on properties in Scotland, England, Ireland and Wales and the fact that so many people are 18 months in arrears on their mortgages while others have had their homes repossessed? If their lives have been changed that much, why do those problems exist?

Mr. Willetts: If the hon. Gentleman wishes me to talk about the development of housing policy, I shall be happy to do so, because there we have another considerable success in the widening of home ownership and the increase in the number of people who enjoy living in homes of their own. The point that I was trying to make on poverty is that we face a dramatic increase in the average living standards of our citizens.

The Labour party then says that there may have been an increase in average living standards, but one has to consider what has happened to the poorest members of

society. Have those of us who have enjoyed those increases in living standards discharged our obligations to the poorest members of society? Of course we have obligations to the poorest members of society.

The Select Committee on Social Security commissioned the Institute of Fiscal Studies to investigate the subject of people on low incomes and what has happened to them since 1979. The first point that emerged was that, between 1979 and 1989, the real value of the basic means-tested benefit—initially supplementary benefit, now income support—had increased by 15 per cent. There had been a real increase in the basic value of benefit going to the poorest members of society. That increase was before the latest consolidation into income support rates of payment for the community charge which has increased still further the real value of income support. Therefore, there has been a considerable increase in the real value of the benefit aimed at the poorest members of society.

Then the Labour party says that people are falling through the net and there has been an increase in the number of people living on very low incomes, below those to which they would be entitled if they were claiming income support. That certainly shows up in the statistics, but again we need to investigate it. What is driving that increase in the number of people apparently on zero incomes? The figures for the poorest 10 per cent. of the population have hardly increased since 1979, because, within that bottom 10 per cent., there are a large number of recorded findings of people living on zero incomes.

Who are those people? There are two main categories. One category is self-employed people, those living above their own shop, for example, many of whom record a zero income. But, describing those people who are disqualified from income support because they have a job, the Select Committee's report states:

"A significant number of those disqualified are self-employed people who declare very low or zero income. The Committee doubts whether the statistics accurately reflect the living standards of this group."

The evidence for that scepticism is that people who declare zero incomes appear in the bottom 10 per cent. and who drag down the recorded incomes of the poorest 10 per cent. record levels of expenditure that are the average for the whole country—if not higher.

Another group in the poorest 10 per cent. are individuals living within a multi-family household. I am sorry to get involved in technical definitions, but it is necessary. An 18-year-old living with his or her parents equals two families living in one household. That 18-year-old is often a student—in fact, that pattern seems to have been driven by the increase in student numbers—and may well have a zero income recorded. In practice, he or she is kept by his or her parents. Nevertheless, that individual will show up in the statistics as a single family with zero income.

When one investigates the statistics more closely, one discovers the distortions that have dragged down the measure of the incomes of the poorest 10 per cent. and notes the increase in the real value of the basic means-tested benefit, some of the assumptions made by Labour's commission about the spread of increased poverty seem rather more questionable. The despairing picture that it paints of low incomes is more tenuous than the miscellaneous professors who contributed to the commission's report may imagine.

The important feature of the welfare state is that it redistributes income across the life cycle. I fully understand, as do my right hon. and hon. Friends, that the welfare state helps people when times are bad and is something to which we contribute when times are good. We can agree on that philosophical underpinning, but that does not take away from the need for reform and for the Government's review.

The circumstances in which people need to call on the welfare state change. The assumptions on which Beveridge made his report do not reflect the way in which we live today. It is essential that any responsible Government examine how the money is spent and whether it can be better targeted. That objective lies behind the Government's review, and it is one that I wholeheartedly support.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): Order. I understand that one hour is available before the wind-up speeches are to be made. Six hon. Members hope to catch my eye in that time. With a little consideration and co-operation on the part of hon. Members who are fortunate enough to do so, I may be able to call all six hon. Members.

8.22 pm

Mr. Malcolm Wicks (Croydon, North-West): It is no surprise that both major parties are currently reviewing in their own way—one nationalised, one privatised—the welfare state. I welcome that, because any European Government would want to review not only the forces in society that make for social security but the forces and trends that make for social insecurity. My quarrel with the Government's review—although I may be dissuaded later—is that it starts at the wrong end of the story. It considers what social security cuts can be made, rather than asking about the changes in our society—the way that people live, work and care—that either enhance social security or makes for social insecurity.

I was surprised to hear the Secretary of State say that he is still concerned to avoid dependency in the system. I welcome that statement, but the House should be told why it is that, in 14 years, the dependency culture has increased, and why more and more of our citizens are dependent on means tested benefits and income support, and subject to means testing and the poverty trap. Why is it also that more and more of our children grow up—not just for months but sometimes for years—in families that, because of the lack of employment, know little of independent family living?

At the beginning of this Government's period of office, they attacked the dependency culture, yet today we have more of it. The Government should explain why things have gone so badly wrong. Part of our motion refers to the social fabric, which is a vital, but sometimes elusive, material. We all support it, but we do not always recognise it. I want to talk about that part of the social fabric that concerns family life, and to argue that, in the Britain of the 1990s, it is about time we developed a strong and coherent family policy.

I will give two quotations from senior Conservatives. One said:

"We need to bring the well-being of families into the spotlight of our affairs."

The other said:

[Mr. Malcolm Wicks]

"It is promoting the family which lies at the heart of our philosophy."—[*Official Report*, 22 May 1979; Vol. 967, c. 1004.]

The first quotation was from Patrick Jenkin, as Secretary of State for Social Services in 1979, and the second from Norman St. John-Stevas, as Leader of the House, in the Loyal Address of the same year. Those were good sentiments at the beginning of the Government's period in office, but I question whether that rhetoric has been matched by strong family policy. I do not believe that it has.

History has shown that the concern of the House and of the Government has been periodic. It occurs at times of social malaise and of outbursts of social disorder, such as football hooliganism. More recently, the tragic death of James Bulger on Merseyside suddenly gave rise to concern about the family.

More recently still, the Secretary of State for Wales found himself trespassing on a council estate. He was shocked by what he found there, and to discover the single unmarried parent. The right hon. Gentleman did not question why there are concentrations of insecure families on council housing estates, or give thought to the macro-economic policies that contribute to that dependency. He did not think, either, about public housing policy. He was so shocked that he had an outburst—he had an emotional spasm, as a distinguished predecessor might have said—on the subject of single parents, which contributed not one iota to our wisdom or understanding.

The costs of not having a family policy over the past 14 years, but only rhetoric and waffle, are substantial—socially, economically and in terms of public expenditure. Any decent family policy would want to understand social change affecting the family, start a public debate and devise a new contract about the rights and responsibilities of families, and develop effective partnerships between the family and the state.

Family change is a substantial issue. We are seeing increasing family diversity. More families are breaking down, and more children are being born out of wedlock—often to very insecure families. There are also substantial changes affecting work and the family—the rise again not only of mass unemployment but of the two-worker family. That is a strength contributing to family income—but it also places pressure on child care and contributes to a new agenda of care.

The aging population brings also the development of the four-generation family. Again, that contributes much strength to family life. A grandparent is often the major child carer in respect of grandchildren, but an aging population also impose strains on community care. If we are not to make major mistakes about social policy and public spending, we must understand family change.

The first ingredient of a decent family policy is an understanding of the social revolution of family change. That revolution has brought many strengths to the family, but we never discuss those. It has also brought many insecurities—which we discuss, but often not very effectively.

Much attention has been paid recently to the single, unmarried mother. A survey commissioned by the Department of Social Security from York university showed that, among single parents, only 12 per cent. of pregnancies had been planned. Claims that some very young women—almost girls, frankly—deliberately get pregnant to gain access to welfare benefits are greatly exaggerated. Although only 12 per cent. of those pregnancies are planned, there is anecdotal evidence that from time to time some young women mistakenly and misguidedly think that, faced with unemployment and no education, the only career open to them is to have a baby. It is unhelpful to dismiss all that as mythology.

We should also ask ourselves why women with careers are postponing having children until their late thirties. As so many opportunities are open to those women, one has to ask why some girls of 16 or 17 may be saying to themselves, "Perhaps I'll have a baby. I don't like my family life. I'll get a council flat." If that were true, what would it say about the lack of opportunities and the lack of optimism among some of our younger citizens? Why should they think that it is a good option to live in a horrible council flat on a poor housing estate on a low level of benefit? What would that say about the lack of opportunities in this country?

We are responding badly to family change. We have not developed our education, employment, training and child care policies sufficiently to enable more one-parent families to stand on their own two feet. Then they would not have to depend on social security. If they were to become workers and taxpayers, that would be a gain for them and their children. It would also be a gain for society and the economy.

Why have we not developed a family policy package that recognises the modern patterns of work and life in dual-worker families? Why have we not translated what is all too often community neglect into a true package of community care? Why have we failed so significantly to understand how society is changing? Why have we not asked ourselves about the rights and responsibilities of the family? I am interested not just in rights; I am interested in duties and responsibilities, too.

To be adult and mature, human beings want rights and responsibilities. That is why I welcome the principle of the Child Support Act 1991. I have always done so. I shall therefore badger the Government to make sure that the Act works properly, so that at least some of the child support goes to those who deserve it rather than to the Exchequer—that is, to mothers and their children. The principle of parental responsibility has to be the cornerstone of our social policy. I make no apology for saying that.

We must also consider the partnership that is required between families and the state. To discuss these issues as though either the family or the state should be tackling them is nonsense. It is a piece of social policy illiteracy. Why is it that so many of our young boys—it is the boys rather than the girls—commit crimes at the age of 12, 13 or 14? How do we enable more parents to understand what is going on? We do it through parental training. We need to grapple with these issues so that, together, the family and the state can crack the crime problem, which is such a worry.

Similarly, much of the best education goes on in families. Sometimes, parents are more important than teachers. There needs to be a better relationship between home and school, parents and teachers, if we are to crack these problems.

My main plea is that we do not just talk about the family and turn on the family in times of social malaise. Often, we turn on the family vindictively. We ought to seek

to understand what is going on. We must not dodge the difficult issues. We must develop a coherent family policy. Let us all, if we want to, fight to become the party of the family. We should do so, though, not just by means of words and rhetoric, as we are all in danger of doing, but by developing sound policies.

Much of this discussion—although I agree with the hon. Member for Havant (Mr. Willetts) that it should not be all the discussion—is about social security. Why can we not liberate the words "social security"? They have become jargon. They have become something about benefits and dependency. Why do we not ask serious questions about how we can build a more socially secure society? To do so, we must look at employment policies.

We have all referred to Beveridge's review 50 years ago and to the need to update Beveridge. When that grand old man said that unemployment was the largest and the fiercest of the five giant evils and the most important to attack, he was right. He is still right. We talk about full employment in a changing economy and in a changing context, but he was right.

Unless the Government and Parliament decide to attack the evil of unemployment, we shall have too much social insecurity. Any Government who try to grapple with public spending will get it wrong unless they deal with unemployment. Therefore, alongside the crucial need for a family policy, an employment policy that means full employment is the best social security policy that Britain can have—and Britain deserves it.

8.34 pm

Mr. Peter Luff (Worcester): It is a privilege to follow two of the most thoughtful contributions to this debate. I pay tribute to my hon. Friend the Member for Havant (Mr. Willetts) and to the hon. Member for Croydon, North-West (Mr. Wicks). I only wish that so much more of the debate could have been conducted in similarly thoughtful and reflective terms.

The opportunity to debate these issues is a refreshing one for the House, after so much preoccupation with the "M" word—Maastricht. I had hoped that, throughout the debate, we might have been treated to the kind of speeches to which we have just listened. Sadly, that was not the case. The terms of the motion dictated that it would not be the case. Certainly the terms in which it was moved by the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) showed that it could not be the case.

When politicians speak as they sometimes do about such important issues, they should be wary of the effect that they have on the electorate at large. The terms in which the debate has been conducted do not do great service to the House when it is dealing with such important issues. It is no wonder that we politicians are not as well loved as once we were. Perhaps I am nostalgic for a past which never existed.

About three weeks ago, I had the pleasure of visiting Stratford-upon-Avon to see Robert Stephens in that fine production of King Lear. In act IV, scene 6, I was brought up with a start when I heard the words of Gloucester, who had just been blinded by Cornwall. He claimed, not unreasonably, that he could not see. King Lear comforted him with the words:

> "Get thee glass eyes;
> And, like a scurvy politician, seem
> To see the things thou dost not."

I am afraid that we have had a bit of that this evening.

The motion itself sees things that do not exist. It laments the "destruction of opportunity". What destruction of opportunity, I ask? A higher proportion of our adult population is in work than in any other major European Community country. A recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development survey concluded that between 1984 and 1990 Britain had

> "by far the best job creation record among the larger economies."

Spending on training and enterprise is up two and a half times in real terms since this Government came to power in 1979. That is creating, not destroying, opportunities.

What I fear is so often destroyed in our society is responsibility. If only the motion had lamented the destruction of responsibility that can be brought about by a well-meaning but ultimately ill-fated approach to social issues. I think of a lady in my constituency who runs a voluntary group that advises my constituents on how they should respond to difficulties. She says that, during the 13 years that she has run that group, she has kept a metaphorical flag in the corner of her office. She says that she will unfurl it when the first person comes in to ask not about his rights but about his responsibilities. That flag has remained firmly unfurled for 13 years.

The motion refers to the Government's policies threatening the security of many individuals and communities. Here we stray into the delicate area of the relationship between unemployment and crime. That relationship is far from clear, but I know for certain that, in the long term, crime has continued to increase whether employment has been rising or falling. Therefore, the spurious accusation that unemployment is the sole cause of crime in inner-city areas does a great disservice to those who live there.

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Lancaster): Does my hon. Friend recall the unemployment rate in the 1930s when people were without jobs but did not resort to crime? They were hard-working, in their own way, and never resorted to crime or used unemployment as an excuse for crime.

Mr. Luff: My hon. Friend makes my point for me, and I am grateful to her. It may be that, at the margin, the devil does sometimes find work for idle hands, but the root causes of the growth in crime are much more deep-seated, as my hon. Friend rightly reminds us, than the experience of some 60 years ago.

The motion refers to the Government's plans to dismantle the welfare state. Again, we see here Labour's claim to a monopoly of compassion. It seems to think that compassion is always best expressed by increasing dependency. That is something which we can never accept. There are no such plans to dismantle the welfare state. I certainly would never be a member of a party that had such plans.

It will be interesting to see exactly what Labour's Commission on Social Justice produces in terms of its findings. If it is being intellectually honest, as it may well be—its distinguished chairman, Sir Gordon Borrie, is one of my constituents, so I am sure that it will be—it may be that the unthinkable will prove unpalatable to hon. Gentlemen. I believe that it is no accident that there are no Members of Parliament on the commission, and I expect that there will be a great rush to distance themselves from the findings of the commission if it produces an intellectually honest result.

[Mr. Luff]

Most disappointing of all is the fact that the Labour motion speaks of economic failure—this in a country that is destined to grow faster than any other European Community country this year and next; where inflation is running at its lowest level for 30 years; where interest rates are the lowest in the Community; where unemployment has fallen for five months in a row; where industrial production, manufacturing output, manufacturing investment, retail sales, exports, productivity and car registrations are all increasing.

The Government amendment, on the other hand, adopts a more reasonable position. Before discussing the issues that the amendment raises, I must make it clear that I do not for a moment pretend that poverty, homelessness and unemployment are not very real problems in our society. In my own constituency, Worcester, we have our fair share of all three. I believe robustly and firmly that public spending will always have a role to play in addressing these problems.

For example, we in Worcester have benefited greatly recently from an improvement in the transport infrastructure in the area. There are investments in the railway services to London and in widening the motorway which I am convinced will increase the economic prosperity of my constituency and so address those problems at their roots.

However, I believe that these issues are not just a matter for the Government. We must have an active society, volunteers, individuals, freely participating in our society and making their own contribution to the resolution of these difficulties. Above all, and notwithstanding what the right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) said earlier, we must have enterprises, businesses, making their own contribution through the profit motive, through helping to create the prosperity that is fundamental in addressing those issues.

Dr. Tony Wright (Cannock and Burntwood): I am interested to hear what the hon. Gentleman says about his constituents in Worcester. I was a candidate in Worcestershire in 1979, and I remember the situation very well. The great appeal of the Conservative party was that socialism was the cause of crime. Indeed, Sir Keith Joseph, now Lord Joseph, used to go round saying that, and Mrs. Thatcher, as she then was, used to say it. This had great appeal in Worcestershire, and it did me no good at all. It did my Conservative opponent an enormous amount of good, showing the connection between socialism and crime.

On the matter of intellectual honesty, perhaps the hon. Gentleman could explain to us why crime has increased by 120 per cent. since 1979. In my own area, it has increased by 200 per cent. So there is something rather intellectually dishonest about the argument, is there not?

Mr. Luff: I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman was in the Chamber during my earlier remarks, when I talked about the long-term secular increase in crime and said that the problems that led to that increase were much more deep-seated than simple factors of unemployment, and so on. I believe that he and I are more in agreement on this issue than he realises. I am glad to say that, now that socialism, as I understand it, is dead in his party—or so we are led to believe—the problem of which he speaks has anyhow disappeared.

The Government amendment talks of protecting the vulnerable, and indeed we must do so. The tests of the last social security review set out in the document "The Growth of Social Security", which is in many ways the bible of this debate, should be applied to the current review, too. But I want to add three of my own.

Yes, of course, we must first, above all, help the disadvantaged members of our society. But the review should concern itself particularly with the problems of the ederly, and it should set as one of its preconditions that money should not be taken from those currently receiving benefit, but that the Government should, wherever possible, seek to refine future benefit systems to ensure that people who are currently in receipt of benefit are not disadvantaged. I know from my constituency surgery that very real anxiety exists in some people's minds—those on invalidity benefit and retirement pensions—about the prospects of the review. I believe that those fears are misplaced, and I hope that my hon. Friend, in winding up this evening, will be able to give me that reassurance to take back to my constituents.

We talk as well in our amendment about the nation's ability to pay. I think back to my noble Friend Lady Thatcher and the great battles that she fought for the heart and soul of this country. She fought a battle against communism, and won it; she fought a battle against trade union power and the abuse of that power, and won that battle, too; she fought a battle against nationalisation, and won that; she fought a battle for home ownership, and won that; she fought a battle for the rebirth of the enterprise culture, and won that, too.

Sadly, there was one battle that she lost. That was the battle to persuade the people of this country, and particularly the Labour party, that there is no such thing as Government money; there is only our money. Still, that is 5-1 to the noble Lady, and that is not a bad record. But it is a great shame that she lost that last battle, because, if she had not, the terms of this debate would have been much more informative.

We also talk in our amendment about scaremongering. This sounds like a narrow partisan point, but it is something which I hold very dear. The way in which so much of this debate is being conducted is scandalous. I know from my constituency surgery how the fears that have been artificially inflated by the Opposition are expressing themselves in my constituents' minds, and the great concern they feel—which they need not feel—about our plans for the future of the social security system and their welfare.

I ask Opposition Members, when they think about the consequences of their scare stories, please to remember the effect that these totally false stories have on the poor and underprivileged members of our society.

Finally, our amendment talks about the failure of the Opposition to produce responsible alternative policies. They are not alone in this regard. Most local and national newspapers in this country seem to call for increased expenditure in every area and to oppose any attempt to raise revenue to pay for it. So Her Majesty's Opposition are not alone in that.

It is disappointing, however, as a number of my hon. Friends have remarked, to note the lack of any positive suggestions from Labour Members for addressing the

alleged deficiencies of Government policy. Perhaps the Commission on Social Justice will in due course produce such positive suggestions, although somehow I doubt it. But, as I said earlier, if it does, I suspect that we shall see the Labour party distancing itself from them very rapidly.

The question that this whole debate raises is how many of the issues with which the motion is concerned are for politicians. Sometimes they are firmly in our court; sometimes they are not; and sometimes they are matters for both politicians and wider society.

I look, for example, at the issue of housing—a subject which a number of hon. Members on both sides of the House have mentioned. I fully accept the need to increase the level of provision of affordable housing. There is a need to enable housing associations to build more housing for rent. I make no secret of that fact. But, equally, I do not believe that we should be driven, in planning our housing provision, by a simple view of the likely continuing rate of household formation.

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman: Does my hon. Friend not agree with me that young, vulnerable, single mothers, aged 16 or 17, would be infinitely better off in hostels with other people the same age, able to be given support, than being shot right to the top of the council housing list and given their own homes? They would get support, they would be able to club together and babysit; they could go out and get employment. It is not kind to young single mothers to give them homes of their own.

Mr. Luff: I not only agree with my hon. Friend, but believe that many young single mothers now living on their own in council accommodation are doing so because they have been actively encouraged to move out of their parental homes by social services departments. Many of those single mothers would be better off, not in the hostels of which my hon. Friend speaks, but in their parental homes, where they would receive the love and support that they need in sometimes very difficult personal situations.

I do not believe that our planning for housing provision should be driven entirely by an acceptance of household formation rates. That is why I am working in my constituency with the Bishop of Worcester to examine ways in which we can remind young people of the consequences of walking out of their family homes because they have had a row with their parents, and what that means to them in terms of the quality of life that they are likely to enjoy later.

We are working in schools to encourage young women, in particular, to understand the consequences of casual sexual intercourse and what that might mean for their own demand for housing and the quality of their lives later.

I hope that that initiative will bear fruit and make some contribution to reducing the rate of household formation, which we should not accept as a given.

I shall truncate my remarks to enable other hon. Members to take part in the debate. We must pay particularly careful attention to the elderly. We have targeted the elderly, particularly the single elderly with modest means—those with perhaps small pensions or savings—adversely. The effect of the change from community charge to council tax has been serious for some single residents in my constituency with modest pensions and no eligibility to benefit. The effect of VAT on domestic fuel will be worse for them than for those on benefit, who will be compensated. I hope that we shall be careful in our review of single pensioners above the benefit levels.

I have heard much in the debate about the need for increased expenditure on benefits. Some Opposition Members have admitted that the PSBR is of concern, yet ultimately they have failed to identify and address the problem and have simply called for extra resources. Noticeably, the hon. Member for Garscadden completely failed to answer the Secretary of State's question about the need to identify one country that was not reviewing its social security spending. The hon. Gentleman declined to answer the question. He knows that they are all doing it. That is why the Government are right to conduct the review.

I am disappointed by the crude, yah-boo politics of the motion. I am also insulted by the gross misreading by some Opposition Members of the sincerity of the Conservative party's dedication to the condition of the people, as a former leader of my party once described it. I fear that if they do not face up to the difficult choices that lay before them, they will never be fit for Government.

King Lear, shortly after his comments to Gloucester, remarked:

> "When we are born, we cry that we are come
> To this great stage of fools."

I wonder whether he had been listening to Opposition Members.

8.51 pm

Mrs. Alice Mahon (Halifax): Does the hon. Member for Worcester (Mr. Luff) think that the elderly, the sick and the poor will take comfort from those words of King Lear?

I am pleased to have been present for most of the debate, because there have been some excellent contributions from my hon. Friends, who have laid out clearly the philosophy of the Government and their supporters towards people who, for whatever reason, become unemployed and people who are sick, elderly and in need of help.

The debate has taught me a lot about the thinking of Conservative Members. Whenever I hear the sort of remarks they make about single parents, I am reminded of their use of scapegoats. The Government are superb at finding scapegoats. The hallmark of any bully is the need to find someone who is weak and vulnerable and then to isolate that person and use him or her as a scapegoat. The Conservatives have been doing that for the last 14 years. My right hon. Friend the Member for Manchester, Wythenshawe (Mr. Morris) spoke of the way in which even the terminally ill are being targeted, and we have heard much about single mothers.

The idea that 16-year-olds who become pregnant—I believe that they total about 45,000—are about to end civilisation as we know it would be laughable if it were not tragic. The idea of putting such "deviant" women in hostels skips a century. It takes us back to the deserving and undeserving poor, the workhouse and the poor law quardians. Even at my age, I know nothing of that, and have only read about it in the history books.

When I tell the members of the Halifax pensioners association that it has been seriously suggested in the debate by Conservative Members that there should be a granny tax to pay the expenses of single parents, those

[Mrs. Alice Mahon]

elderly folk may think that they had better start producing petitions on issues other than the shutting of post offices and the imposition of VAT on domestic fuel.

The Conservatives have had some success over the years with the tactics of blaming others for their mistakes, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) was right to say that they have resorted to that tactic because they are the Government of unemployment. They want low wages and to undermine trade unions and any institution that protects working people. They instil fear into the public, so that when people are asked why they put up with it, they respond that they are frightened to do anything else.

In that context, some of the words in the Government amendment are chilling, particularly the reference to the Government's

"approach to the reform of social security, which is designed to improve the system, protect the vulnerable".

We have been down that road before. They said something similar in 1988 when they introuduced discrimination against the young in benefits, the area on which I shall concentrate because it is a subject about which not enough has been said.

Youth unemployment now stands at 1 million. In other words, one in three of the unemployed in Britain is aged under 25. I emphasise at the outset that I would like them all to have jobs, and I know that I speak for all Opposition Members when I say that. I am anxious tonight that the Minister takes careful note of what is happening because of the discrimination in benefits, especially as he and I shared a platform recently on the "Today" programme when we discussed the issue.

A million youngsters are unemployed through no fault of their own. The amount of income support they get depends on their age. If they are 16 to 17, they have no entitlement to benefit. Nor do they have the guarantee of a YTS place, and I hope that Conservative Members will not argue that all youngsters get a place on the YTS scheme. More than 100,000 do not have a place on the scheme, nor do they have any entitlement to benefit.

I hope that my remarks about that will not be challenged because even if they succeed in going through the hurdles to obtain a hardship allowance, they are given only £15. They are means-tested before they get it and after a few months it comes to an end. If the Government are seriously examining social security and benefit levels, they must examine that issue because it has been a disaster for young people.

About half a million 18 to 24-year-olds are trying to live on £4·97 a day. The Under-Secretary has £122·22 a day to live on, while the Secretary of State, who likes to sing at party conferences, has £172·73 a day. Yet they think it fair a person who, through no fault of his or her own, cannot find work and is in the age bracket 18 to 24, should have to manage on £4·97 a day.

The Secretary of State is fond of singing about people having little lists. He has a list, and he has made fun of it. A person living on £34·80—there are 200,000 or more in that age group living away from home—and managing independently has quite a struggle. We are not referring to people living with parents. They are trying to manage independently.

I assure the right hon. Gentleman that they, too, have a little list. They would like three meals a day, gas and electricity bills must be paid, water rates come due—we have heard how they have increased, and there are no rebates for those in the group I am describing—and they must also pay for their laundry and household insurance, although for many of them the latter is just a dream because they cannot afford it. They must also replace their clothing and footwear, buy household items and have money for fares for job hunting, plus stamps and stationery for the same purpose. They may need money for a newspaper and for a television licence; I recently discovered how many people are serving prison sentences in Yorkshire because they could not afford to buy one.

Young people also need money for leisure activities and for one-off occurrences. One young man who recently came to see me had been turned down for a one-off payment—he needed money to go to a loved one's funeral in Liverpool. The Government say that people in that age group must meet all such expenses from £4·97 a day, but it cannot be done.

There will be social consequences of such a mean and punitive benefits system, which will become even meaner and more punitive after the review. There is no question but that there is a link between increasing poverty, crime and shoplifting. Young people who are denied a stake in society of course risk becoming involved in crime. I shall not detain the House very long, but my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, South (Mr. Simpson) will tell us about a young man forced into prostitution because of inadequate benefits.

Youngsters are often forced into a world of drugs because they have no future and cannot participate in society. The shops are full of goods that they have no means of buying. Relationships break down in the parental home, which means that many children have a bad start in life. Some of us warned the Government about that when they introduced the disastrous cuts.

Youngsters are alienated from society because they are not considered to be adults until the age of 25, although they were considered adults when the Government said that at 17 they were old enough to die in the Gulf war.

We are creating a counter-culture, breeding an underclass who are being pushed into lawlessness through boredom and the fact that they are excluded from everything. Many live in a twilight world, and I feel desperately sorry for them. They are a lost generation—"Thatcher's children" is a phrase that comes to mind. The Thatcher years created the problem, and the present Government are reinforcing it.

The youngsters I am talking about do not live in a Gilbert and Sullivan society on £177 a day. They cannot have a good dinner in one of the posh restaurants in this place. They are scratching around trying to find enough to eat. At the end of the day, society will pay a high price for the Government's recklessness.

9 pm

Mr. James Clappison (Hertsmere): I welcome the opportunity to participate in a debate in which we have heard some thoughtful and constructive contributions, most notably from my hon. Friend and Member for Havant (Mr. Willetts) who spoke with great vision about the fabric of society. His speech was more wide-ranging than that which we heard from the Opposition spokesman. I hope that the Opposition will not mind if I say that the

hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) opened the debate with a great deal of hollow rhetoric which lacked credibility.

The premise from which the motion and the hon. Gentleman started was a return to the well-worn rhetoric that we heard so many times in the 1980s. His talk of cuts and attacks lacked credibility because he cannot disprove the fact that there has been an enormous increase in the social security budget since 1979. By any measure, historical or otherwise, there has been an important real terms increase in social security benefits across the board for pensioners, for the long-term sick and disabled and for housing needs.

If one measures the growth in the social security budget since, say, 1949, which I am sure some Opposition Members would consider a golden year, one realises that there has been a substantial increase in real terms spending and in the level of social security spending as a proportion of total Government expenditure and of gross domestic product.

What emerged clearly from the analysis by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and my hon. Friend the Member for Havant is that there has been a structural increase in the social security budget, aside from the issue of unemployment. The hon. Member for Garscadden is hard pressed to deny that.

Even allowing for a fall in unemployment, the 3 per cent. per year rise in structural terms in the social security budget is an increase that we cannot afford when we have such a large public sector borrowing requirement. It is therefore entirely right and proper that there should be a review of social security benefits. The Secretary of State deserves support in conducting the review, which is absolutely essential if we are to tackle the PSBR. I see that the hon. Member for Garscadden is looking interested, so I will give way to him.

Mr. Dewar: Is the hon. Gentleman saying that a review means an exercise in reducing benefits and expenditure? If so, what targets should we be looking for in the next Budget?

Mr. Clappison: If I were to say that I accepted that expenditure was too high and had to be examined, I would be using exactly the terms that the hon. Gentleman used. The facts are inescapable when the PSBR has reached its present size. The hon. Gentleman's position on that issue was more sophisticated than that of the hon. Member for Truro (Mr. Taylor), who has now returned to the Chamber. After a considerable period of absence, he is the only Liberal Member present. He said that the Liberal party would not be prepared to change the social security budget and that, even if a structural increase were made, it would have to be paid for out of taxation. According to his analysis, those who have benefited most since 1979 should pay most.

That was an interesting proposition, especially just before the Christchurch by-election. Does it mean that the Liberal party will go into the by-election with "soak the rich" emblazoned across its battle bus? I remind the hon. Gentleman that, since 1979, the top rates of income tax, investment income surcharge and capital taxation have been considerably reduced. All those issues will be of considerable interest to the Christchurch electors.

Mr. Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford): "Soak the rich" is far from what the Liberal Democrats will be saying at the Christchurch by-election, but that is what they will mean.

Mr. Clappison: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for that intervention. "Axe tax" will be written in large letters on the back of their battle bus.

Mr. Matthew Taylor *indicated assent.*

Mr. Clappison: I note that the hon. Member for Truro is indicating assent. It is an interesting position for him to take.

Mr. Taylor: I was indicating assent to the long list of tax cuts for those on higher incomes. It was quite accurate. I did not argue that we should restore tax to its 1979 level: I said that it seemed inappropriate that the Government should target those on invalidity benefit, for instance, without proposing that the whole country should share in tax cuts. The rich have benefited most from tax cuts and those on lower incomes have benefited least.

Mr. Clappison: I see another green paper approaching from the Liberal party to bail it out, just as it produced a green paper—or was it a blue or red paper?—to bail it out of its problem on energy tax.

The Labour party has conceded that there must be a review and produced its own Commission on Social Justice, which has turned its hand to the task of reviewing the social security budget. As the hon. Member for Garscadden said, it produced its first fruits today. I agree with the analysis of the review by my hon. Friend the Member for Havant. He analysed the value of benefit and the critique by the Commission on Social Justice, and showed clearly that there has been an across-the-board increase in income and prosperity, including an increase in real value of benefits.

Moreover, the review of the Commission on Social Justice complains about differences in the geographical dispersal of infant mortality. It is an interesting criticism because since 1979 infant mortality has substantially diminished. In the past 20 years, it has fallen by half in all areas, including those to which the commission refers. Perhaps the commission would be happier with a uniform but higher level of infant mortality—*[Interruption.]* This is a serious matter, because it has been raised by the so-called Commission on Social Justice. It may prefer lower levels of infant mortality across the board.

The commission also complains of innumeracy among adults, which comes as a surprise to those of us who are committed to the Conservative party's education reforms and the standard attainment tests. I remind the hon. Member for Garscadden that the standard attainment tests for seven-year-olds, which the Labour party bitterly opposed, have resulted in a substantial improvement in seven-year-olds' reading abilities. In 1991, 72 per cent. of seven-year-olds attained the target and, in 1992, 77 per cent. attained it.

I urge the House to support a responsible and constructive approach to the social security review. I can do no better than quote the words of Beveridge himself. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State hit the nail on the head when he spoke of the spirit of Beveridge, and I remind him of what he, quoting Beveridge, said in his Mais lecture:

"The state in organising social security should not stifle incentive, opportunity, responsibility; in establishing a

[Mr. Clappison]

national minimum, it should leave room and encouragement for voluntary action by each individual to provide more than that minimum for himself and his family."

I commend that approach, and I am confident that my right hon. Friend is following it.

9.9 pm

Mr. Alan Simpson (Nottingham, South): Let me put the debate into a context that makes sense to me. We would not be having the debate if the Government were confident in what they say to the House about our being on the verge of economic recovery. We would not be having it, either, if Labour Members were not aware, from meetings that we attend throughout the country, that the people do not believe that there is a recovery in the offing.

We would not be having the debate if the Government did not know that they face not only a crisis in their domestic borrowing and spending programmes, but another crisis that will loom as the gap between manufactured imports and manufactured exports widens. That will precipitate a crisis that will include a run on the pound, which will herald a new wave of austerity measures.

The Government are preparing their next round of austerity social policies. That is the context in which the debate is taking place. We are not on the verge of a recovery; instead there is a lacuna—a pause between the current economic crisis and the next economic catastrophe.

In that context, I shall challenge just three of the major hypocrisies in Government policies. The first is the claim that the Government care about people's housing prospects. I shall examine that idea against another set of reference points that they refuse to mention.

Millions of households face rising mortgage debts that they cannot service. Millions of people own properties worth less than the mortgages on them. The burgeoning of personal debt and repossessions is causing local authorities to throw up their hands in horror and wonder what the hell to do about the growing problem of homelessness being created by the Government's policies.

I set that development against the fact that public sector house building has virtually ground to a halt. For example, in Nottingham, the city council now has about 20,000 households on its waiting list, and in the greater Nottingham area, 2,516 families received housing repossession notices during the past year.

Yet how many houses for rent were built last year? The grand total was 217. How do we account for the gap? What are we to say to families who turn up on local authorities' doorsteps? Do we say, "The local authority can buy your house back"? Do we hell as like. The authority used to be able to buy back council houses, but now it is a requirement that the families be evicted and the houses sold on the private market.

Do we say, "The Government will tell the building societies and banks that evictions must stop, and that they must convert mortgages into rents"? We do not. We have to tell people that the Government will take no steps beyond repeating platitudes. Do we say that we will allow local authorities to build again, to meet the needs of the people forced into homelessness by the Government's economic crisis and by their lack of interest in public sector housing? We hear no word of that.

Some Conservative Members have talked about homelessness as though it were an act of fecklessness. According to them, young people walk away from loving families, and it all takes place over the breakfast table. Parents say, "Eat your sprouts," and the children reply, "No, I don't like sprouts; I'm off to get a local authority house." I wish that those Members would come with me to social services departments and find out about the crises in family lives that local authorities have to deal with. We would see whether they would still talk about fecklessness then.

Conservative Members expressed concerns about illegitimacy. However, the greatest illegitimacy in this country today is the fact that we have stolen from people the right and the opportunity to live in a decent house. We make the right to a decent house sound dirty. People may not be able to afford to buy a house, but they still have the right to expect one. We treat them as though they are somehow dirty people, as if they are not worth it and they are a burden on the state. I tell the House this: if any state cannot offer its people the prospect of decent housing, there is something wrong with the state, not its people.

The second big lie that the Government run with is that they care about families. Conservative Members ask why the Labour conference rejected the idea of support for the Child Support Agency. It is simply because those at the conference knew that the Child Support Act 1991 was a misnomer. It should have been called the "Government Support Act", because it was about turning on families, setting parents against each other and punishing children to reclaim money. It was an Act not for families or children, but for the state.

The Government have turned on families because they are short of money. The Government have said—not in the spirit of the Children Act 1989, where children were to be put first, but in the spirit of self-interest and crisis in their own management of the economy—that money must be drawn back in. Vulnerable people must be found so that they can then be blamed, and so that the Government can put the boot in.

The Labour conference refused to support the Child Support Act for those reasons, not because it did not want to make it possible for both parents to be decent parents. The Labour party did not want to go down the path that begins and ends in punishing children, punishing caring parents and pushing deeper the divide between those whose family lives have been broken apart. I hope that the Labour party sticks to that path.

The third Government lie that I shall address is that they care about young people. I am fed up with visiting schools in my constituency where children have to learn in crumbling classrooms. In the schools that my own children attended, I was fed up with having to discuss whether children were allowed to take books home because they might not be returned. Why might children not return books? Because they did not have any other books in their homes. I would rather that children took books home and that the books did not come back, than to have to tell children that they could not have books.

That is an example of some of the hard decisions that are being made in inner-city schools today. The basis of funding in schools is based on age-weighted pupil ratios, not on a needs basis that would allocate additional resources to those who have the most ground to make up. We punish children. There is no care and compassion for children in Tory schools policies.

What are we saying to those people who have left school? To the young people of Nottingham, the Government are saying that, in the past three years, the number of young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are without a job has increased by 80 per cent., from 6,535 to 11,815.

When I think of Government policy towards those who have no job, I am reminded of the words of a song by Woody Guthrie called "Pretty Boy Floyd" that says:

"Some people rob you with a sixgun and some with a fountain pen."

I am sure that "Pretty Boy Lilley" has convinced young people—the 100,000 who are aged 16 and 17 who have to live on fresh air, and the half-million who have no job and must live on less than subsistence level—that he is fast on the draw and quick to kill them off with his pen. That is the care and compassion he offers.

A delegation of young people came to the House a week ago. Not a single Tory Member was present at that meeting at which a young lad called Jason said:

"I was forced to leave home at 16 when . . . my mother and stepfather found out that I was gay . . . I ended up homeless. I then went to the local DSS office, who told me I was not entitled to any money. I tried in vain to get a YTS placement, but because I had nowhere to live nobody was willing to offer me a job, and without any income I couldn't find a place to live. So I suppose in a way it was a catch 22 situation. I have lived in various night shelters, but without money it was very difficult to feed and clothe myself and keep a tidy appearance for job interviews.

At that time, I knew a couple of prostitutes. One of them told me that she had a bisexual punter who wanted some business with a young lad. I had not eaten for several days so I agreed to do it.

It was the most difficult decision of my life. Though I don't think that I really had any choice at the time, it was either that or starve.

This went on for nine months, until I was seen by a mental health worker and referred to a local hostel for young people. I was one of the lucky ones—I got a place there. I thought that was the end to all my problems, but I was wrong. Two years later, when I finally was offered a council flat, I had a lot more to deal with than I had expected. I was trying desperately to keep on top of my bills, but couldn't, and ended up in hospital after taking an overdose. The thing I found hardest to accept was that, because I was under 25, I was supposed to have less money needs than someone over 25. My next-door neighbour found it hard enough to manage paying his bills and so on, which were exactly the same as mine, but because he was over 25 he got more money.

I think it's about time this Government realised the hardship, poverty and damage they are doing to young people in this so called classless society."

That is how young people are being treated by the Government; and the Government must be judged against such a measure.

What will happen when the Minister goes into the dock to face that criticism? He comes across as the Michael Sams of social policy. He stands there and says, "It wasn't me—I offer you another illusion or delusion. A friend I cannot name was responsible for it all."

Labour Members' constituents know that that is simply a lie. What is more, people of all ages know that it is a lie. I spoke yesterday to a group of pensioners in my constituency. I asked them, "What do you want the Government to do?" They said, "Take the young people off the dole. Get them to build houses; team them up with skilled tradespeople to give them skills that they can use in a society that is fit for us all to live in tomorrow. Let them put insulation in our houses. Let them help us to reduce our heating bills, so that the meagre pensions we have to live on go further."

I have another meeting with that pensioner group tomorrow, at which I shall tell them of the wonderful idea that floated from across the Chamber, about the "Wisconsin" experiment of making grandparents responsible for the costs of their grandchildren. Perhaps we do need such an experiment. Let us take a family who are, as the Tories would say, living off the back of the state, who have never done a day's work in their lives and who are responsible for loads of kids or grandchildren. Let Tory Members go to Granny and tell her that she is responsible. I shall come with them, because I should like to see the look on the Queen Mother's face when they tell her that.

You see, Madam Speaker, it is a question of where we start, who we deem to be the social parasites and who is pulling their weight to make ends meet in society. Many of the families I know, whom the Government try to caricature so harshly, work to provide decent lives in ways that Tory Members do not understand. It is an insult to hear those families caricatured and derided.

I go back to that meeting tomorrow knowing that what people want is reinvestment in a social fabric which they see disappearing before their eyes. When Conservative Members dive into the word "dependency", Labour Members must leave them to go off on their own. What we are talking about is not a nanny culture but an understanding of interdependency—a society that does not steal from itself and all do not steal from each other's future, but where all invest in each other to give the children of today the prospects of tomorrow and of accepting the responsibilities that we would like to share.

That is what society outside the Chamber knows. It does not matter whether the Government will recognise it. In fact, it does not need to wait for permission from our Commission on Social Justice to be heard. It is a message that already is not waiting for permission to express itself outside the Chamber or inside the country. The sooner Labour hears that message and stands up and argues for it, the better we will be—here and in the country as a whole.

9.23 pm

Mr. Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford): It is intriguing to listen to charges that the Government have crushed the worst-off, attacking those on benefits and thrashing everybody who is on the bottom levels of income. Then I look at the figures, which show that we have increased spending on social security by 75 per cent. Social security now accounts for one third of total Government expenditure—it did not in 1979—and has reached a total of £80 billion a year, or £13 per person per working day.

It is an absurdity that the Government must listen endlessly to the Opposition's charges, when those charges fail to deal with the reality of the figures. Those figures speak louder than any of the Opposition's rhetoric. If we carry on increasing that total at the same rate without a careful examination, we will cause major structural problems for the economy.

Reform is necessary—I use the word advisedly. But it does not mean that there will be massive cuts or a dilution of certain benefits. Reform means looking at what is required and what is not required, and how the money is focused. Reform is necessary, because the current rate of expenditure will result in a cycle of higher spending and higher taxes which will lead to higher inflation and will distort the labour market.

[Mr. Iain Duncan Smith]

That last example is what has essentially been happening for the better part of 40 years. There is, of course, no bottomless bucket of money, and even if there was such a bucket, it would be madness to go down the road of spending on everything imaginable. That would distort the methods of a society that was going out to work and generating income from other sources.

The key thing may be to look back at the original Beveridge plan. I am aware that other hon. Members have touched on that subject, and I do not intend to go into it in great detail given the time. I think that Beveridge was aware that the achievement of a national minimum for all was the essential objective of a welfare state. But he went on to say:

"The state in organising security should not stifle incentive, opportunity or responsibility in establishing a national minimum. It should leave room and encouragment for voluntary action by each individual to provide more than that minimum for himself and his family."

That is crucial and lies at the core of what a welfare state is about. It is about identifying and looking after those who are most in need, and making sure that the most amount of money is focused on those people.

That does not mean that money should be spread wide to catch everyone, while perhaps missing out on the odd person. It is about focusing on those in need and encouraging those on the margins and helping them get back into work. The problem has been essentially the method with which Beveridge was implemented. He saw it as a 20-year implementation plan. His idea was that the scheme was introduced slowly, to make sure that the economy could bear the strain, and that every cost was met.

Two things resulted from the major change which followed the Labour party's implementation of the scheme. First, I believe that the voluntary sector was rapidly stifled. I believe that the voluntary sector would have grown alongside the welfare provision to provide many of the things that we now take for granted as coming from the state. I would even widen that, to talk about areas of insurance that could and should be widened to allow the private sector to become involved.

Secondly, the lie has grown, and is believed by most of the public, that national insurance in some sense was providing for their future, and still is. Many hon. Members are told time and time again at their surgeries that people have paid for their future with their stamps, and should be able to collect something at the end of it. The lie has grown that national insurance is some form of insurance scheme against the future.

The reality is that it is nothing more than an extra level of taxation, providing for those who need benefits. It is a reality problem. The public must understand why they pay into national insurance only to be told that the reality is that there is no insurance. If they had been in a private sector scheme, they would have had a real insurance scheme that had been put somewhere to invest. But Governments of all complexions have raided national insurance over the years, and used it to pay for what was happening at the time.

It is perhaps time to look back. In 1942, in an exchange of notes, Sir Kingsley Wood prophetically said:

"the scheme is presented as contributory but like the existing system depends on a deficiency grant, which will grow in the course of time to immense proportions, from the general taxpayer."

He went on to warn:

"acceptance of the complete plan involves a contract with many millions of beneficiaries, the continued fulfilment of which would properly have to be, in good times or bad times alike, a prior charge upon the national resources."

To some degree at least, that has come true.

It is absurd to suggest that we should not be thinking of change or reform. Many of the Opposition's speeches today reminded me of "Jurassic Park"—vast dinosaurs charging around and trumpeting ideas whose time has gone. They still say that every case that has ever gone wrong and every case of need has been the fault of the Government, and that the Government must dip into their pocket and raid the Exchequer for more money. Worst of all is the hon. Member for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) who, like Tyrannosaurus Rex, charges up to the Dispatch Box and snaps at the Government for spending or for not spending, while proposing not a single alternative. That is both absurd and outrageous. The public should be aware that the Opposition have done nothing but level unproven charges at the Government, who in their turn have dramatically increased spending on social security.

I urge the Government to go ahead boldly and implement the necessary reforms, and most of all to ensure that we focus properly on where the money is needed.

9.31 pm

Ms Marjorie Mowlam (Redcar): Listening to the hon. Member for Chingford (Mr. Duncan Smith), one wonders about the evolutionary strains to be found on the Conservative Benches. What he said in the last couple of minutes showed up the differences between our parties. Had he listened carefully to Opposition Members, it would have been evident to him that the Labour party wants to modernise the social security system because we want people to have the opportunity—they do not have it now—to develop their talents and skills to the full.

By contrast, Conservative Members and the Secretary of State, in his introduction and in comments that he has made before, show their desire to dismantle the welfare state. That difference ran through all the speeches today. The hon. Member for Chingford talked about expenditure, but he cannot deny that the increase in expenditure is largely due to unemployment.

A number of speeches by Labour Members have pointed up the destructive policies that the Government have followed, harming not just the social fabric of society but communities and families. My right hon. Friend the Member for Manchester, Wythenshawe (Mr. Morris), a doughty fighter on behalf of people with disabilities, clearly showed the concern that many disabled people have about the changes and the proposed cuts in benefit. The Minister said that he was not interested in cutting; he just wanted to cut growth. I think that that is a cut. He also said that he would introduce an objective test for invalidity. That means that the test will be Treasury-driven, not related to need.

The Government do not understand why people get scared about all this, even though Conservative Members admit that people on invalidity benefit are frightened. The Government promised no increase in VAT for pensioners,

yet there was one. Indeed, there have been a number of U-turns since the election promises. That is why people on invalidity benefit are anxious.

We heard moving contributions from my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) and from my hon. Friend the Member for Renfrew, West and Inverclyde (Mr. Graham). Both spoke about what unemployment has done to people's lives in the past 14 years.

We have heard a great deal from the Government about citizens' basic rights and we have been subjected to numerous charters. The one basic right to which people should be entitled is the right to work. Any social security system would have difficulty surviving the high levels of unemployment that we are now experiencing.

We heard a robust contribution from my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh, Leith (Mr. Chisholm), who talked about the problems that families face, whatever shape or size they come in. He talked about our idealised vision of families and what happens when the difficulties of abuse and domestic violence are faced. He said that many families, particularly single-parent families, need a chance to find a pathway out of poverty. That could be done through the provision of child care. If child care was flexible, affordable and accessible, many young parents would be able to move out of their current poverty.

My hon. Friends the Members for Nottingham, South (Mr. Simpson) and for Halifax (Mrs. Mahon) spoke about the lives of young people. My hon. Friend the Member for Halifax referred to them as "Thatcher's children". We cannot ignore what is happening to young people. *[Laughter.]* A lot of sniggering is coming from the Conservative Benches, but I defy any Conservative Member to talk to 16 to 18-year-old constituents who are alienated by the system. We as a country, and as part of this political system, ignore what is happening to those young people at our peril. They feel no connection with our political system.

My hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, North-West (Mr. Wicks) had much experience of family matters in his previous job. He made two important points. One was the problem of the dependency culture created by benefits. He posed a question that he often asks. If more and more women who are happy in their careers are waiting longer and longer to have children, so that they are in their thirties before they have a family, why do young women who do not have opportunities or hope—and when no part of the system acknowledges them as having value—behave differently? That is a question we have to answer, and we can do so by introducing a policy for families that produces a partnership between the state and parents.

Several hon. Members have mentioned the difficulties that young single parents experience in bringing up their families. Many positive things could be done in relation to parental training and offering support—not what the hon. Members for Tiverton (Mrs. Browning) and for Worcester——

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman: Lancaster.

Ms Mowlam: I am sorry, it was the hon. Members for Tiverton and Lancaster (Dame E. Kellett-Bowman) who mentioned hostels. Introduction of hostels would repeat the problems that young people are already suffering. We would be saying to children who are in difficulties through no choice of their own that they must go through the same experiences as their parents.

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman: That is the opposite of what is intended. If eight or 10 young mothers live together in accommodation, they can obtain support and advice. If they are alienated from their families and cannot go back to them, they are not left alone, day after day and night after night, in a council flat. They can come together, talk about their problems and mind each other's children, and some can go out to work. That is the kind of support that young mothers need—support that does not leave them isolated in a 18-storey tower block.

Ms Mowlam: Where did individual choice go? We have heard a lot from the Government about individual choice, but returning to a form of workhouse is not the answer. Of course support, opportunities and a pathway out of poverty are needed, but that will not happen by putting young mothers together, marking them and saying to them, "You are different from the rest of society." When their children go to school from those houses, they will be told, "You come from the hostel house down the road." That will not give those children a new opportunity in life; it will be dictating to them how they should behave.

Mr. Quentin Davies: I do not think that the hon. Lady has given credit to what is quite a serious idea. In South Kesteven, in my constituency, we have a system under which single mothers who come to the council and say that they wish to be housed and demand their statutory rights are not put immediately into a council flat or council house. They go into a hostel for about 18 months, and 40 per cent. of those offered hostel accommodation, which is perfectly decent and clean, prefer to go back to mummy.

Ms. Mowlam: Stigmatising families, which is what one would be doing, is not the answer. Surely the answer is to say that we have a housing shortage. Whether they are single parents with children or whether they are two parents with children—hon. Members know the problems that many families experience, as the hon. Member for Tiverton said—surely the answer is to build more houses rather than mark one family out against the other.

The hon. Member for Havant (Mr. Willetts) usually gives an intellectually stirring performance. It was depressing to listen to the general waffle and wander that we have heard from him today. He talked about the social fabric of society and of the importance of the voluntary sector, and the hon. Member for Chingford made the same comment. I agree that the voluntary sector is crucial to the social fabric of our society. The voluntary sector has been squeezed by the Government's policies.

For example, the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux is closing many of its offices. A classic example is Relate, which is there to help people to stay together in a marriage. Its money is in question for the second year running. If that is giving the voluntary sector support so that it can function, goodness knows what the opposite would be.

When we look at what Relate does for families we must be careful to say exactly what we mean when we refer to the family. The trap—some hon. Members made the point today—is to believe that the world that Beveridge described still exists. It clearly does not. In 1942, he wrote:

[Ms. Mowlam]

"By definition, the family is a group consisting of two parents . . . and their off-spring. In the next thirty years, housewives as mothers have vital work to do in ensuring the adequate continuance of the British race".

The family that Beveridge described fits just 6 per cent. of British families today. His assumption that a woman's place was in the home of a two-parent family dependent on her husband's income is no longer a reality. Employment can no longer be classified in terms of full male employment. We no longer have men working 48 hours a week, 48 weeks of the year, 48 years of their life, because today half the work force are female. Men no longer monopolise the role of breadwinner.

We must accept that the reality of today's families has little to do with the cosy Pathé news vision of what the family looks like. It is our duty as politicians to face up to that new reality. We listened to the reforming zeal of the Secretary of State for Social Security, whose mind-set—if one wants a "Jurassic Park"—is back in the 1940s, at least. To live in a world, as he does, that bases social, economic and political judgments on Hovis and Ovaltine advertisements is a fantasy—a fantasy that no longer has a basis in policy.

Let us look at what we need. Many hon. Members have argued that we need answers to the difficulties that we are facing. One crucial aspect that needs to be changed is that we need to provide the right economic conditions for families to survive. The creation of economic wealth has to go hand in hand with social welfare. A stronger economy is not the only answer. We also need changes to work patterns.

We need work patterns and workplaces that allow both men and women to become family friendly. Everyone has a responsibility to help to achieve that. It would certainly make a difference to the House of Commons. If we had a family-friendly environment, the children of Members of Parliament would not be brought up by single parents—our partners. As most of us know, that is the reality. We need more flexi-time so that women and men can spend more time with their families and we must have a real commitment to maternity, paternity and parental leave.

We must also review the way that the benefits system means that women whose husbands become unemployed do better remaining on benefit than finding a pathway back to work. There must be incentives for people to return to work. There must be greater employment protection and opportunities for part-time workers. For most women, part-time work is a positive choice, but it carries with it low pay, low status, lack of training and the loss of pension rights and protection. If men are to be given the opportunity to be better fathers, we need to change working practices so that they, too, can spend more time caring for their children. We need a national child care strategy that makes that possible for both men and women.

Families are not just the responsibilities of parents. Everyone has rights and responsibilities and that includes the Government. After the innovation of their economic policy, which wrecks the economy, we have had an employment policy that fuels unemployment and an education policy that leaves children uneducated. It seems that we shall now experience the unhappy prospect of a welfare policy that seems designed only to undermine the welfare of our citizens.

9.46 pm

The Minister for Social Security and Disabled People (Mr. Nicholas Scott): We have heard a wide-ranging and, at times, challenging debate—I suspect that it was as challenging for the Opposition as it has rightly been for the Government—as we have looked at the future pattern of social security.

It is timely that we are having the debate before the House rises for the summer recess. As the hon. Member for Redcar (Ms Mowlam) said, society is changing and the social security system needs a fundamental look at it from time to time to ensure that it is working with the grain of society as it exists, rather than being set in concrete.

I must say, in a fairly light-hearted manner, that some of the changes in working patterns mentioned by the hon. Lady have dangers as well. I remember a gentleman from the White House coming to see me to talk about home working, which is developing in the United States. He told me that they had found that a surprising result of men working in the house all day long was an increase in the incidence of the breakdown of marriage, and that they had to find ways to get men out of the house for much of the day so as to make the system work better.

We are dealing with a part of public policy concerned with the needs of people—retirement, sickness or disability, the misfortune of unemployment or family responsibilities. The social security system is designed to meet those needs. We must also look at the social security system from time to time, because of the massive cost to the taxpayer that the social security budget represents. It costs some £80 billion a year and that figure is rising, as my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State said.

The social security system, as it reacted to the changes in society that the hon. Member for Redcar mentioned, tended, rather Topsy-like, to grow. Every so often, we need to take a fundamental look at the pattern of social security provision. My hon. Friend the Member for Stamford and Spalding (Mr. Davies) spoke of how, within that growth, anomalies and disincentives creep into the pattern of social security provision which therefore needs to be reviewed.

We need a dispassionate, intelligent review of the system. I am delighted that the Labour party, floundering in our wake, has established the Commission on Social Justice. I am surprised that the party did not undertake the work itself but decided to privatise it, in spite of the commitment of the hon. Member for Redcar to opposing privatisation and contracting out wherever it takes place.

I agree with one sentence in particular in the document published by the Commission on Social Justice, which is that welfare is now top of the political agenda. I welcome that and I think that the House welcomes the fact that we are taking a close and penetrating look at the system. So far, the commission seems to have delivered a number of very elegant essays, but has not come up with any firm recommendations for the hon. Members for Glasgow, Garscadden (Mr. Dewar) and for Redcar to recommend. Firm recommendations seem a long way off. Our review is being addressed urgently, and we will not shrink from taking tough decisions if necessary.

All countries in the western world face the same problem. Much of today's debate has assumed that our society in these islands is considering social security problems in an isolated way. Europe, north America, Australia, New Zealand and all the advanced economies of

the world are having to take a close and penetrating look at their social security systems, not least to see whether present generations and those to come can afford them. Some countries have already acted to constrain expenditure and others are plannning to do so. I do not believe that anyone can opt out of that challenge.

The Government welcome the idea of a debate and all the contributions to it, including, in due course, that of the Commission on Social Justice.

Some of the parameters that the Commission on Social Justice has established for itself fit in very well with the concepts set out in the Mais lecture by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State. It recognises the importance of the link between economic and social policy. It recognises that changes in the economy and society since Beveridge have rendered some of the assumptions of Beveridge out of date and ready for review, as the hon. Member for Redcar recognised.

The commission also recognises the importance of more saving and investment and the need for people to have more control of their own resources, to enhance self-reliance and to help create future wealth. The commission recognises the need for better incentives to work and believes that people should meet their obligations to each other and be encouraged to insure themselves. So there is common ground, although one would not think so when one listened to the hon. Member for Garscadden opening the debate today. Clearly we can agree with those themes.

I differ from the Commission on Social Justice in its gloomy picture and analysis of Britain today, which is not a picture that I recognise. I believe that Opposition Members live in a world in which they—*[Interruption.]* They believe that it is in their own interests to paint as bleak a picture as possible.

On page 48 of the document, the Commission on Social Justice says that we are wealthier, healthier, better educated and better housed today than we were 40 years ago. That is the reality of society today and has been increasingly true since 1979, when a Conservative Government came into office.

Mr. Dewar: Does the right hon. Gentleman take satisfaction from the fact that the Department of Trade and Industry's evidence to the Select Committee included a table of gross domestic product per head in 24 industrialised western countries in which we are 18th out of 24? Is that something from which we should take consolation?

Mr. Scott: I have about six minutes to draw the debate to a conclusion. The hon. Gentleman made that point in his opening speech. People know that they are better off now. They are becoming increasingly better off under a Conservative Government. We have won four successive general elections as a result of that policy and we are destined to win a fifth.

The right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) made a remarkable speech, in which he reiterated his belief that state intervention and spending are all that are needed to cure all the social ills that beset our society. He declared—somewhat bravely—that he is still a socialist, an endangered species in the current Labour party. He asserted that, in 1979, the Government embarked on a deliberate policy of increasing unemployment to achieve certain political aims. I utterly refute any such suggestion.

Unemployment is evil and wasteful in human and economic terms. Our policies are designed to reduce it, and they are beginning to do that. We intend to continue to pursue those policies because they will lead to economic recovery and lower unemployment. I was somewhat surprised by the right hon. Gentleman's assertion that the increase in unemployment is the result of deliberate actions by the Government, because when he last held office, unemployment went up from 1·9 to 4·1 per cent. and he still felt able to remain a member of that Labour Government. It is easy to criticise us, but the right hon. Gentleman was in a Labour Cabinet when unemployment doubled.

I share the astonishment of my hon. Friend the Member for Chingford (Mr. Duncan Smith) at the picture of this country painted by Opposition Members. They have accused us of dismantling the welfare state, but we have increased welfare spending by 75 per cent. in real terms since 1979. There have been accusations that the rich are getting richer, but people know that the hallmark of Conservative government since 1979 has been the spreading of wealth and opportunities in ways that had never been used before.

We have given the opportunity of home ownership to some 2 million people who bought their council houses, and that was done in spite of Labour's consistent and sustained opposition. Share ownership has been taken up by 11 million people, again despite Labour's fierce opposition. Under this Government, the vast majority of people in Britain are better off now than they were in 1979. Household incomes have grown by 35 per cent. in real terms and pensions have fared even better. The growth in ownership of consumer durables has been faster than at any time in our history.

The true litmus paper test has been our electoral success, and that has been due to the success of our policies. The hon. Member for Garscadden said that life chances are being destroyed, but the contrary is true: they are being enhanced and broadened by our policies. Our record outdoes even the peroration of Opposition Members. The Labour party can scheme its schemes and the Liberals can dream their dreams, but we have work to do and we are determined to do it.

We want a successful economy and we are achieving it. We have no intention of dismantling the welfare state. We aim to make it better, to protect the vulnerable, to improve incentives to work and to cope with changes in our society. Above all, we aim to make sure that the pattern of social security is affordable for this generation and for generations to come. Every country is having to do that.

Labour's mismanagement of the economy in 1974-79 resulted in pensioners' incomes from savings falling by 16 per cent. in real terms. Under this Government, their income from savings has more than doubled. It is difficult to take lectures from a party which failed to pay the pensioners' Christmas bonus in 1975 and 1979.

We also find it difficult to take criticisms about means-tested benefits, when this Government made those benefits a statutory entitlement. Under the Labour Government, entitlement to those benefits was discretionary and rules for the exercise of that discretion were not even published. We aim to run a successful economy and a compassionate welfare system, and I commend the motion to the House.

Question put, That the original words stand part of the Question:—

The House divided: Ayes 268, Noes 312.

Division No. 354] **[10 pm**

AYES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beggs, Roy
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Bruce, Malcolm *(Gordon)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Fatchett, Derek
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Ieuan Wyn *(Ynys Môn)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jowell, Tessa
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Rendel, David
Richardson, Jo
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Wicks, Malcolm
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Jon Owen Jones and
Mr. Dennis Turner.

NOES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian

Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliffe)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'shire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heath, Rt Hon Sir Edward
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shepherd, Richard *(Aldridge)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(Calder V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Winterton, Nicholas *(Macc'f'ld)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. David Lightbown.

Question accordingly negatived.

Question, That the proposed words be there added, *put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 30 (Questions on amendments) and agreed to.*

Question accordingly agreed to.

MADAM SPEAKER *forthwith declared the main Question, as amended, to be agreed to.*

Resolved,

That this House supports the Government's approach to the reform of social security, which is designed to improve the system, protect the vulnerable and prevent spending outstripping the nation's ability to pay; and deplores the scaremongering tactics of the Opposition, who cause unnecessary alarm to the least well off, elderly and disabled people, yet fail to produce responsible alternative policies.

Immigration

10.17 pm

Mr. Graham Allen (Nottingham, North): I beg to move,

That the Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules (House of Commons Paper No. 725), a copy of which was laid before this House on 5th July, be disapproved.

I understand that with this it will be convenient to discuss at the same time the following motions:

That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that the Asylum Appeals (Procedure) Rules 1993 (S.I., 1993, No. 1661), dated 5th July 1993, a copy of which was laid before this House on 5th July, be annulled.

That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that the Immigration Appeals (Procedure) (Amendment) Rules 1993 (S.I., 1993, No. 1662), dated 5th July 1993, a copy of which was laid before this House on 5th July, be annulled.

That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that the Immigration (Restricted Right of Appeal against Deportation) (Exemption) Order 1993 (S.I., 1993, No. 1656), dated 2nd July 1993, a copy of which was laid before this House on 5th July, be annulled.

There is something fundamentally wrong with a Parliament that allows such matters of life and death to be put not in a Bill but in rules to be discussed briefly at night, or even in Committee. *[Interruption.]* Even so, the Minister must now be clear—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. I should appreciate it if those hon. Members who are leaving would so so quietly.

Mr. Allen: Even so—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. An hon. Member is speaking.

Mr. Allen: Even so, the Minister must now be clear about our opposition to these mean-minded measures. They will do little to help those fleeing for their lives from political persecution and they will do immense harm to Britain's tradition as a haven against oppression.

The Opposition have consistently rejected the basic premises that underlie the Government's motivation for introducing these restrictive measures. The fear of waves of immigration, so inelegantly and bogusly supplied by the hon. Member for Davyhulme (Mr. Churchill), reflects Conservative inhibitions that have held this country back socially, economically and politically. Unfortunately, that paranoia is also gripping other right-wing parties in Europe.

The German Government's inability to address the racism of its far right needs no elaboration. The reaction within Italy's northern political movement is a worrying development for its future race relations. Last week, in France, the National Assembly began its medieval quest for zero immigration. The Assembly passed laws to restrict French nationals' ability to bring third-country spouses to France. Random identity checks on immigrants and unchecked expulsions now seem to be Government policies. Those are the policies of so-called moderate Conservatives. I dread to think what a radical Conservative contemplates, let alone the hard core of far right-wingers in the European political spectrum.

When it comes to drafting harsh immigration rules, the British Government's version of the resolution put to the ad hoc group of European Immigration Ministers shows that this is one area where Britain, sadly, leads the rest of Europe. Where we could be leading, pressing for a directive against race discrimination, we draft instead the lowest moral denominator on asylum. These asylum rules are borne of the spurious problem of bogus asylum applicants—a problem invented for political gain before the last election.

The key test for Opposition Members in approaching the rules is whether they will take us into a new era of compassionate, fair and effective appraisal of applications to the United Kingdom for asylum. It is clear that they will not. The impact of the rules will be to reduce dramatically the possibility of a successful application from a legitimate asylum seeker being lodged.

The disastrous consequence of the safe third-country proposals—paragraph 180 of the rules—is already being witnessed daily. For example, there was the man who, on asking for asylum at Heathrow back in May, having fled from Colombia on a direct flight to the United Kingdom, was returned to Portugal because the plane on which he had arrived had been forced to make an emergency landing in the Azores for one day. In spite of the fact that he already had a sister in the United Kingdom—a reason for him to apply for asylum here—he was returned to Lisbon, where he suffered a nervous breakdown and ended up in a mental institution. Now, thanks to hard work by his sister and lawyers, he has been able to enter the United Kingdom. Do we have to make this the standard practice for anyone seeking to come here? Do we have to heap further pressure and indignity upon those fleeing persecution?

The most odious paragraph—there is severe competition for the title—is 100G. Under that provision, the Home Office asylum division is now required to take into account various specific factors when application for asylum is made to it. Each one looks unexceptionable on face value. However, on closer examination, it appears that each one could be used to turn around a person desperately and legitimately fleeing for his life.

For example, if an applicant fails to make his application immediately on arrival in the United Kingdom, the application may be deemed not credible. But, as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has pointed out, if one is in fear of losing one's life and has been admitted to a country, it may well be that one's natural reaction is to delay one's application for fear of being refused entry and immediately returned.

Similar arguments were made by colleagues in Committee and on the Floor regarding the other criteria: false representations, damaged documents, currently lodged applications, full and prompt disclosure, and the safe third country rule.

How can asylum seekers make a reasonable explanation as to why they may have destroyed a document, claimed in a group, not made a full and prompt disclosure, or left a so-called safe third country, when the Government do not give them a reasonable amount of time to gather their thoughts or obtain considered legal advice? We reject the Government's imposed time limits as totally inadequate.

All the catches that I have explained have been argued about in Committee and on the Floor throughout the passage of the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill. We argue that these criteria are too complex to be judged immediately when someone enters our country. These are not petty legislative drafting points. If we get this wrong, people can be sent back to their death.

The UNHCR has pointed out those fears time and time again since these measures were introduced in draft in November. The Government have ignored every concern

expressed. It appears that the only way to get the Government to respond is through the generation of publicity. Thus, after massive newspaper coverage, we now have the minor concession extending the au pair system to men.

The Government were shamed into allocating 1,000 places for Bosnian ex-detainees by media coverage of starved and tortured people from Bosnia. Can the British Government never take a moral lead, or is it another example of what the right hon. Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont) called a Government in office rather than in power?

Mr. Michael Fabricant (Mid-Staffordshire): Have the hon. Gentleman and his party learnt nothing from the instability in Germany because of that country's immigration policy?

Mr. Allen: I do not know if that question deserves a reply. The policy of the British Government in allowing 1,000 individuals into Britain from the Bosnian territory is pathetic. Small though the number is, we still do not have 1,000 people from Bosnia in a safe haven in the United Kingdom since November. That is appalling. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will raise that with the Minister before he starts comparing the records of Governments in other European countries.

Mr. John Carlisle (Luton, North): The hon. Gentleman, despite his laconic and somewhat lazy style, which I suppose he thinks is attractive to the House, has not answered the question put to him by my hon. Friend the Member for Mid-Staffordshire (Mr. Fabricant). Does the hon. Gentleman's fixation with numbers extend to the actual cases? He seems to be accusing the British Government of not taking more than 1,000 Bosnian refugees on the basis that the number is wrong. Do not the individual cases matter to him, or is it Labour party policy to let everybody in and talk about the numbers afterwards?

Mr. Allen: The hon. Gentleman could not have been listening to what I said. After great pressure from Opposition Members, not least throughout the debates on the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Bill, the Government finally, after the coverage of horrendous events in the media, decided to allow into the United Kingdom 1,000 individuals from the war-torn areas of Bosnia. That small quota has still not been fulfilled. Perhaps we can talk about other numbers when the Government have met the quota that they set to help the people of Bosnia.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Allen: I am anxious to get on with my speech. Many Conservative Members wish to intervene. I will give way again, but I must warn them that we are using their time, too.

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Lancaster): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that, were we to take in too many people, we would be assisting in ethnic cleansing? The policy of the Government has been to try to get people settled as near as possible to their homes, so that they may return when peace comes. Bringing them here is unlikely to enable them to get back to their homes, where they really wish to live.

Mr. Allen: Most political asylum seekers do not seek settlement in this country but prefer to return home. They will no doubt seek to do that once the situation at home has settled down. In any event, allowing in 1,000 individuals hardly represents a dent in the Bosnian problem. It is window dressing to placate people who see television pictures coming from Bosnia. I repeat that even the Government's target of 1,000 has not been met. Perhaps the Minister will say when he expects to meet that pathetic target of 1,000 political refugees.

The other statutory instruments come from a similar stable and are equally deeply flawed. I refer specifically to the procedure rules governing asylum appeals. Those procedures, which must be followed when applying for an asylum appeal, are riddled with the notion that all applicants must be suspected of false motives.

The instruments introduce for the first time in British law a 48-hour time limit for lodging appeals for people whose cases are certified by the Home Secretary as groundless. It is ludicrous to imagine that that will allow adequate time for serious arguments or legal advice to be given. The hearing is then set within three days and completed within a further seven days. That will not allow adequate time for decent appeal arguments to be drafted or even for proper legal advice to be given.

The prescribed forms attached to the measures, which must be used when lodging an appeal, are also a matter of concern to immigration case workers and lawyers. Perhaps the Minister can make it clear whether photocopies of the forms, rather than the original forms, are acceptable or whether there is an absolute and strict requirement for the prescribed forms to be used.

A further difficulty is the required signed declaration:

"I declare that the information I have given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief".

The finality of the wording suggests that giving any new information or evidence at a later stage may be taken as deceit. Again, the Minister may wish to comment on whether that is the intention of the measures.

Additionally, I see no reason for the very strict requirement that a legal representative cannot sign on behalf of an applicant. It is permitted in other immigration procedures, so why rule out the ability in this case?

We are meant to be grateful for the fact that there is a new right of appeal against asylum refusals when, at the same time, the Government have abolished all rights of appeal for anyone refused a visitor's visa to come to Britain, for example, to see relatives, for holidays, weddings or other family occasions. However, the Government's policy, in establishing a new right of appeal in cases of asylum, however cursory, recognises the fact that mistakes will always be made and, as it can be a question of life and death, it is vital that there is a right of appeal.

The measures are the Government's squalid contribution to the development of European immigration policies. They are certain proof of the repressive direction in which Europe is heading—"fortress Europe". Fortress Europe is becoming a reality, and it is to our undying shame that one of its foundation stones is being laid in the British Parliament tonight.

10.31 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Wardle): The House has witnessed yet another ritual performance from the hon.

[Mr. Charles Wardle]

Member for Nottingham, North (Mr. Allen). He has rehearsed the same groundless objections to our sensible, practical and fair-minded measures, which are now to be found in the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993.

We have been debating asylum and immigration matters for about eight months, and it ill behoves the hon. Gentleman to confuse on the Floor of the House the removal of an asylum applicant to a safe third country with the return of that applicant to the country in which he or she claims to have a well-founded fear of persecution. The two matters are entirely separate, as I am sure that the hon. Gentleman will agree on reflection. He knows full well that under the Act there is the right to an oral hearing for every refused asylum applicant. The fact that he bases his objections on whether or not there is an appeal seems to be stretching credulity.

Talking of stretching credulity, let us think a little further about Bosnia. The hon. Gentleman said several times that the Government had agreed to accept 1,000 people from Bosnia. As he knows, because he was here when I made the statement in the House last November, at that time we agreed to accept 1,000 ex-detainees from Bosnia, selected by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and their dependants. Our estimate was that it would mean about 4,000 Bosnians arriving here.

It does not end there, however, because the hon. Gentleman must know from previous debates that, since September 1991, about 70,000 people have come here from the former Yugoslavia, of whom approximately 7,000 have applied for asylum. He failed to tell the House that our offer to the UNHCR is the second highest after Germany's. I wish that he had taken the opportunity to compare the British offer with that of the United States. The United States offered to take 300 ex-detainees and said that, with family dependants, it would take a total of 1,000 people. Like the British Government, the United States Government have not yet been able to get the full number that they asked for, because UNHCR has not identified a sufficient number of ex-detainees.

The British Government's response has been to suggest that UNHCR liberalises the criteria for selecting people and adds other vulnerable individual cases. Those may include someone who has not been in a detention camp, such as a woman who has been raped and seen her family butchered. She and her direct dependants should be able to come here within that limit of 1,000. UNHCR has agreed to our suggestion.

Mr. Allen: Is the Minister saying that a woman who had been raped and seen her family butchered was outside the criteria and would not have been allowed into this country as part of the 1,000 detainees?

Mr. Wardle: UNHCR's criteria were drawn extremely tightly. For reasons which the hon. Gentleman would surely support, we suggested to UNHCR that we should broaden the criteria.

This country's support in the humanitarian effort in the terrible conflict in Bosnia has been enormous. My right hon. and noble Friend the Minister for Overseas Development announced in another place recently that a further £18·5 million would be added to the £113 million aid contribution that has already gone from this country to Bosnia. We have contributed troops, pilots, mercy flights, doctors, nurses, medical supplies, vast quantities of food, clothing, road transport, drivers, mechanics, engineers, housing shelters, and technicians dealing with water and power supplies. On reflection, Opposition Members will appreciate just what the British commitment has been to those terrible problems.

Mr. Robert Maclennan (Caithness and Sutherland): To put all that in context, will the Minister say how many refugees from former Yugoslavia have been received in Germany?

Mr. Wardle: I can give the hon. Gentleman an estimate. I understand that about 600,000 people from former Yugoslavia have arrived in Germany. However, that was neither a decision by the German Government nor a declaration of intent by a German politician. People simply arrived across the border because of the geography. Whereas, before this terrible conflict began, this country had a community of people from former Yugoslavia of some 14,000, Germany had some 700,000 guest workers, or gastarbeiter. It is therefore not surprising that, because of those connections and Germany's geography, people just turned up there and I respect the efforts made by the German authorities to cope with those numbers of people.

Mr. Max Madden (Bradford, West): Will the Minister confirm that, as of last week, fewer than 600 of the 4,000 Bosnian people whom he announced last October would be received in this country had been received here? What are the British Government and the international community doing to relieve the enormous refugee crisis building up in Croatia? Eighty per cent. of the 300,000 Bosnian refugees are living with Croatian households who are paid $18 per refugee per month, and the money will run out by the end of this month unless the international community comes forward with more. What is being done to ensure that the social crisis that will ensue if those families are evicted on to the streets does not happen?

Mr. Wardle: On the hon. Gentleman's first specific point, the figure is not fewer than 600. As of last week, 672 ex-detainees and direct dependants had come to this country, not including 68 wounded people who came here as hospital cases. I know that the hon. Gentleman appreciates the position, because he has been looking at the position in former Yugoslavia. Last month, he was in Karlovac. The hon. Gentleman will know that selection of the former detainees, and now, the other vulnerable cases, has to be a matter for the experts on the ground—UNHCR with the help of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The hon. Gentleman mentioned other displaced people in former Yugoslavia, especially in Croatia. It is estimated that more than 4 million people have been displaced by the conflict, of whom nearly 3·5 million remain in that country. To seek to start moving them beyond the boundaries of what used to be Yugoslavia would be to capitulate to the evil goal of ethnic cleansing, which simply cannot be done.

On his return from his recent visit to Karlovac, where he saw people waiting, the hon. Gentleman wrote to me saying that there were former detainees waiting to be placed. When we checked with UNHCR we found that everyone confirmed as a former detainee had been assigned a country to go to, with their dependants. Fifty of

them were coming to this country, and they have since arrived. Other people in Karlovac were pressing their claims on UNHCR and saying that they were former detainees, although they had not been removed from camps by that organisation.

It is now time to deal with the orders that have been prayed against——

Mr. Madden *rose*——

Mr. Wardle: How can I resist the hon. Gentleman? This is what happened week after week in Committee.

Mr. Madden *rose*——

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): Order. Before the hon. Gentleman starts his intervention, may I remind him that interventions should be short? His previous intervention was not short.

Mr. Madden: I thank the Minister for having told me that 300 to 400 men who had applied for detainee registration were being interviewed. May I tell him that Karlovac was being shelled on Saturday night, and that 1,500 men, women and children are still there? What are the Government doing to ensure that that camp is emptied as quickly as possible?

Mr. Wardle: As the hon. Gentleman knows, we have told UNHCR that people do not have to be former detainees and that, within our limit of 1,000 vulnerable cases and their dependants, we have the space. It is therefore entirely open to UNHCR, if it so chooses, to designate from among those people a few, many, or all of them, within that limit, to come to this country.

I suspect that I have tested the patience of the House, because hon. Members would like me now to deal with the statutory instruments. It will not come as a surprise to the House that there is a familiar ring to the debate. The rules and statutory instruments that we are considering form part of a package, closely linked with the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993. The package as a whole will enable us to reform decision-making procedures in asylum cases and to refocus on the real priorities in the general immigration appeals system.

The hon. Member for Nottingham, North raised a number of points, which I shall seek to cover. But I know that, if I take too long in doing so, there will be much angry shifting on the Opposition benches, and I would not be so ungentlemanly as to take so much time that the hon. Member for Hackney, North and Stoke Newington (Ms Abbott), for example, did not have the opportunity to say a few words.

It is the package as a whole that we talked about when we were considering the Bill. We made available drafts of the new asylum provisions of the immigration rules and the asylum appeals procedure rules to allow informed debate on the Bill during its passage through both Houses. So there are no surprises in the material now before the House.

The two sets of rules lie at the heart of the debate, and as they were examined exhaustively during the passage of the Act the criticisms from the Opposition have a certain ritual quality. We all know what the rules contain, and we have discussed at length the reasons for their contents. It is time now to get on and make them work in practice.

As the House knows, together with the instruments that we are discussing, we laid a commencement order bringing into force the relevant provisions of the new Act from next Monday, 26 July. I explained during the passage of the Act that we had been building up resources and making practical arrangements in anticipation of the new system over the past two years. We need the new system to draw proper effectiveness and value for money from those new resources. As practitioners have had many months to become familiar with our plans during the Act's protracted progress, there would be no justification for aritificially delaying its implementation now.

Before looking in turn at each of the instruments that we are considering, I remind the House of the situation in the asylum system as we move to implementation of the Act next Monday. There are now some 550 staff in the asylum division, and about 70 further staff will be added this year. We have begun to get to grips with the huge outstanding case load in advance of the new procedures. In the first half of the year there were about 11,500 new asylum applications, suggesting that the annual total this year will be broadly similar to last year's total of just over 24,000. In the past six months, we took more than 17,000 decisions and we continue to make steady inroads into the backlog of undecided applications. Even so, that backlog stood at more than 41,000 at the end of last month. It is coming down, but there is much work to be done.

From next Monday, we shall give priority to processing new applications and will aim to resolve the great majority of them within three months. At the same time, we shall continue to work systematically through the backlog. All refusal decisions taken after 26 July will attract the new appeal rights. All cases, both old and new, will be decided on the same criteria.

The fingerprinting provisions of the Act came into force on Royal Assent on 1 July, and last week we began routinely to take the fingerprints of new applicants both at the ports and at Lunar house, Croydon. It is too early to draw conclusions about their impact, but I am pleased to report that procedures are running smoothly, with applicants being co-operative and experiencing no obvious difficulties or distress.

I turn to the documents and I will start with the "Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules". This looks a little different from the draft rules on asylum that we made available with the Bill simply because the material in the draft has had to be fitted in with the present format of the rest of the rules. The substance is unchanged. It sets out more fully than at present the criteria that will be applied to determining asylum cases. It lists the factors that, without a reasonable explanation, may be damaging to an applicant's credibility, which concerned the hon. Member for Nottingham, North, and may thus lead to refusal. It must be right to let applicants know where they stand and what is expected of them. Our expectations are not excessive. We are simply looking for good faith and co-operation in the investigation of their claims.

We have also added to the earlier draft—the hon. Member for Nottingham, North was thinking of paragraph 180G, not 100G—amendments to reflect the abolition of certain general immigration rights of appeal under sections 10 and 11 of the Act, which we discussed and debated at length in Committee.

The elements of the statement of changes in the rules that do not flow directly from the Act are straightforward, and I hope that the House will agree that they are uncontroversial. The hon. Member for Nottingham,

[Mr. Wardle]

North mentioned at least one of them. As we have previously announced, we have amended the rules on au pairs so that young men may now qualify in that category.

Mr. Bernie Grant (Tottenham) *rose*——

Mr. Wardle: Since I am talking of young men, I give way to the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Grant: I thank the Minister for his generosity in giving way. I note that the rules for admission to the United Kingdom make an exception in the visa requirements for people from Croatia and Slovenia. Why is that exemption granted, when people from other parts of former Yugoslavia must have visas?

Mr. Wardle: That has nothing to do with the instruments. As the hon. Gentleman knows, however, that was made perfectly clear when the new visa regime for other parts of former Yugoslavia was introduced at the end of November.

In anticipation of completion of the channel tunnel, we have included a number of references——

Mr. Keith Vaz (Leicester, East): What is the answer?

Mr. Wardle: I have given the answer.

We have added the word "train" to the rules at suitable points. We have clarified the language in the rules relating to entry clearance and transit passengers, and as they have become independent countries we have added Eritrea and Macedonia to the list of visa nationalities. Ethiopia was already on the list.

I should like to take this opportunity to say that we have it in mind to introduce a further change to the immigration rules in the near future. The main purpose of this further exercise is to consolidate the rules and to improve the format and presentation for the benefit of applicants and practitioners. Their practical application has also been reviewed and the opportunity will be taken to make a number of substantive changes. These include provisions regulating the circumstances in which married students may be accompanied by their spouses and amending the rules on working holidaymakers, who will in future be required to obtain entry clearance before coming to the United Kingdom.

I propose to lay a consolidated statement of the immigration rules before the House before the end of 1993, to come into effect early in 1994. I am placing in the Libraries of both Houses a consultative document covering the working draft of the proposed consolidation. Copies will be made available in the Vote Office imminently. In addition, my officials will be sending the document to a number of interested parties seeking their comments. Further copies are also available from Lunar house, and we will invite comments by the end of September.

Mrs. Gwyneth Dunwoody (Crewe and Nantwich): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. Is it in order for the Minister to make a major announcement in a debate on instruments that are narrowly drawn and do not encompass the substantive changes to which he has just referred?

Madam Deputy Speaker: I should like to hear more from the Minister before making any announcement.

Mr. Wardle: As I have explained, I thought that it would be for the convenience of the House to announce that a consultation exercise was about to be embarked on. I said that the document would be available in the Vote Office and in the Library, and I made it plain that we would approach a number of interested parties to seek their views by the end of September. I thought that it would be for the convenience of the House if I took this early opportunity to announce the timetable——

Mr. Madden: On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The Minister has said that he intends to place documents in the Vote Office. Surely they should have been given us for this debate, to enable Members to consider them and question the Minister about them? With the recess looming there would seem to be no further opportunities to do that.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I understood the Minister to be giving the House notice. Hon. Members get annoyed when things are sprung on them, so they cannot complain when they are given notice.

Mr. Wardle: I am grateful for that ruling. I hope that Opposition Members who served on the Committee with me will recognise that I sought to be assiduous about providing copies of letters and of other information. I regard it as only courteous to the House to let it know about a future exercise, not related to these instruments. There will be ample opportunity to debate the consultation exercise——

Mr. Vaz: Has the document in question already been prepared? If it has, what is to stop the Minister's officials placing a copy of it in the Vote Office tomorrow?

Mr. Wardle: The document will be there imminently——

Mr. Vaz: Tomorrow?

Mr. Wardle: Imminently.

Mr. Vaz *rose*——

Mr. Wardle: I will incur the wrath of other Members if I give way again.

Mr. Vaz: On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. You have told the House that the Minister has given us notice that a document is to be placed in the Vote Office and the Library. He has told the House that the document has already been prepared. Could the Minister tell us, through you, why it is not possible to place the document in the Vote Office tomorrow?

Madam Deputy Speaker: I do not regard that as a matter of order for the Chair.

Mr. Wardle: It is perhaps a monument to the hon. Gentleman's sense of self-importance that he has used up so much of the time for this debate on a point that ensued from my attempts to be courteous to the House.

I can now answer the hon. Gentleman's question. By turning my head in a certain direction I have been able to ascertain, as if by magic, that "imminently" means tomorrow. It was only my innate caution that led me to say "imminently" in the first place—I did not want to let the hon. Member for Leicester, East (Mr. Vaz) down. In any case, I can confirm that I mean tomorrow.

The Asylum Appeals (Procedure) Rules 1993, laid by my noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor, are even more straightforward than the new immigration rules. They were made available in draft for consultation in substantially their present form, and the changes made in the final version are slight. The rules establish a separate procedural regime for asylum appeals channelled to the designated special adjudicators, and from special adjudicators to the appeals tribunal. They set time limits for the different stages of that procedure.

A change to be noted in the present version is the inclusion in rule 5(2) of clarification that the two working day limit for lodging appeals will apply only when three criteria are met—that a port case is involved; that the application has been certified as without foundation; and that the applicant has been served personally with the refusal notice. I can repeat tonight that, in practice, we will operate this procedure only when applicants are detained.

A second change is that the time limits for certain preliminary stages in the accelerated handling of cases certified as being without foundation have been extended in the interests of the practicability of the new system. Rule 6(2) now allows the special adjudicator three days in which to serve notice of the time and place for the hearing. Rule 9(2) provides that, overall, the special adjudicator will determine a "without foundation" case within seven days of receiving notice of an appeal.

The final instrument for discussion this evening is the Immigration (Restricted Right of Appeal against Deportation) (Exemption) Order 1993. This, too, flows directly from the provisions of the new Act. Section 5 of the Immigration Act 1988 restricts the grounds that can be raised on appeal against deportation when an overstayer has been in this country for less than seven years. Hitherto, there has been an exception to ensure that asylum-related issues can also be raised. Now that there is a specific right of appeal against deportation on asylum grounds, that exemption is no longer necessary.

Mr. Peter Thurnham (Bolton, North-East): Will my hon. Friend give way?

Mr. Wardle: I hope that my hon. Friend will not mind if I do not give way now. I am about to end my speech, and no doubt he will have an opportunity later to catch the eye of the Chair.

A new exemption is needed to give effect to assurances that I gave during the passage of the 1988 legislation. I made it clear that when an existing leave is curtailed under section 7—I know that this will interest the hon. Member for Norwood (Mr. Fraser)—there will be an opportunity to raise all aspects of the case in an appeal against the notice of intention to deport. The order ensures that that is not restricted by section 5 of the 1988 Act.

As I have said, the instruments are an essential part of the practical changes that the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act seeks to achieve. They are entirely consistent with the clear picture of our intentions that we gave during the passage of the Act. Our task now is to make the system work effectively; these instruments are essential practical tools to enable us to do just that, and I commend them to the House.

10.57 pm

Ms Diane Abbott (Hackney, North and Stoke Newington): To hear Conservative Members talk about immigration and asylum matters is to hear them at their most unpleasant and unsavoury. I only wish that members of the minority groups whose votes Conservative Members are so keen to solicit at election time, and whose big cash donations they are so keen to solicit at any time, could hear them at this time of night, jeering at the very notion that immigrants might have rights.

What has been entirely lacking—both in the debate on the original legislation and, so far, in tonight's debate—is any notion that immigrants or asylum seekers are people: people who, historically, have contributed to the country. Anyone listening to the jeers and sneers of Conservative Members would not think that some of our most distinguished public figures were once refugees and asylum seekers. Nor has it yet been pointed out that refugees, immigrants and asylum seekers are entitled to due process. One of the most grotesque features of the instruments that we are debating is the notion that the answer to an administrative backlog of asylum seekers and refugees is to curtail their rights. The humane and proper answer would have been to provide the staff necessary to speed the process.

According to Conservative Members and the media, the focus of the changes to our immigration and asylum rules is the need to avoid the problems experienced in Germany. Let me remind Conservative Members that the serious problems in Germany are not the responsibility of the refugees there. They have been caused by the failure to take legal action against illegal Nazi violence, by the failure of leading politicians to condemn fascist and Nazi violence and by the phenomenon of the resurgence of Nazism and fascism.

If Conservative Members spent less time sneering at the notion that immigrants and refugees are entitled to a due process of rights and more time condemning Nazism and fascism wherever they rear their heads, they would do themselves a little more credit, and would seem a little less hypocritical to those of us who know the reality of their behaviour in the Chamber and the hypocrisy of the appeals they make to members of minority communities at election time.

Mr. Fabricant: I am grateful to the hon. Lady for giving way to me, as I was the one who mentioned the instability in Germany. I hope that she is not trying to say that any Conservative Member would condone Nazi activities in Germany or anywhere else. Will she accept, as a matter of common sense, that huge inflows of immigration and refugees, some of whom may be bogus, cause instability? Does she not think that, if the Minister is creating a system under which immigration can be controlled to allow in those who have a just cause, it will mean that immigrants coming into the United Kingdom can be looked after, and instability will not arise, as it has in Germany and elsewhere?

Ms Abbott: It is precisely that kind of rhetoric that Labour Members find so alarming. The hon. Gentleman talked of inflows as though he was talking about so much inanimate debris. We are talking about people. The problem in Germany is caused first and foremost by illegal fascist violence. Immigrant and refugee communities both in this country and in Europe as a whole want from people in positions of authority a clear condemnation of fascist violence.

While we are about it, why do not some Tory Members condemn the speeches made recently by the hon. Member of Davyhulme (Mr. Churchill)?

Mr. Jeremy Corbyn (Islington, North): Where is he?

Mr. David Winnick (Walsall, North): Making another racist speech, I should imagine.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. The House will know my view about repeated seated interventions. Let us return to the subject in hand.

Ms Abbott: I have tried to tell the House what Labour Members and the public at large find so alarming about the spirit in which the rules and instruments have been drafted. Part of the spirit can be found in what the hon. Member for Davyhulme has said. I am loth to mention his recent speeches, because I believe that his primary motivation was to get cheap publicity at the expense of exciting fears and playing on people's passions. That sort of cheap politics goes back to Smethwick and beyond.

The misapprehension at the heart of what the hon. Gentleman said is shown by his insistence on talking about immigrants. The people he was referring to, in the big cities of the north and the midlands—whether in Manchester, Oldham or Huddersfield—are not immigrants. Many of them are second and third-generation British people. It does no good for publicity seekers and political failures such as that hon. Gentleman to try to resuscitate their careers by replaying the old Powellite record.

Mr. Vaz: Does my hon. Friend share my astonishment at the fact that, after the hon. Member for Davyhulme (Mr. Churchill) made his speech, the Under-Secretary of State responsible for immigration matters and the Minister with responsibility for community relations did not issue statements condemning it? They are both in possession of facts disproving the rhetoric of the hon. Member for Davyhulme, but neither of them presented those facts.

Ms Abbott: I am grateful to my hon. Friend. We have all noted the failure by any Minister, including the Home Secretary, or any Conservative Member to condemn——

Mr. Fabricant: On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The hon. Member for Hackney, North and Stoke Newington (Ms Abbott) spoke about statements by my hon. Friend the Member for Davyhulme (Mr. Churchill). As she has said, those statements were about people living in this country who are not refugees. Therefore, that has nothing to do with the subject of the debate, which is on the issue of the statutory instruments on refugees.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I will be the judge of that.

Ms Abbott: It is relevant to the matter in hand, because I was trying to outline for Conservative Members the type of climate, thinking and hysteria that could generate rules and instruments that are contrary to any notion of due process. It has alarmed many people that the Home Secretary has been unwilling to condemn remarks made by one of his hon. Friends.

It is gross hyprocrisy for the Government party to try to present itself to minority groups, especially wealthy members of those groups, as a party that is on their side

when, with the other hand, they seek to play to the basest, racist feeling in the electorate. We shall keep exposing that hyprocrisy all the way to the next general election.

Not just Opposition Members but members of the judiciary and members in the other place believe that these rules and instruments run counter to any notion of fairness and due process. They will cause difficulties, separation, and unhappiness to tens of thousands of my constituents and the constituents of my hon. Friends.

The genesis of these rules and instruments dates back to before the general election when the Conservative party was anxious to play the race card. The press campaign that accompanied the issue of asylum and refugee seekers and the statements and rhetoric of Conservative Members in the debate can only confirm the worst fears of my constituents, whether they are refugee immigrants, the stock of such immigrants or people who are simply concerned about civil liberties and people's rights.

In recent times, the record of this country and that of Conservative Members in exploiting people's fears on the issue is nothing to be proud of. Above all, the Minister has nothing to be proud of in presenting the rules and instruments. On behalf of my constituents and anybody in this country who is the descendant of a refugee immigrant or asylum seeker, I will be glad to vote against them.

11.8 pm

Mr. John Greenway (Ryedale): I shall be brief, because Opposition Members want to speak in the debate. The hon. Member for Nottingham, North (Mr. Allen) made the kind of speech that we all dread in an Adjournment debate, because he seemed to ramble without much passion. He said that the issue of asylum seeking was a problem invented by the Government for political gain.

Mr. Allen *indicated dissent.*

Mr. Greenway: The hon. Gentleman shakes his head, but I am sure that *Hansard* will prove that I have quoted him correctly.

I hope that I will not embarrass you, Madam Deputy Speaker, by recalling a visit that you and I made to Gatwick airport as members of the Home Afairs Select Committee in the last Parliament during an inquiry into the policing of EC borders. Without any prearranging—and I do not think that any hon. Member would suggest that it could have been prearranged—while we were there around 45 people from the Lebanon arrived on an aeroplane and promptly squatted in the reception lounge at Gatwick airport and claimed political asylum.

Ms Abbott: So?

Mr. Greenway: The hon. Member for Hackney, North and Stoke Newington (Ms Abbott) should listen, because I am about to say something that I hope she will find encouraging.

On further inquiry, we found that that group of about 45 men, women and children had come from the Lebanon via Turkey and Paris to London. They had onward tickets to Portugal and then Cyprus. They had been allowed to fly into Gatwick airport because of their onward tickets. They had also destroyed all their other papers.

None of us had any doubt whatsoever that it was part of a racket. They all claimed political asylum; they were nothing short of economic migrants. They had family and friends in Britain and were seeking to exploit the immigration rules.

It was equally clear to us all that many people in Britain —some of them live in the constituency of the hon. Member for Leicester, East (Mr. Vaz) and he and I discussed the matter when he, too, was on the Home Affairs Committee—who have accepted the immigration rules, greatly resent the fact that bogus asylum seekers seek a way around the rules for their own gain.

It therefore behoves the House to have nothing to do with the prayers tabled by the hon. Member for Nottingham, North on behalf of the Labour party, but to give our full approval to the measures before the House, which merely give effect to the proposals in the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993, which already has Royal Assent, most of which were debated in the House and the other place on two occasions.

I cannot say to my hon. Friend the Minister that I enjoyed his company on the last Bill. I was spared that, as I had spent all my time on the Bill which was aborted because of the election last year. However, the issues are the same now, and they are the issues on which the Government are right.

The hon. Member for Hackney, North and Stoke Newington complained that no Conservative Members seemed to care much about the rights of people who come to Britain fleeing from persecution, or even economic migrants who arrive here and are given leave to remain. She is deeply wrong.

As the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Mrs. Roche) knows, the Select Committee on Home Affairs' sub-committee spent some time earlier this year looking at the delays in the immigration nationality department. We published a report three or four months ago which my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary warmly welcomed, albeit that it chided his Department in one or two respects. We took issue with him and the Government over the cases of those who had applied for political asylum in Britain and who, under the archaic rules that these measures seek to deal with, spent three or four years in Britain waiting for their cases to be decided, had been given exceptional leave to remain on humanitarian grounds then had to wait up to four years to be reunited with their families and loved ones who were refugees in other countries. We suggested that four years was too long.

I want to take the opportunity to tell my hon. Friend the Minister that those of us who have looked at these matters feel that the Government, having given those people exceptional leave to remain, should bear in mind the fact that there are many cases where there are grounds for such families to be reunited. There are mothers with very young children living in abject squalor in refugee camps and we owe it to them, having given the father leave to remain, to allow them to be reunited as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Barbara Roche (Hornsey and Wood Green): I welcome the hon. Gentleman's remarks about the need for family reunion, but does he agree that it was a mistake for the Government to introduce the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 because it muddled immigration and asylum, giving rise to the racist overtones and speeches about which we have heard recently?

Mr. Greenway: I do not think that there is much muddle in the minds of Conservative Members. There may be a muddle in the minds of some Opposition Members. As my hon. Friend the Minister admitted, 41,000 cases remain to be settled. That is 9,000 fewer than when the Select Committee published its report, but it is, none the less, as my hon. Friend will be the first to accept, an unacceptable number.

I warmly welcome my hon. Friend's comment, which goes to the heart of one of the recommendations in the Select Committee's report, that, when the measures come into force on Monday next week, the impetus to deal with the backlog of 41,000 existing cases will remain and they will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

The House, if it is honest, knows that the European Community faces a potential flood of economic migrants from Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and north Africa. It would go beyond the parameters of this debate to talk about the measures that the European Community might have to take, but they may be discussed in two days' time when we again consider the Maastricht treaty. It is clear that the measures taken by the Government are necessary and timely and, as time will demonstrate, other European countries will copy them.

11.16 pm

Mr. Robert Maclennan (Caithness and Sunderland): This is a short debate and many of the arguments about asylum to which it gives rise have already been extensively canvassed in the debate on the parent Bill, so I shall not go into great detail. There are few surprises in the measures. Most remarkable has been the Minister's statement that he intends imminently to announce a consolidated measure that the House will have an opportunity to see tomorrow.

That is an important announcement. The Minister said that he proposes to consult interested parties on that measure. Many parties and bodies are interested in the welfare of immigrants, and specifically in refugees and asylum seekers. The views of those established bodies must be heard, but I hope that the hon. Gentleman will not content himself with simply consulting them. Because those bodies and others have expressed many concerns and criticisms, there is a case for the Government doing as they do in another area where there are fears of the denial of human rights and fundamental freedoms. I speak of the nexus of laws concerned with the prevention of terrorism.

The Government should consider appointing a senior judge to review the operation of the measures to satisfy both him and the House, when we come to consider the revised and consolidated statement of immigration rules, that justice is not being denied, that due process is being afforded to those seeking refuge in these islands and who, under the terms of the United Nations convention, to which we are a contracting party, are entitled to come here. The view of a judge on those matters would be of immense objective value. Now is the time, when the rules are fresh, to make such an appointment. It is open to us to put aside any partial considerations that may have brought to our deliberations on the draft measures.

The Minister, in consolidating these measures, should examine three particular matters not covered by the existing rules, to which the attention of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants has been drawn. First, the husbands of students have no claim to be with the students while they are studying. That provision is sexually discriminatory and should be discarded. Secondly, the children of lone parents should be allowed to join their parents in the United Kingdom, if there is adequate support for them. Thirdly, where children have the right of abode, their parents should normally be permitted to stay with them. Those aspects could be covered in the consolidated rules.

As to the asylum and immigration matters covered by the amended immigration rules and by the three statutory instruments that are before the House, I was surprised to hear the Minister say that the justification for rule 180G, to which the hon. Member for Nottingham, North (Mr. Allen) referred, is that it is necessary to let applicants know where they stand and what is expected of them.

If the rules are at all justifiable—the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees made it plain that they are not—it is only because of the assistance that they might offer immigration officers or those who review an applicant's claim to asylum. In reality, most of those who claim asylum are under great pressure because of the time limits that the orders impose. It is highly unlikely that many applicants have the remotest idea of what are the requirements of our complex domestic law.

My main criticism of the rules in their totality is that the pressure of time in considering cases does not make it possible to be satisfied that due process will be observed. I hope that the Minister will examine that aspect with particular care when the 1971 Act is reviewed. There is no need to shuffle people through our processes with the speed for which the measures provide—particularly in respect of those whom the Home Secretary determines have groundless cases. The 40-hour limit in respect of such cases will plainly make it impossible for such applicants to know where they stand and what is expected of them, to use the Minister's words.

My right hon. and hon. Friends and I resisted many of the proposals during their passage through the House. We fully acknowledge and accept the need for proper asylum control, to ensure that people do not enter this country on false pretences, and agree that that requires a new appeals system. We welcome the decision slightly to extend rights and to provide for the right of appeal to the Court of Appeal in at least one case—but we cannot welcome procedures that, viewed in the round, could result in kangaroo courts.

I hope that before the House debates those matters again, we will have the advice of a judge on the working of the rules, to enable all right hon. and hon. Members independently to arrive at a view on whether the rules match the highest standards of British justice.

11.24 pm

Mr. Allen: With the leave of the House, Madam Deputy Speaker. This debate will be remembered, above all, for the fact that not a single Conservative speaker took the opportunity to condemn the remarks, repeated yesterday, of the hon. Member for Davyhulme (Mr. Churchill). In the short time left to the Minister, I hope that he will take the chance to condemn those remarks and to dissociate the Conservative party from the remarks of his honourable colleague. That was a chance missed by the Home Secretary and deliberately avoided by the Prime Minister. The Minister now has the chance to put that right.

If the Government had seriously wanted to improve the system of asylum applications, they could have proposed

a range of measures—from adequate staffing for processing applications promptly to easier access to legal advice, better translation and interpretation facilities, independent monitoring of the activities of immigration officers, statutory recording of immigration interviews, and so on. But improvements and greater justice were never the Government's motivation.

Now the Minister tells the House, almost with glee, that the Government have commenced the process of fingerprinting people who seek political asylum in this country. Having thought that they had found a safe haven, they are now welcomed to our shores by having their fingerprints taken, like common criminals. The Government have no ideas on how to handle the serious crisis that is blowing up in eastern Europe and the mass migration that is taking place. Perhaps they have no intention of helping eastern Europe.

The answer, clearly, is not to offer everyone a haven in the United Kingdom. To build ever higher fences to keep out people who are fleeing from persecution is not the answer, either. We must try to solve the problems where they occur, but, since the liberation of eastern Europe in 1989, the scale of assistance and the quality of advice exported by the Government have been as pathetic as the foreign policy paralysis of the European Community. In 1945, the European refugee crisis led to the United Nations convention on refugees. In 1993, it has led to the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act and these petty rules.

There is an unprecedented refugee crisis on the horizon. Europe is awash with displaced persons. All the Government have to offer is a little England mentality. If our foreign and domestic policies fail to match the task ahead, not only shall we reap the whirlwind of European migration and ethnic conflict but we shall deserve to do so.

11.27 pm

Mr. Charles Wardle: With the leave of the House, Madam Deputy Speaker. As the House knows, the Government are committed to fighting racial discrimination, wherever that is apparent. They value the contribution made to this country's cultural and social life by members of ethnic minority communities. The Government believe that by maintaining firm control over immigration, we shall maintain the basis for good race relations. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with an open discussion by anyone of our immigration policies, but there are two essential ingredients for a measured debate on the subject.

First, we need to be factually accurate about the ethnic make-up of the British population when we debate the subject. Secondly, we should remember that primary immigration slowed to a virtual halt years ago. Of course, employers must have the right to recruit overseas staff with high-level skills when no such skills are available in the United Kingdom. The Government have always recognised a commitment to spouses and to genuine direct dependants of British citizens and also to those settled here and those accepted as refugees.

For the past eight months, in the House and in Committee, Opposition Members have expressed unsubstantiated fears about the rights of people who claim asylum in this country and about the manner in which those claimants are received and treated. Only very infrequently during those months of debate have Opposition Members acknowledged the acceleration of our asylum procedures since the late 1980s because of the large number of people arriving in the United Kingdom, whose motivation for coming here often has nothing remotely to do with a well-founded fear of persecution. What no Opposition Member chose to say was that, while there are people with traumatic experiences—genuine refugees—waiting in that long queue, those who make bogus applications do those genuine cases a disservice.

Time after time, Opposition Members chose to present a distorted view of what the new rules offer. There is the right of oral hearing—which the hon. Member for Hackney, North and Stoke Newington (Ms Abbott) seemed to ignore—for everyone refused asylum.

Opposition Members have only grudgingly allowed that our visit or visa procedures have delivered outright approval to over 92 per cent. of applicants. We welcome millions of non-EC nationals to this country each year as short-term visitors in one category or another.

It being half-past Eleven o'clock, MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER *put the Question, pursuant to Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business).*

The House divided: Ayes 194, Noes 249.

Division No. 355] **[11.30 pm**

AYES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Burden, Richard
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Gunnell, John
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hoey, Kate
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*

Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Kilfoyle, Peter
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McKelvey, William
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Meale, Alan
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
Patchett, Terry
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Raynsford, Nick
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sheerman, Barry
Short, Clare
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Tipping, Paddy
Vaz, Keith
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Jack Thompson and
Mr. Dennis Turner.

NOES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Cash, William
Chapman, Sydney
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Couchman, James
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Devlin, Tim
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shepherd, Richard *(Aldridge)*
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Soames, Nicholas
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Streeter, Gary
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*

Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Winterton, Nicholas *(Macc'f'ld)*
Wolfson, Mark
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Irvine Patnick and
Mr. Timothy Wood.

Question accordingly negatived.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Motion made, and Question put,

That, at the sitting on Monday 26th July, Standing Order No. 54 (Consolidated Fund Bills) shall have effect as if for the words 'nine o'clock in the morning', in line 15, there were substituted the words 'eight o'clock in the morning'.—*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

Hon. Members: Object.

PETITIONS

Rural Unemployment (Scotland)

11.42 pm

Mrs. Margaret Ewing (Moray): It is with great honour and humility that I present to the House—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Lady, but it is grossly discourteous for those leaving to make so much noise that the hon. Member who has the floor cannot be heard.

Mrs. Ewing: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

It is with humility that I present to the House a petition from my constituents in connection with unemployment in rural areas of Scotland.

Many of us believe that unemployment is the key issue for modern society. Without a job or the dignity of employment, and without the feeling that society cares, there is a sense of outrage in many areas. I dispute the idea that those who are not in employment are lazy, lack interest in employment opportunities and should be reduced to an unemployment scrap heap.

The petition is not selfish. It does not relate solely to my constituency but looks beyond it to highlight the distress and concern felt by families in many rural areas of Scotland and other parts of the United Kingdom that many traditional areas of employment are being downgraded——

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Lady, but it is not in order to make a full-blown speech when presenting a petition. All that is possible is a summary of what the petition requires.

Mrs. Ewing: I am attempting to give a short summary of the issues involved in the petition.

The petition relates to traditional areas of employment within rural constituencies, especially in the north of Scotland, such as fishing, farming, distilling and forestry. It also relates to new areas where the implications of petroleum revenue tax changes on oil fabrication yards are of significant proportions.

More than 10,000 signatures have been collected in Morayshire in connection with the petition, which says:

> To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom, of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Parliament assembled.
>
> The Humble Petition of the people of Moray and elsewhere sheweth
>
> That we wish to express grave concern at increasing levels of unemployment;
>
> That there should be a united commitment to the objectives laid out in the Moray Charter for Jobs, in an attempt to counter the social and economic effects of unemployment in Moray and elsewhere.
>
> Wherefore your Petitioners pray that your honourable House will support and implement the proposals in the Moray Charter for Jobs.
>
> And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

This is a sincere petition from my constituents and other individuals in the area surrounding Moray. We regard the matter against the background of the European Community's objectives 1 and 5b and hope——

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sorry, but I must bring the matter to a conclusion. Will the hon. Member bring the petition forward?

To lie upon the Table.

Sub post offices

11.46 pm

Sir David Steel (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale): I have the honour to present a petition to the House signed by more than 4,000 constituents in the rural areas of Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The Humble petition of the undersigned Residents of Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale sheweth that we express deep concern that the Government propose to privatise post office services and compulsorily transfer Social Security payments from post offices to banks, and we oppose these measures jointly and severally as they threaten the very survival of sub post offices and deny the efficiency and convenience of the present system, especially in rural areas.

Wherefore your petitioners pray that your Honourable House will do everything possible to impress upon the Secretaries of State for Trade and Industry and Social Security the need for an autonomous post office service in the public sector and to abandon plans for the transfer of social security payments to banks.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, etc.

To lie upon the Table.

ROYAL ASSENT

Madam Deputy Speaker : I have to notify the House, in accordance with the Royal Assent Act 1967, that the Queen has signified her Royal Assent to the following Acts:

Video Recordings Act 1993
Local Government (Overseas Assistance) Act 1993
Bail (Amendment) Act 1993
Local Government (Amendment) Act 1993
Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993
Representation of the People Act 1993
Sexual Offences Act 1993
Road Traffic (Driving Instruction by Disabled Persons) Act 1993
European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993
Harris Tweed Act 1993

Pollution (River Wear)

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

11.49 pm

Mr. Chris Mullin (Sunderland, South): In October last year, British Coal and the Government announced their intention to close or mothball 31 pits. Among those listed were Easington, Vane Tempest and Westoe, in County Durham. The future of Wearmouth, in Sunderland, is also in doubt. Much has been said and written about the social and economic consequences of the decision to dismantle the British coal industry, but I wish to concentrate on an aspect of the closure programme that has attracted little attention—the environmental impact.

I wish to discuss in particular the effect that the cessation of pumping at Easington would have on the River Wear, which runs through Durham and Sunderland and is one of the most beautiful waterways in the north of England. The Wear also provides much of the public water supply for the city of Sunderland.

When the closure plan was announced, Easington district council, with commendable foresight, commissioned a report on the probable environmental impact from Dr. Paul Younger, a lecturer in water resources at the university of Newcastle. Dr. Younger's conclusions were shocking. He said that the abandonment of pumping would cause the water table to rise and acidic, metal-laden water to be discharged into the Wear. The long-term effect would be catastrophic.

The natural flora and fauna of the Wear, part of which runs through National Trust woodlands, would be devastated, and the water supply to the city of Sunderland would be imperilled. Wildlife would be endangered, as would livestock grazing near the river. Use of the river by human beings for sports purposes would probably have to be restricted to wet weather, and there was also a danger that parts of the Durham and Sunderland coastline, which has some fine and well used beaches, would be contaminated.

In case anyone should imagine that British Coal would not be so irresponsible as simply to turn off the pumps and walk away, Dr. Younger drew attention to previous occasions when it had done exactly that. His first example was taken from the Fife coalfield, where the mines around Cardenden, Cowdenbeath and Dunfermline were closed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, resulting in what was known as the water table rebound, over an area of about 100 sq km. Within 10 years, acidic discharges began to appear at the surface, issuing from old adits, boreholes and fissures that had been forgotten.

Serious pollution resulted in the River Ore and in the Keithing burn, both of which ultimately flow into the firth of Forth. Ochre coated the banks and beds of the receding stream, and the acidic water killed or drove out fish. Abstraction from the Keithing burn by a paper mill was rendered impossible, and as the paper mill was the main employer in Inverkeithing, the economic impact was considerable. Acidic water also resulted in the corrosive undermining of the foundations of an overhead electricity pylon at Inchgall.

The National Coal Board did not accept responsibility for the environmental impact, and the Forth river purification board did not have the finance to undertake any remedial action. The pollution continues to this day.

About 18 months after the closure of the Dalquharran mine in Ayrshire in August 1977, when the pumping of mine waters was discontinued, there appeared in a small stream which flows into the water of Girvan a discharge of water containing iron, aluminium and sulphate. As in Fife, the discharge resulted in a thick coating of ochre covering the banks and bed of the stream. Aquatic life was devastated, with fish being killed even in the sea beyond the mouth of the water of Girvan. A food factory that drew water from the river had to close its intake permanently and seek alternative sources of water.

The National Coal Board, as it then was, denied responsibility for the pollution, which continued unabated during legal proceedings brought against the NCB by the Clyde river purification board. Eventually, at an appeal hearing in February 1981, the board was found to be responsible for the pollution and was fined a mere £750. Some remedial action was taken afterwards, but this has been only partially successful, and pollution of the water of Girvan continues.

Dr. Younger said that the only way to avoid a similar disaster on the Wear, which would be virtually impossible to remedy once it had started, was to maintain some pumping at Easington.

In February, having read Dr. Younger's report, I wrote to the chairman of British Coal, Mr. Neil Clarke, and to the regional general manager of the National Rivers Authority, Mr. Roger Hyde, to invite their comments. Mr. Clarke replied suggesting that there was no cause for alarm. He questioned some of Dr. Younger's facts and assumptions and concluded:

"We will, of course, be maintaining these close links with the NRA to ensure that any adverse environmental impact is avoided."

Mr. Hyde at the NRA painted a less rosy picture. The NRA had, it emerged, commissioned its own report from consultants, Wardell Armstrong.

According to Mr. Hyde's letter:

"This report confirms Dr. Younger's claim that large quantities of possibly poor quality water are likely to discharge into the river Wear and its tributaries. Most of these discharges will not occur for 20 years but some may occur within a year of ending"

pumping

"unless remedial action is taken."

Mr. Hyde went on:

"British Coal have so far refused to accept responsibility for any resulting pollution using the defence in the Water Resources Act 1991",

sections 88 and 89 of which exempt pollution caused by mine workings. It is on this that British Coal is seeking to rely. There was no mention of that in Mr. Clarke's letter to me.

Mr. Hyde concluded:

"The predictions of the impacts on the Wear are uncertain due to the complexity and the scale of the abandoned mine workings. We have urged British Coal to make available to us their summary mine plans which our consultants require to reduce the uncertainty of their predictions. So far British Coal have refused to release these plans.

Mr. Bill Etherington (Sunderland, North): You will be aware, Madam Deputy Speaker, that my hon. Friend and I represent adjoining constituencies covering the urban area of what is known as the city of Sunderland. I do not know whether my hon. Friend is aware that, before the Kielder reservoir was built, most of the water supply of the town of Sunderland, as it was then, was provided by boreholes and pumping arrangements. When the reservoir was built, they were gradually abandoned. A small amount of water came from reservoirs that were well inland.

When the Kielder reservoir was built, it put Sunderland's water supply in a vulnerable position, because, as my hon. Friend will be aware——

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. Interventions at any time should be short. That is particularly so in a short Adjournment debate. I must ask the hon. Gentleman to conclude. We shall continue with Mr. Mullin.

Mr. Etherington: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker——

Madam Deputy Speaker: No, I call Mr. Mullin.

Mr. Mullin: I am grateful for my hon. Friend's contribution. In his previous incarnation, he had a long association with the coal industry. He is an expert on the problem we face, and I am sure that he will be listened to with respect inside and outside the House and wherever the problem is discussed.

At about the same time as I corresponded with the National Rivers Authority, the NRA issued a press statement, which began:

"The Northumbria region of the NRA has expressed concern at the problems likely to occur if minewater pumping ends."

The statement went on to call for an assurance from British Coal that pumping will continue until a course of action that will prevent pollution has been agreed. As far as I am aware, no such assurance has been forthcoming; only a promise of at least two weeks' notice before the pumps are turned off.

Meanwhile, the buck is being passed. When, on 17 February, I asked the Department of the Environment what steps had been taken to assess the impact of the closure of the pits on the pollution of the River Wear, the reply that I received was, "None"—it was a matter for British Coal and the NRA to assess the likely damage. The Minister added:

"Arrangements have been made between British Coal and the NRA for effective liaison over proposed pit closures."

I asked the same question again on 28 April and received more or less the same replies. The Secretary of State added:

"I have not discussed this specific matter with the National Rivers Authority or British Coal."

By now it has become absolutely clear that, although liaison is taking place between the NRA and British Coal, its results are far from satisfactory.

In a letter to me dated 16 June, Mr. Hyde said:

"British Coal did provide us with a report in September 1992 predicting what they thought would happen. This only concerned itself with the quantity of water and said nothing about the final quality."

As to suggestions that the NRA would accept responsibility for pumping should British Coal withdraw, Mr. Hyde stated:

"This is not the case . . . the NRA considers the responsibility for dealing with the potential pollution lies with British Coal."

This appears to be wholly at odds with British Coal's position.

I spoke yesterday to Mr. Malcolm Colley, technical manager of the NRA. He told me that, although co-operation had improved, British Coal had still not supplied the NRA with detailed plans of the underground

[Mr. Mullin]

workings that would assist with assessing the likely damage. Apparently, it is citing commercial reasons—a reference, no doubt, to impending privatisation.

As for the pollution that would arise from switching off the pumping, British Coal still refuses to acknowledge responsibility. According to the NRA, the issue may have to be tested in the courts.

This morning, I received a fax from Mr. Colley. He says that the NRA is due to receive a further report from its consultants next week. He expects it confirm the original findings

"that discharges of minewater to the River Wear upstream of Durham would occur within about six months if the pumps protecting Easington colliery were switched off."

British Coal is still promising 14 days' notice, but that is its best offer. No one knows what will happen after that. Mr. Colley concluded:

"The NRA has kept the Department of the Environment fully informed of developments and will look to the Department to ensure that minewater pumping continues."

So, despite protestations to the contrary and vague talk of liaison, it is with the Minister that the buck stops. What I want to hear from him tonight—it has not been evident so far—is that the NRA will be given all the backing it needs to make British Coal live up to its responsibilities. I should like to know what discussions he has had with his colleagues in the Department of Trade and Industry who have responsibility for British Coal. It needs to be made absolutely clear to the management of British Coal that their attitude so far has been unacceptable.

The letter from the chairman, dated 11 February, is positively misleading. Who, reading it, would guess that there was a problem at all? All Mr. Clarke does is attempt to discredit Dr. Younger, who has been entirely vindicated and but for whom we might never have known about the problem until it was too late.

I hope that the Minister will not give us a lot of blather about the need for British Coal and the NRA to liaise. They have been doing that for the past nine months, and the results so far are not satisfactory. If the NRA had been satisfied with the co-operation it was receiving, it would not have felt the need to issue public statements calling for assurances from British Coal; nor would it have told me, as it did today, that the NRA is looking to the Department to ensure that pumping continues.

I am looking for some sign from the Minister that he acknowledges that there is a problem and that ultimately it is up to his Department to do something about it. Above all, what I and the people of Sunderland seek is a cast-iron guarantee that pumping will continue for as long as necessary to prevent the destruction of the River Wear; and that, if necessary, the Department of the Environment will pick up the tab.

During the past five years, the people of the north-east have lost their shipyards, their coal mines and a large slice of their manufacturing industry. We do not also want to lose one of our greatest natural assets—the River Wear.

12.3 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. Tony Baldry): I am grateful to the hon. Member for Sunderland, South (Mr. Mullin) for raising an important issue. Along with hon. Members representing neighbouring constituencies—such as the hon. Member for Sunderland, North (Mr. Etherington)—he has expressed understandable concern about the possibility of water pollution from coal mines that have closed down, damaging the River Wear. That is clearly important, and we take it very seriously.

Coal has been mined in the north-east coalfield since Roman times. Early coal mines were small, and used either shallow mine shafts or adits to access the coal measures. As technology improved, mines became larger and were able to exploit deeper reserves. At this stage, natural drainage became inadequate, and mine pumping was necessary.

At the time of nationalisation, when 186 Durham and Northumberland collieries were vested in the National Coal Board, output was around 35 million tonnes a year. Since then—first because of the depletion of the easily accessible reserves in the west of the coalfield, and latterly because of the loss of markets—production has declined.

In recent years, British Coal's deep-mined production in the north-east has fallen steadily, from 10·5 million tonnes in the late 1980s to 7·5 million tonnes in 1991-92. The total capacity until the October 1992 announcement was about 12 million tonnes a year; the closure of Vane Tempest, Easington and Westoe has reduced capacity to about 8·5 million tonnes.

It is important to view the matter in the correct context. Many mines in this country have been abandoned. Some are the remains of activity that took place centuries ago, and a much smaller proportion are the result of mineral extraction in the 20th century. Let me give hon. Members some idea of the scale involved. British Coal alone holds details of approximately 10,000 abandoned mine workings. Since 1947 and nationalisation, it has abandoned some 900 mines, of which roughly 700 were closed before 1979. Those closures have not brought about the dire situation described to us this evening by the hon. Member for Sunderland, South.

The historical perspective makes it clear that many more mines have been abandoned in the past than are likely to be closed in the foreseeable future. What we are discussing tonight is not the closure programme, but the action being taken to overcome one of the side effects of Britain's industrial past.

Pit closures are, of course, a matter for British Coal. British Coal has decided that it no longer wishes to operate Vane Tempest/Seaham and Easington collieries, and has advertised both pits for licence to the private sector. I understand that those collieries are protected from ingress of water by pumping operations at a number of sites. Cessation of pumping would cause groundwater to rise over time. British Coal is maintaining pumping arrangements until it knows whether a private sector licensee is available. If so, the future pumping regime will be open for negotiation between British Coal and the buyer; if not, British Coal will consider what action to take. It has undertaken to keep the NRA informed of its intentions.

It is, of course, British Coal's responsibility as the mine owner and operator to ensure that water pollution does not occur as the result of mining operations. In the case of closures in the Durham coalfield, British Coal has taken a very responsible attitude, altering existing pumping arrangements at the NRA's request and consulting other parties in particular, the National Rivers Authority. In the course of discussions, British Coal has, I believe, provided a great deal of useful data.

The stretch of the River Wear on which this debate is centred was graded class 1B in the NRA's 1990 river quality survey. That means that it is water of high quality —although not the best quality—suitable for drinking, water abstraction and high-class fisheries, and with a high amenity value. More recent sampling confirms that the river's quality has been maintained at that level for some time. There is a major abstraction point for drinking water at Lumley, near Chester-le-Street.

Minewater is currently discharged into the Wear via a number of pumping stations between Vinovium and Lumley, all of which are designed to protect Easington colliery. Those discharges are subject to consents granted by the NRA and are monitored for quality. The river also relies on the minewater, in certain parts of the year, to support the minimum maintained flow at Chester le Street. There are thus a number of reasons why the NRA should be concerned to investigate the anxiety that has been expressed about possible discharges of polluting mine water into the river, and changes in the pumping regime.

The NRA has acted with a measured and rational response. Initially, an independent firm of consultant mining engineers was commissioned to report on the matter, with the remit of establishing the gravity of the problem and the need for further action. Subsequently, a second, more detailed, report has been commissioned, aimed at determining more precisely the extent of any pollution, the time scale involved, and the likely location of discharges. However, as it is difficult to predict exactly what will happen to groundwater levels if pumping rates are changed, the NRA is planning to drill five boreholes at strategic points in the area.

Mr. Etherington: The Minister mentioned the vast closure programme since nationalisation. I take it that he is aware that, notwithstanding the vast number of collieries that have been closed in the north-east, the water table has remained constant because of the pumping arrangements. Worry about the water rising has led my hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland, South (Mr. Mullin) to raise the matter on the Adjournment.

As yet, we have not had a satisfactory response on that point. Given that there is conflicting evidence from learned people, it would be preferable if the Department would instigate a hydrologist and a geologist to investigate the matter and make a report.

Mr. Baldry: The country has a perfectly good water regulatory authority—the National Rivers Authority. The NRA and British Coal are quite capable of working together to carry out the surveys. I repeat: this is not an unprecedented situation. The peak year for coal production was 1914. Pits have been closing, year after year, for a long time. The situation on the River Wear is not unprecedented. Everyone is anxious to ensure that pollution does not occur. British Coal has a responsibility, as the mine owner, to ensure that that does not happen. It is being assisted in that by the NRA.

The NRA is drilling five boreholes at strategic points in the area, which will allow it to monitor what is happening to water levels and to water quality underground. That will also help it to validate and amend where necessary the computer prediction model that is using. In that way, it should be possible to make a cautious, but informed, assessment of what is likely to occur, and it is expecting that the second report, due very soon, will give even more information. That report will be publicly available to the many interested parties, and will, of course, be discussed in detail with British Coal, local authorities and those interested parties, including Members of Parliament.

I think that everyone will agree that the important factor here is that much has been put in hand that is intended to anticipate and avoid any possible pollution, and to identify what measures need to be taken. The responsibility for deciding what action is necessary to avoid pollution is in the first instance for British Coal, in consultations with the NRA.

British Coal and the NRA have been discussing this for some considerable time and have studies in hand to establish the likely extent of the problem. It is, however, for British Coal to consider the implications of stopping pumping. It knows that it is an offence to cause pollution, and the NRA has powers to prosecute whenever it considers that this has happened.

The hon. Member for Sunderland, South seemed to suggest that, when British Coal is privatised, statutory control will be weakened. However, we have made it absolutely clear that, when it is privatised, its liability to ensure that pollution does not occur will continue. The Government will ensure that British Coal's current responsibilities on the physical legacy of mining will continue after privatisation.

Mr. Mullin: The problem is that British Coal does not accept that it is responsible. It cites the Water Resources Act 1991, which exempts pollution caused by mining. At the very least, its argument may have to be tested in court. I telephoned the Minister's office earlier today to make sure that he understood the question to which I seek an answer. Perhaps he will reach that answer in the last few minutes of the debate. The question is, what will the Department of the Environment do if British Coal does what it says it will do, which is to give 14 days' notice before turning off the pump?

Mr. Baldry: That question falls ill from the lips of a Labour Member, because in the Coal Industry Nationalisation Act 1946, a Labour Government passed considerable powers to the National Coal Board, which became British Coal. British Coal has responsibilities, and it must carry them out. No mining organisation can ask the taxpayer to pick up the bill for its mining operations. British Coal management know full well their statutory responsibilities, and we have made it clear that those responsibilities will carry forward on privatisation, that such liability will continue, and that British Coal's current responsibilities on the physical legacy of mining will carry forward.

The consequences of mine closures are complex. It is clearly an offence for mine owners, such as British Coal, to cause pollution of water courses, regardless of whether a mine is active or abandoned. I do not think that there is any dispute about that, and there need be no argument about it. Responsibility for avoiding pollution rests with the discharger. Discharges from active mines are covered by the system of discharge consents that are operated by the NRA.

We are aware of the issues that have been raised about the legal provisions causing discharges from mine workings. The question was referred to in last year's report from the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution on freshwater quality, which recommended

[Mr. Baldry]

"that the Government consider ways of remedying the *apparent absence of legal powers* to require owners or former operators of abandoned mines to prevent pollution".

We are considering the framework of legal responsibility for pollution from abandoned mines.

The NRA, for its part, is carrying out a number of studies into particular pollution control issues. One of these is currently reviewing the problems presented nationally by discharges from abandoned mines. Many such mines were abandoned centuries ago in circumstances somewhat different from those that we are debating.

Liability in respect of abandoned mines is similar to that of contaminated land. In March, my right hon. and learned Friend the then Secretary of State for the Environment announced a review of the powers and duties of public authorities relating to contaminated land. That *review is well under way*, conducted by an interdepartmental group of officials under the charirmanship of my Department.

We are not discussing the situation in Durham as though British Coal had already decided to close——

The motion having been made after Ten o'clock on Tuesday evening, and the debate having continued for half an hour, MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER *adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.*

Adjourned at eighteen minutes past Twelve midnight.

House of Commons

Wednesday 21 July 1993

The House met at half-past Two o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PRIVATE BUSINESS

PWLLHELI HARBOUR (AMENDMENT) BILL

Lords amendments agreed to.

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL (WESTER BRIDGE) ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL

Read the Third time, and passed.

Oral Answers to Questions

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Norway (Import Ban)

1. **Mr. Tony Banks:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make it his policy to ban imports from Norway.

The Minister for Energy (Mr. Tim Eggar): No.

Mr. Tony Banks: I am surprised and disappointed by that response from the Government, who clearly do not take the matter seriously. I hope that the Minister has at least done me the courtesy of reading the publication that I sent him about the slaughter of whales by Norway.

Is the Minister aware that public opinion in this country demands something more positive from the Government? Selective sanctions against Norway would let that country know precisely how strongly people in this country feel. We want the Government to do something, rather than just ignore the subject. Is the Minister aware that Londoners will take action by telling the Norwegians precisely what they can do with their Christmas tree this year—and that we will not be suggesting that it is put in Trafalgar square?

Mr. Eggar: I have listened to what the hon. Gentleman has said. I am sure that individual consumers will give Greenpeace's call for a boycott all the support that it deserves.

Sir Roger Moate: Will my hon. Friend remind the hon. Member for Newham, North-West (Mr. Banks) of the great bond of friendship that exists between this country and Norway? Will he further remind the hon. Gentleman that we must make due allowances, whatever differences of opinion we might have, for the different cultures and traditions of members and potential members of the EC? Is it not in our interest, and in the interest of the hon. Gentleman's cause, that we promote closer friendship and trade with Norway?

Mr. Eggar: There is concern about the resumption of commercial whaling in Norway. I am sure that people will listen carefully to what my hon. Friend said.

Post Office

2. **Ms Estelle Morris:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the application of European Community regulations and developments to Post Office activities.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Technology (Mr. Patrick McLoughlin): There are at present no European Community regulations which apply specifically to the Post Office, although the European Commission published a range of proposals in its green paper on the development of the single market for postal services in June 1992, which have been subject to widespread consultation. There is also a considerable range of European Community directives which have some bearing on the activities of the Post Office and with which the Post Office seeks to comply.

Ms Morris: Does the Minister accept that Britain, with the most profitable and efficient postal service in Europe, is well placed to benefit in a single market? Does he agree that the Post Office needs a clear assurance about its future organisation, freedom to invest in and develop services, and a firm commitment to universal delivery? When will the Government come off the fence and give the Post Office the backing it deserves?

Mr. McLoughlin: There is no question about giving the Post Office the backing that it deserves. Indeed, the Post Office had a good year last year, as its results showed. We have consistently made it clear that the maintenance of a nationwide delivery network with delivery to every address in the United Kingdom is of paramount importance. I agree with the hon. Lady that there are certainly opportunities for the Post Office within the single market.

Mr. Harry Greenway: Will my hon. Friend renew the assurance that has been given by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, that pensioners will be able to cash pensions at post offices as well as perhaps through banks, if they wish to do so? Will he join me in deploring the Labour party's continuing campaign to frighten pensioners into believing that they may not be able to cash their pension at a post office?

Mr. McLoughlin: I am happy to give my hon. Friend that reassurance. No pensioner or other benefit recipient will be forced to use automated credit transfer. We have made it clear that those people who wish to collect their benefits from post offices will be able to do so. Indeed, as we have said several times, the amount of business transacted through the post offices on behalf of the Government increased in each of the past three years.

Mr. Beggs: Is there anything in European Community regulations to prevent the delivery free of charge of talking newspapers to the blind and partially sighted? Will the Minister guarantee today that, if proposals are made to privatise post office services, such a service will continue to be provided free to the blind and partially sighted?

Mr. McLoughlin: I know of no proposals from the Commission that would put any restrictions on the service that is provided. As I have often said, when we come to

make our full decisions on the Post Office, the House will be the first to be informed. I assure the hon. Gentleman that the point that he has raised will be dealt with carefully.

Mr. Nigel Evans: Irrespective of what the EC has to say about post offices, will my hon. Friend give an assurance that, in any changes, due regard will be given to the importance of post offices in rural areas? In many rural areas, the post office is the only shop that is there giving a service to rural people. Perhaps, in any future changes to post offices, we could consider widening the services that they can provide to rural people.

Mr. McLoughlin: I am grateful to my hon. Friend. He is right about the provision of post offices in rural areas. Indeed, my constituency is similar to his in some respects. There are many rural post offices. It is worth remembering that most rural post offices are in private hands and have a great deal of flexibility in the services that they can provide.

Mr. Robin Cook: Will the Minister explain how he can square his claim that the Government back the Post Office with the Government's instruction to the Post Office to treble the pay-out that is clawed back to the Treasury? Does he recognise that the Post Office can achieve such a dramatic increase only if it shoves up the price of stamps? Is he aware of the rumours that that is what the Post Office intends to do next month? Does he appreciate that, if it does so, the Government will have imposed a new stamp tax which will shove up the price of sending a letter for everyone who uses the Post Office?

Mr. McLoughlin: I shall not go into the details of the price rises that were inflicted by the Post Office between 1974 and 1979. The Post Office is an efficient organisation, and it has made a return to the taxpayer. I should have thought that the hon. Gentleman might welcome that.

Export Statistics

3. **Mr. Pickles:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what has been the change in total exports from the United Kingdom in the first quarter of 1993 relative to the first quarter of 1992.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Corporate Affairs (Mr. Neil Hamilton): The volume of United Kingdom exports rose by 6·6 per cent. between the first quarter of 1992 and the first quarter of 1993. Thanks to the efforts of our exporters, exports grew faster than imports over this period, despite poor economic conditions in our main markets. I trust that the whole House will join me in congratulating our exporters on that impressive achievement.

Mr. Pickles: My hon. Friend will be aware that the headquarters of the Ford Motor Company is in my constituency. Is he aware that Ford has played an important part in exports and that, in particular, 37 per cent. of its production of transit vans now goes for export? Does he agree that that is a remarkable achievement, considering that Ford now has half the market for that type of good in Britain? Will he congratulate the work force and the management on clearly demonstrating that if Britain produces the right goods at the right price, they will sell anywhere?

Mr. Hamilton: I entirely agree with my hon. Friend. It shows what a good place the United Kingdom is to do business. I certainly congratulate the Ford management and the work force on the shop floor on their contribution to the success of that company, which has recently received a Queen's award for export.

Mr. Purchase: Is not the Minister aware that, although the Government have recently admitted their long-term lack of interest in manufacturing, and have only just awakened to the real importance of that sector of the economy, our manufacturers in the west midlands and elsewhere have made heroic efforts in an increased export drive? Does not the Minister know that, for finished goods in the high street in the 12 months to May of this year, imports increased by 23 per cent. and exports by 15 per cent? Is that not a case of too little effort too late from the Government? When will they wake up to the question of our manufacturing sector?

Mr. Hamilton: It is a pity that the Labour party can never welcome good news when it hears it. The hon. Gentleman should be aware that, although exports have gone up by nearly 7 per cent. in the most recent quarter, imports have not increased at all, so the trade gap has narrowed. That shows that the Conservative party recognises the advantage of a competitive industry that exports goods. The Labour party wants to load extra costs on business so that we can export jobs.

Mr. Dunn: Whatever shape, form or colour the new Government of the Empire of Japan assumes, will the Minister undertake to make the strongest representations to them about the barriers to British goods entering the Japanese market, which are currently in place and ought to be eliminated as soon as possible?

Mr. Hamilton: I can tell my hon. Friend that there has been significant liberalisation in Japan in recent years, but no doubt there is always scope to do more. I am certainly a vigorous exponent of free trade; if other countries expect access to our markets, they must also expect to give us access to theirs.

Mr. Fatchett: Has the Minister seen the evidence given to the Scott inquiry by Mark Higson, the former Iraq desk officer at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, who told the inquiry that the Government deliberately misled the public and Parliament about their decision to circumvent the arms embargo on Saddam Hussein? Will the Minister confirm the accuracy of that evidence, and is not it clear from Mr. Higson's statement that, yet again, on arms to Iraq and other issues, the Government will deliberately mislead the public and Parliament just to save their own skins?

Mr. Hamilton: Scaremongering to get a headline in the newspaper may be justifiable to the hon. Gentleman, but that is a matter for the Scott inquiry and I shall leave it to the inquiry.

Mr. Malcolm Bruce: I welcome the fact that the Minister can report some improvement in our export performance, but will he acknowledge that a short-term adjustment to the balance of payments deficit does not deny the fact that Britain has an underlying inability to compete and overcome our balance of payments deficit, and that that will be achieved only if we have a long-term

strategy to build up our manufacturing industry? Will the Minister make a positive statement on how the Government propose to achieve that?

Mr. Hamilton: The Liberal party has had a long-term inability to compete with other political parties, so I can well understand the hon. Gentleman's concern for such an issue. It is a great mistake of Opposition Members to seek to sell Britain short at every opportunity: after all, we have a good story to tell. Manufacturing output is up by 3 per cent., retail sales are up by 3 per cent., exports are up by 7 per cent., for the fifth month in a row unemployment is down, we have the lowest inflation for 30 years, and manufacturing wages costs are down by 3·5 per cent. this year. That is not evidence of an underlying inability to compete, but solid evidence of recovery and the improvement of our economic position.

Alternative Energy Sources

4. **Mr. Moss:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on his Department's policy towards alternative sources of energy.

Mr. Eggar: I propose to make a third order setting a renewables non-fossil fuel obligation for the 12 regional electricity companies in England and Wales, to run for 15 to 20 years as from November 1994 in respect of approximately 300 to 400 MW of new renewables capacity.

I have today placed a document with further details of the proposed arrangements in the Libraries of both Houses and in the Vote Office.

Mr. Moss: I thank my hon. Friend for that comprehensive answer, which will be warmly welcomed by all involved in renewal energy production. Can he tell the House when the first bids for the regional electricity companies are expected, and when he expects the first projects to become operational?

Mr. Eggar: I thank my hon. Friend for his response —it is indeed an important announcement that I have just made. We are hoping that bids will be submitted as from September, with the first projects becoming operational, we expect, within the next two years.

Mr. Skinner: Until the Government can use this alternative form of energy, instead of using up the small reserves of gas, would it not make more sense to depend more on coal, now that we have heard about the 22 per cent. increase in productivity? The French interconnector link should be stopped, saving six pits, and the rundown of the industry should be halted. The £1·3 billion subsidy should also be taken away from nuclear power. Then we could keep the pits open and keep another 30,000 people in jobs so that they will not have to pick up dole payments.

Mr. Eggar: If I were the hon. Gentleman, I would be very worried—for once he seems to agree with those on his Front Bench.

Mr. Stern: Is my hon. Friend aware that his announcement this afternoon will be welcomed by producers and potential producers of energy from renewable sources? Will the new tranches announced today also be available to existing producers of renewable energy or to producers who have been included in previous tranches but have not yet been able to start production?

Mr. Eggar: I am hoping to announce a fourth order in 1995, and a fifth in 1997. Today I give notice of that.

As for projects that have not so far proceeded but which could have been covered by the second order: assuming the correct procedure is followed then they may well be able to benefit from the third order.

Nuclear Power

5. **Mr. Martyn Jones:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the current output from United Kingdom nuclear power plants.

Mr. Eggar: In the first quarter of 1993, nuclear power stations in the United Kingdom supplied 21·8 TWh of electricity.

Mr. Jones: I thank the Minister for that somewhat delayed reply, which I think shows that the amount of nuclear energy, as a proportion of our total energy requirements, that we are using has not really changed for a number of years. Moreover, the fast breeder reactor programme has been shut down. If I am right, surely it is pointless to go ahead with the THORP facility, as it will only increase the amount of bomb-grade plutonium in the world and will not add to our energy supplies.

Mr. Eggar: It is right to pay tribute to the nuclear industry, which has increased output from its stations, particularly from the advanced gas-cooled reactors, by a considerable amount.

There was a debate in the House on THORP, when the House made its view very clear.

Mr. Oppenheim: Will my hon. Friend gently remind Opposition Members that it was part of Labour's great post-war energy strategy to give in to lobbying by industrial vested interests and boffins, and to reject cheaper, proven technologies in favour of complex, untried advanced gas-cooled reactors—the true cost of which was not even known until privatisation? Compounding that by opting for expensive domestic coal instead of cheaper, cleaner gas from which other countries were benefiting surely shows that, although decisions made by markets may not be perfect, they are a great deal less imperfect than decisions made by politicians and bureaucrats.

Mr. Eggar: They are undoubtedly much better than those made by the right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn).

Mr. Wigley: Is the Minister aware that, in the wake of the announcement yesterday about the closure of the Trawsfynydd nuclear power station and the loss of 500 jobs, a positive proposal is being put forward for Trawsfynydd to be adapted as a centre for decommissioning skills, which would enable the technology developed there to be exported to other areas? Will the Minister give a commitment that the Government will do everything they can to facilitate this, in order to provide replacement jobs for those that will be lost from our community?

Mr. Eggar: I have spoken to the hon. Gentleman's hon. Friend the Member for Meirionnydd Nant Conwy (Mr. Llwyd) about this, and to Nuclear Electric on a contingency basis, not only about potential plans for the use of the station site but more multi-skilling of the existing work force.

The hon. Gentleman knows that it will be some time before there are any significant job losses, although the details have not yet been released. There will be a phase when considerable numbers of employees will be needed. I know that Nuclear Electric is addressing those issues, and I would urge the hon. Gentleman and his hon. Friend to enter into discussions with Nuclear Electric's senior management.

Mr. Dickens: Is it not as sure as night follows day that one day gas, coal and oil will be depleted? It is at that time that we shall thank our engineers and scientists for our reprocessing techniques and dry storage. It is very important for the future that we have a long-term nuclear industry in the United Kingdom, and that we are a long-term player.

Mr. Eggar: I hear what my hon. Friend says. There is an important role for renewables, and we shall shortly embark on a nuclear review, when we will look at the future role for our nuclear industry.

Mr. O'Neill: Does the Minister agree that the announcement of the closure of Trawsfynydd is the first occasion on which the nuclear inspectorate has closed a power station on safety grounds? The safety authority is now clearly willing to take such tough decisions. In future, the debate about nuclear power in this country will revolve around economic questions, and the size of the subsidy that the industry should or should not receive.

Before the Minister starts on the nuclear review, will he say what guidelines he has given to those carrying out the review, so that we can understand how it will proceed? At the moment, as long as the nuclear industry continues to receive its massive subsidy, there will be suspicion about the calculations that are made about its future and economic viability.

Mr. Eggar: Uncharacteristically, I think that the hon. Gentleman is, by implication, being unfair to the nuclear inspectorate. It is true that this is the first time that a station has been closed because of safety considerations, but the inspectorate has always had rigorous standards, and it is recognised around the world for imposing them. There are a number of issues that have to be considered while we are working towards an announcement on the nuclear review, and the issues raised by the hon. Gentleman are among them.

Investment (North-West)

6. **Mr. Brandreth:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps he is taking to encourage inward investment in the north-west.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The Government attach high importance to inward investment and have developed, nationally, a quality service to existing and potential investors. As a result, the United Kingdom is now the preferred European location for direct foreign investment.

In the north-west, my Department provides funding towards Inward, the regional development organisation, which has now achieved more than 150 inward investment successes, representing more than 8,000 associated jobs. Inward works closely alongside local authorities and other organisations in the region, as well as in co-operation with the English Unit and the Invest in Britain Bureau. It is carrying forward an extensive programme to promote the north-west in key overseas markets.

Mr. Brandreth: Is my hon. Friend aware that, in the past year alone, three major international companies have come to the city of Chester that might otherwise have gone to Belgium, Malaysia or the United States of America? We very much value the excellent partnership between Chester and the Department of Trade and Industry's Inward team in Manchester. Long may it continue.

Mr. Hamilton: I am very grateful to my hon. Friend. Not least among the attractions of Chester, of course, is its Member of Parliament. I am delighted to receive my hon. Friend's tribute to the work that so many people do in the north-west do to ensure that the rest of the world knows about the attractions it offers for locating industry.

Ms Eagle: Before the Minister drowns himself in false self-congratulation, what is he going to do, a few days after the closure of Cammell Laird, to ensure that industries which are world leaders are preserved?

Mr. Hamilton: There was no element of falsity in the self-congratulation. We all know that there are problems in certain parts of the north-west. Structural change is bound to bring disappointments such as that which has been felt in the hon. Lady's constituency with the closure of Cammell Laird. We have a wide-ranging programme, however, that will help to bring more jobs to the region, in particular to the Wirral, as well as to other areas that are affected by the long-term decline of certain industries. We cannot, however, set our faces against economic reality.

Mr. Sumberg: May I make a practical suggestion to my hon. Friend? If he wants to encourage inward investment, he should confirm that regional assisted status will continue to apply to Bury and Bolton. Will he have a word with our right hon. Friend the Minister for Industry to find out whether an announcement about that can be made before we rise for the summer?

Mr. Hamilton: I will certainly have a word, as I frequently do, with my right hon. Friend. In fact, he is sitting next but one to me on the Front Bench and I am sure that he has heard for himself what my hon. Friend said.

Mr. Loyden: The Minister will be aware that the Merseyside economy is based on shipbuilding and the port and has been subject to structural changes. No compensation has been offered, however, for the thousands of jobs that have been lost from Merseyside, not only from the port and shipbuilding but from related industries in the hinterland. When will the Government address that particular problem, so that jobs are created in that part of the world?

Mr. Hamilton: The hon. Gentleman played his full part, as a union militant, in the destruction of Liverpool's reputation as a shipping and port-based economy. He should rejoice in the fact that more traffic is passing through Liverpool port today than in its heyday in the 1950s. Since the abolition of the national dock labour scheme, that port has become competitive again.

New Car Registrations

7. **Mr. Alan Howarth:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the figures for new car registrations in the United Kingdom for the first six months of 1993.

The Minister for Industry (Mr. Tim Sainsbury): I welcome the 9·14 per cent. increase in new car registrations in the first six months of this year as compared with 1992.

Mr. Howarth: In welcoming those impressive and encouraging figures, may I ask whether my right hon. Friend has noted that virtually every car company has now committed itself to give to charity 30p-plus for every new car registered in the United Kingdom? As a result, more than £250,000 has already been raised for charities by the industry since the start of this year. Will my right hon. Friend congratulate Rover group, Peugeot Talbot, Jaguar and others on this pioneering and admirable example of social responsibility in one of our major industries? Will he commend this model of charitable giving to other industries?

Mr. Sainsbury: I am happy to join my hon. Friend in congratulating the car industry on what he has described as an admirable example of responsibility and charitable giving by companies. I hope that he accepts, however, that I believe that it is best to leave each company to decide how best to discharge its responsibilities in that respect.

Mr. Olner: I welcome the increase in car registrations. Would the Minister care to comment, however, on the plight of workers at the Peugeot Talbot plant in Coventry in my constituency, where 300 will be made redundant this summer because the company is taking work away from the United Kingdom and giving it to French factories? Would he care to comment on the fact that the French already enjoy the benefits flowing from the social chapter, yet they are denied to our workers?

Mr. Sainsbury: I wonder whether the hon. Gentleman has discussed with the management of the factory its relative competitiveness as opposed to that of the French factories. If he were to do so, I believe that he would discover that the factory's ability to compete is much improved——

Mr. Olner: What about the social chapter?

Mr. Sainsbury: If the hon. Gentleman asks a question, he might have the courtesy to listen to the answer.

If the hon. Gentleman asked the management about the social chapter, I think that he would discover that, because of the great improvements in productivity that it has achieved in the past few years, it is able to compete with its French fellow producers of Peugeot cars. If that factory were saddled with the social chapter, there is absolutely no doubt that its costs would go up and it would become less competitive. That seems to be a splendid way in which to destroy jobs in the hon. Gentleman's constituency.

KONVER Programme

8. **Mr. Ian Bruce:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the Konver programme and its application to areas without assisted area status.

Mr. Sainsbury: The Foreign Affairs Council this week adopted new regulations allowing areas not designated for objectives 1, 2 or 5(b) to receive under Konver not only European social fund grants but limited European regional development fund grants. The Government intend to make use of that new flexibility in the United Kingdom's 1993 Konver programme.

Mr. Bruce: I congratulate my right hon. Friend and his colleagues on getting that agreement out of the European Commission, as we in Dorset have been asking for that for a long time. I know that he is seeing a delegation from Dorset who will, I am sure, say what we need for Weymouth, Portland and Christchurch in the way of money that results from other than assisted area status. Will he tell us where we can pick up the forms to apply for the new money?

Mr. Sainsbury: My hon. Friend has campaigned vigorously for a fairer basis for the allocation of Konver funds. I have been happy to act on his behalf with the Commission and I am glad that we have succeeded in getting recognition of the merit of the case that he made so energetically. We are working out the basis of regions' dependence on defence industries, as that will be one of the factors for allocating funds. I look forward to receiving an application from my hon. Friend's constituency, as I look forward also to receiving him and the delegation next Monday.

Assisted Areas

9. **Miss Lestor:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer on 23 June to the hon. Member for Dumbarton (Mr. McFall), *Official Report*, column *226*, if he is now in a position to announce his review of regional policy in relation to the assisted areas map.

Mr. Sainsbury: I hope to announce a new assisted areas map before the House rises for the summer recess.

Miss Lestor: Is not the Minister aware that that is exactly the same answer that he gave last month when the question was put to him, and that we are now in a position of promises, promises, promises? Is he aware that the announcement should be made at a time when the House can properly debate it? Is not he aware of the conjecture and the leaks that have taken place, which mean that local authorities and those wanting to get involved in economic development are finding that difficult? I, for one, think that the delay is nothing short of a disgrace.

Mr. Sainsbury: I am glad that the hon. Lady has appreciated the consistency in my answers. I have to tell her that we are still awaiting the approval of the European Commission, which I hope to receive shortly. I am well aware of the points that she has made. That is why I gave the answer I did—I hope to announce the outcome of our review before the House rises for the summer recess.

Mr. Marland: May I add to what has already been said, as my constituents in the Ross-on-Wye Cinderford travel-to-work area are also impatiently awaiting the revision of the assisted area map? May I urge that their case is carefully considered before any final announcement is made, because they, too, will be immensely disappointed if there is any change in status in their area?

Mr. Sainsbury: I assure my hon. Friend that I will take careful note of what he has said. The case made by that travel-to-work area, as, indeed, every other, has been carefully considered in our review.

Mr. Robin Cook: Does the Minister recognise the deep unease caused by the rumours that he proposes to extend less help to towns that have more unemployment than they had before? How can he justify asking the Commission to cut regional aid to Darlington, Cardiff and Corby now that they all have more unemployment than they had three years ago? Has not regional aid been cut to the extent that it is now only one third of its level a decade ago? Is not it time that the right hon. Gentleman admitted that he cannot solve a bigger problem on a smaller budget?

Mr. Sainsbury: I hope that the hon. Gentleman would expect that the new map will reflect an assessment of structural problems as they are today and not as they were in 1984. That is surely the only fair and honest way of putting forward the map. It is on that basis that we put our proposals to the European Commission.

Competitiveness

10. **Sir Thomas Arnold:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement about Britain's international competitiveness.

Mr. Sainsbury: Productivity has risen by 8·7 per cent. over the past year. Inflation is at its lowest level for 30 years and manufacturing output has shown the largest increase for four years. Those are all signs that Britain's industrial competitiveness is steadily improving.

Sir Thomas Arnold: As competitiveness is a race among nations and as that race is getting tougher, will my right hon. Friend outline the particular steps that he proposes to take to reduce the burden on business of regulation from Brussels?

Mr. Sainsbury: I very much agree with my hon. Friend that one of the ways to help British business to be even more competitive is to reduce the burden of regulation. That is why I am delighted that my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Corporate Affairs is taking such energetic action in pursuit of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's deregulation initiative. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister presided yesterday over a meeting at which we discussed further progress on deregulation. I assure my hon. Friend that we will continue to give deregulation and lifting the burden of bureaucracy from business, particularly from small businesses, the highest possible priority.

Dr. Berry: If the Minister is so satisfied with Britain's international competitiveness, will he please explain why last year we had a record trade deficit in the midst of the worst recession since the 1930s? The Government have presided over the worst growth rate of any Government since the war.

Mr. Sainsbury: I am sure that the hon. Gentleman would not want anyone to be satisfied with our competitiveness because, whatever stage we may have reached, we can be sure that our international competitors will not be resting. They are also looking at their competitiveness. We find that Britain did particularly badly in the 1960s and 1970s when, for too much of that time, we followed the kind of subsidy policies that are still so energetically supported by the Opposition Front Bench. The interesting thing about the 1980s is that we did markedly better and, in terms of productivity, we did better than all our major competitors. We caught up a lot of ground, but we still have further to go. That is why the Government will continue to give priority to improving the competitiveness of British industry.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton: In fully supporting the views expressed by my hon. Friend the Member for Hazel Grove (Sir T. Arnold) and in supporting my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's initiative on deregulation, will my right hon. Friend give me and the House an assurance that, prior to the Government introducing any legislation in future, the implications for our international competitiveness will feature as part of the consideration of that legislation and its implementation?

Mr. Sainsbury: I am delighted to give my hon. Friend just that assurance. That assessment of the impact on companies, particularly small companies, will precede any further regulations. It is perhaps because I am able to give my hon. Friend that assurance that I was interested to note that the Engineering Employers Federation's industrial strategy interim report says of my Department that we
"are supportive, positive and helpful and we"
the EEF—
"are happy to acknowledge this".

Mr. Bell: The House will welcome the Minister's statement that our competitiveness is steadily improving. The Opposition accept and welcome that, as we also welcome the attack on regulation. However, most of the regulations on the statute book are a consequence of 13 years of Conservative Government, and not the consequence of Brussels. If the Department of Trade and Industry's competitiveness unit uses gross domestic product per head as a measure of competitiveness, in accordance with the Department's leagues, we are 18th out of 24 in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development league. How does the Minister propose to improve that record with improved investment and improved skills in our work force when we have a shortage of skills and investment?

Mr. Sainsbury: Of course, skills in the work force are an important part of the input into the competitiveness of United Kingdom industry. That is one reason why we have already taken so many measures to raise skills in our work force. Almost all those measures have been opposed by the Labour party; they include the national curriculum, testing, training and enterprise councils, national vocational qualifications, investors in people, national education and training targets and training credits. Those measures have been consistently opposed by the Labour party.

British Telecom

11. **Mr. Bates:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what representations he has received from those wishing to renationalise British Telecom.

Mr. McLoughlin: I know of no such representations to renationalise British Telecom, even from the Opposition Benches—[HON. MEMBERS: "Oh"]I am sorry. We still have some people who would like to see that. The Government

are convinced that the privatisation of British Telecom and the introduction of competition into the telecommunications market has been largely responsible for British Telecom's transformation into a highly successful and internationally competitive telecommunications operator.

Mr. Bates: Does my hon. Friend think that that almost complete silence is due to the fact that a three-minute cheap rate telephone call is now half the price in real terms that it was 10 years ago? Is not it due to the fact that there are now 96,000 telephone boxes, of which 95 per cent. are operational, as opposed to 50 per cent. 10 years ago? Does my hon. Friend think that those improving statistics, of which we are all aware, may have been of benefit to people sceptical of the benefits of privatising the rest of the Post Office at the earliest opportunity?

Mr. McLoughlin: I am grateful to my hon. Friend. I think that I have made the Government's position on the Post Office fairly clear in my answers to earlier questions, but he is right. There have been dramatic improvements in the performance of British Telecom, in spite of all the scare stories that we consistently hear from Opposition Members at times of privatisation. There were scare stories that telephone boxes would go. My hon. Friend is right to say that more boxes are in operation; what is more, they are working, which is quite a change from the position 10 years ago. There has been an improvement to the customer and to the country.

Mr. Barnes: What were the costs of the advertisements to encourage people to register for British Telecom shares? Will the Minister have a word with a Home Office Minister to find out how that compares with the money that was spent on encouraging people to put their names on the electoral register? For instance, last year nothing was spent on the latter in Northern Ireland, although a considerable sum was spent there on encouraging people to register for British Telecom shares. Does not that display the Government's incorrect balance of values? They push ahead with privatisation, when people try to grab what they can, rather than being involved in the democratic process.

Mr. McLoughlin: I was not sure from that question whether the hon. Gentleman was telling us that he favoured renationalisation. Since privatisation, the service provided by British Telecom has dramatically improved, and we even see occasional signs of approval from Opposition Members.

Mr. Ian Taylor: Does my hon. Friend agree that the risk from the Labour party is not simply of renationalisation but of other idiocies, such as a windfall tax on profits to cover up its overspending in other areas? Will he draw the attention of the millions of shareholders who subscribed to the successful share offer to the fact that they are likely to be savaged if there is another Labour Government?

Mr. McLoughlin: I agree with my hon. Friend that the supposed windfall tax that the Opposition were talking about would do great damage to British Telecom's future investment. Opposition Members speak with different tongues, however, because only yesterday the hon. Member for Livingston (Mr. Cook) issued a press release which ended by saying:

"These twin reforms, taken together, will benefit every industry, every citizen and every BT shareholder."

I have yet to understand how their proposed windfall tax would benefit shareholders.

Mr. Cousins: Surely the Minister recognises that after many millions of pounds were spent pushing the BT share sale, a few weeks ago a prospectus finally emerged in which BT mentioned six major issues of fair competition and fair regulation, including one on which it is taking the Government to court? In the light of that, does the Minister advise new shareholders to hang on to their shares?

Mr. McLoughlin: Here they go again, totally criticising our intention to create wider share ownership and trying to undermine what has been a very successful share offer. We are proud of the fact that we have returned British Telecom totally to the private sector and we are amazed at the turnaround by the Opposition Members. We are proud of our wider share ownership. We will not do anything to destroy it. The Labour party would.

Mr. Maginnis: Although one welcomes and supports competition in the telecommunications industry, is the Minister content with the fact that Mercury is creaming off the best business while British Telecom continues to meet the need to invest in and service the more remote rural areas, such as my constituency?

Mr. McLoughlin: The hon. Gentleman raises a particular point. Many representations are made to the director general of the Office of Telecommunications. The director general will obviously consider the representations that are made to him. That is a very effective way of doing so. We should welcome competition in the telecommunications industry; it is beneficial to the consumer. Obviously, the director general of Oftel will judge all those matters when he makes his decision.

Deregulation

12. **Mr. Jacques Arnold:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a further statement on progress in lifting the burden of unnecessary regulation on business.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: At the Prime Minister's progress meeting on deregulation held yesterday, Ministers welcomed progress on specific deregulation measures to reduce the burden on business and agreed to introduce an important deregulation Bill as soon as possible. Ministers also agreed to publish a document called "Working with Business: A Code for Enforcement Agencies" and a report on the operation of EC law in the United Kingdom; to review how duplication between enforcement agencies might be eliminated; to require a small business litmus test of the impact on them of any new regulations; and to set up an eighth task force focusing on charities and voluntary organisations.

Mr. Arnold: I welcome the progress that is being made with the campaign to hack at red tape. Does not it contrast with the legislation, bureaucracy and interference that would follow from the adoption of the social chapter which is supported by two Opposition parties?

Mr. Hamilton: I know that dinosaurs have become much more popular recently as a result of films, but Opposition Members really must get rid of their neanderthal attitudes to the competitiveness of British

industry. It is only by continuing to reduce the burdens on industry that we can take full advantage of international competitiveness, which will ultimately be reflected in increased employment opportunities.

Mr. Turner: Does the Minister accept that millions of people would welcome more regulations, particularly when dealing with companies such as Ever Ready, which has closed a factory in Wolverhampton, with the loss of 80 jobs? A constituent of mine visited Woolworths in Wolverhampton and found on sale Ever Ready batteries that were manufactured in China.

Mr. Hamilton: The hon. Gentleman must accept that bureaucracy and red tape do not do business in this country any good at all. The consequence of imposing extra legislative burdens on companies to increase their operating costs would simply make us less competitive. What we should be concerened about in the European Community is not what Mr. Delors called social dumping in moving jobs from France to Scotland, but moving jobs outside the European Community altogether to the deregulated economies of the far east and elsewhere.

Sir Michael Grylls: When my hon. Friend considers deregulation measures, will he consider abolishing the statutory audit? In particular, will he listen to the views of business organisations, especially the Small Business Bureau, which have made it perfectly clear that there is no reason why there should not be total abolition of the statutory audit for all privately owned companies? It serves no purpose to any outside trader dealing with privately owned companies; therefore, let us get rid of it. I hope that my hon. Friend will be able to to do so very soon.

Mr. Hamilton: I am confident that we will be able to announce in due course a relaxation of the current audit requirements on small companies. The results of the consultation exercise in which we have been engaged for some time will be evaluated shortly. I am delighted that my hon. Friend and the Small Business Bureau have made representations to me as part of that consultation process. I hope that we shall be able to announce a radical change, to the benefit of business, in due course.

Mr. Nigel Griffiths: As the Minister has had a year to study the Institute of Directors' proposals to abolish 50 licences, including licences in respect of driving instruction, the retail sale of alcohol, the running of theatres and cinemas, and minicabs, will he repudiate the proposals to leave the public without proper protection and ensure that they are not included in his Bill?

Mr. Hamilton: I shall repudiate the hon. Gentleman and the Labour party. They have done nothing constructive to contribute to the debate. There are many ways in which we can ensure effective regulation to preserve the interests of the wider public which do not involve licensing. As part of the deregulation review, we shall be reconsidering all the legislative burdens on business of any kind to ensure that they are proportionate to the benefits that are claimed to flow from them. It can never be in the interests of business or of the people whom business employs to impose unnecessary costs on them.

Mrs. Lait: Does my hon. Friend accept that many Conservative Members are pleased to hear about the new initiatives to consult small businesses about the regulations that bear so heavily on the people who run those businesses? Is he happy with the means of consulting all small businesses? Has he any proposals to improve the consultation process?

Mr. Hamilton: We agreed yesterday that, in future, when we consult before legislation is put before the House, we will first view our proposals from the perspective of small business. Too often in the past, the Government have listened to what big business has had to say and to business organisations, which may not in themselves be wholly representative of all the small businesses that are active in their economic sectors. It is important that small businesses are encouraged because it is from small businesses that big businesses and future jobs will grow.

Domestic Gas Appliances

13. **Mr. Connarty:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps he is taking to reduce the number of deaths caused by carbon monoxide poisoning in the home from unsafe gas appliances.

Mr. McLoughlin: The number of deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning from gas appliances is a matter of concern. That is why I welcome the introduction of the EC gas appliances directive, which sets new safety requirements for gas appliances.

Mr. Connarty: I am grateful to the Minister for that response, but it seems highly inadequate given the estimate that each year there are 200 deaths in the home from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by badly installed and poorly maintained gas appliances. Does the Minister share with me and the Council of Registered Gas Installers the concern that there are 40,000 cowboys installing gas appliances, yet CORGI members are the only people legally entitled to do so?

Will the hon. Gentleman bring some influence to bear on the Health and Safety Executive to chase and prosecute the cowboys in what is basically a trade in death, rather than pursuing householders and landlords, which seems inadequate action in the face of such a threat?

Mr. McLoughlin: Any death from carbon monoxide poisoning is tragic. We do hear of a number of such cases, although I do not recognise the number quoted by the hon. Gentleman. My information is that there are between 30 and 40 such deaths a year. However, arguing about the figures does not help. I assure the hon. Gentleman that the Health and Safety Executive takes its responsibilities very seriously.

Pit Closures

14. **Mr. Mullin:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what funding he will provide for British Coal to enable it to prevent pollution of the River Wear caused by the closure of pits in Durham.

Mr. Eggar: It is for British Coal and the National Rivers Authority, in the first instance, to decide what action may be necessary in respect of any threat of water pollution which may be related to any proposed pit closure.

Mr. Mullin: Is the Minister aware that the NRA is saying that if British Coal were to turn off the pumps at Easington when the pit closes, the River Wear—which

supplies 20 per cent. of the water for the city of Sunderland —would be devastated by pollution? Is he further aware that British Coal is flatly refusing to accept any responsibility for the consequences of turning off the pumps, other than giving 14 days' notice? What is he doing to ensure that British Coal lives up to its responsibilities?

Mr. Eggar: The hon. Gentleman is not entirely accurate.

Mr. Mullin: Oh yes, I am.

Mr. Eggar: No, the hon. Gentleman is not entirely correct. If he had read the letter to him from the NRA, he would know that he had misquoted it. As I understand it, the problem relates to pumping issues at pits above Easington that have been long abandoned. It is clear that there would be an issue were pumping and production at Easington to cease. There has been a careful examination of the matter, both by the NRA and by British Coal. There is no question of any rapid decision being taken to cease pumping in that section of the Durham coal mines.

I assure the hon. Gentleman, as he was assured by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Environment last night, that full consultation is being carried out and there will be appropriate levels of co-operation between British Coal and the NRA.

Research and Development

15. **Dr. Lynne Jones:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on his policies to encourage United Kingdom manufacturing companies to increase their investment in research and development.

Mr. McLoughlin: The best encouragement that the Government can provide is a stable economic environment with low inflation, low interest rates and low corporation tax, together with selective assistance, such as that provided by the Department in appropriate cases.

Dr. Jones: Are not United Kingdom manufacturing tools twice as old as German tools and three times as old as Japanese tools? Do not British companies spend twice as much on dividends as they spend on research and development? It is no wonder that we have such a massive trade deficit, which is unprecedented in a recession. When will the Government shake themselves out of the complacency shown by Ministers' answers this afternoon and learn from the Japanese and other Pacific rim countries, which are investing massively in research and development? Why do they not start by transferring savings from defence research and development to civil research? If they did, at least the Minister could boast that his Department's budget was somewhat larger than that of the Department of National Heritage.

Mr. McLoughlin: I am not sure whether the hon. Lady was trying to talk her question out. The fact remains that industry-funded research and development rose 28 per cent. in real terms between 1981 and 1991. Of the companies questioned by the Confederation of British Industry in an innovation trends survey, 50 per cent. planned to increase their research and development expenditure in 1993, which is very encouraging.

Complaint of Privilege

3.30 pm

Madam Speaker: The right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) raised with me, as a possible breach of privilege, the willingness of a court on Tuesday of this week to hear an application based on allegations related to a Bill then before Parliament. The Bill was the European Communities (Amendment) Bill, which is now an Act.

The right hon. Gentleman complained that proceedings in Parliament were, on that occasion, being questioned in a manner contrary to article 9 of the Bill of Rights. He asked me to give precedence to a motion tomorrow relating to the action of the court in agreeing to entertain Lord Rees-Mogg's application, and referring the matter to the Committee of Privileges.

I have decided that it would not be appropriate for me to grant precedence to a motion based on this complaint, not least because, at the time to which the complaint relates, the Bill had been passed by this House but was proceeding in another place. It would therefore primarily be a matter for that House to pursue.

I do, however, take with great seriousness any potential questioning of our proceedings in the courts, which is why I have chosen to deliver my decision on the complaint in this way, as the rules entitle me to do, rather than to write privately to the right hon. Member for Chesterfield, as would normally be the case.

The House will be aware that, following a recent decision by the House of Lords in the case of Pepper *v.* Hart, the courts now allow themselves to assess the significance of words spoken in this House during the passage of Bills in order to assist in the interpretation of statutes. That has exposed our proceedings to possible questioning in a way that was previously thought to be impossible.

There has of course been no amendment of the Bill of Rights, and that Act places a statutory prohibition on the questioning of our proceedings. Article 9 of the Act reads:

"that the freedom of speech and debates or proceedings in Parliament ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament."

I am sure that the House is entitled to expect, when the case referred to by the right hon. Gentleman begins to be heard on Monday, that the Bill of Rights will be required to be fully respected by all those appearing before the court.

Mr. Tony Benn (Chesterfield): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for your statement in response to the letter that I sent you, which was much better than a reference to the Committee of Privileges. You will recall that I expressed my concern explicitly that Lord Justice Watkins and Mr. Justice Auld would be in breach of article 9 of the Bill of Rights were they to hear the case.

Whatever the merits of the Maastricht treaty, you, Madam Speaker, have reaffirmed the historic view that it is not in order for the courts or anybody else to question our proceedings. You have told the courts today, in language that I am sure they will understand, that we do not interfere with their jurisdiction and they do not interfere with our jurisdiction and that the question of judicial review cannot be used as an encroachment of the rights of the House of Commons.

You referred to the Pepper *v.* Hart case, which purported to give the judges the right to review our proceedings. If this practice is not stopped, it will be open to anyone to seek a court injunction preventing Members of Parliament from doing the work for which they were elected by their own people.

I hope that the gravity of your statement is understood, and that the judges concerned, who are appointed rather than elected—appointed, I might add, by the royal prerogative—will drop the case brought by Lord Rees-Mogg. To proceed after what you have said would possibly constitute a breach of privilege. I believe that your statement of the primacy of the House of Commons—which I would rank with the statement of Mr. Speaker Lenthall—will be a warning to any other person, whether that person is responsible for using the royal prerogative or for using any other powers, that the House is determined to protect the rights of those we represent.

Arts Council (Review)

3.35 pm

The Secretary of State for National Heritage (Mr. Peter Brooke): With permission, Madam Speaker, I should like to make a statement about the Arts Council.

Last December I told the House that I would commission consultants to review the structure of the Arts Council. I subsequently commissioned Price Waterhouse to undertake that review, and I made available to the House on 4 June copies of the working papers that they presented. Their study was a thorough and professional undertaking, which has informed my consideration of the future of the Arts Council, following the transfer of responsibilities for the Scottish and Welsh Arts Councils from next April. I have now also had the benefit of advice from the Arts Council itself, and the wider arts community has made known its views.

For the purposes of this statement I should like to concentrate on five main areas in turn: the arm's-length principle; the size and composition of the council; relations between the council, its clients and the regional arts boards; the core functions of the Arts Council; and the structure of the organisation. I am writing separately to Lord Palumbo on a number of detailed issues, and I am arranging for a copy of my letter to be made available in the Library.

I reaffirm my commitment to the arm's length principle, and agree that this should be stated clearly so that the respective roles of my Department and the council can be clearly understood. Put simply, I see the primary role of Ministers as setting the council's legal, financial and institutional framework, including appointments to the council and the structure of arts funding and management. Within that framework, the role of the council is to steer the general direction of artistic policy and decide the allocation of funding in line with the exercise of its artistic judgment. It is not for the Government to seek to intervene in matters of artistic judgment, although there can be occasions when Ministers can properly act as a conduit for public and political opinion.

With that degree of independence for the Arts Council in the use of the taxpayer's money comes also the responsibility for explaining its decisions fully and clearly, not least to this House; and I shall be exploring with the chairman ways in which current levels of accountability might be improved. But this analysis of our different roles should not obscure the fact that these are objectives that the council and Ministers share and to which each should contribute for example, in encouraging the widest possible access to the arts. In this connection I should like to stress the importance I attach to the council's role in promoting touring to ensure that the best of our arts reaches the widest possible audience.

As to the size and composition of the council, Price Waterhouse recommended a reduction from its present membership of 20 to 12. I welcome a streamlining of membership. However, I am not finally convinced that a council of 12 members will sufficiently represent all those interests which should be part of the decision-making process. With the Arts Council's endorsement, I therefore intend to move to a council of 16 members, including the chairman and vice-chairman. This will allow the inclusion of five regional representatives, each of the seven art form panel chairman and four independents.

The Arts Council's relationship with regional arts boards and directly funded clients is most important, and the integrated planning system should underpin this; but it is not yet working as it should. I endorse Price Waterhouse's view that all involved should make its success a high priority, and I am glad that the council confirms that it will seek to do so. I am also glad that the council has accepted that the planning and finance functions should come more closely together, and that arrangements for contractual funding should be developed. I am making clear in my letter to Lord Palumbo what my Department requires from the planning process, and the need to develop better performance measures.

That brings me to the core functions of the Arts Council. As I told the House in December, the council has three main functions: providing a strategic policy framework for the arts at national level; managing grant-in-aid; and the monitoring and appraisal of arts organisations. Those were endorsed by the Price Waterhouse report, and I am pleased to restate them today. Price Waterhouse also stressed the council's role as an advocate for the arts. I readily endorse advocacy as a natural component of all the council's work, but I do not see it as a free-standing function. It arises naturally out of the responsibilities of members and senior management.

Price Waterhouse questioned whether the Arts Council's activities are sufficiently focused within its core functions. As public money is involved in supporting the Arts Council's activities, it is important that there should be a clearly identified need for them. I have therefore asked Lord Palumbo over the next two or three months to conduct an analysis of the entire range of activities undertaken by the Arts Council, and to report to me on how they fit in with its core functions. That work will need to reflect the need for market testing, and the specific ideas for streamlining put forward by Price Waterhouse. It will, I hope, focus attention on providing services for which there is a real demand. It must also, of course, reflect the new responsibilities that the national lottery imposes on the council as distributor.

Much of the public interest in the report has been in the three structural options put forward by Price Waterhouse. I do not intend to press for the adoption of a specific option but, as part of the planned activity review, I think that it is helpful to set the Arts Council a benchmark for the level of savings that it might achieve. So I am asking the council to assume an illustrative 10 per cent. reduction in administrative costs, and as part of the activity analysis to make the case for restoring it incrementally in tranches. That will not be an easy process, but it is important for all of us to ensure that overheads are kept to a minimum and as many as possible of the available resources are passed directly to the funding of artistic activity.

The process of change is never easy, but I hope that what I have said today will help to reduce uncertainty by giving those working in the arts community a clearer framework within which to operate. The debate on structures has been prolonged. It should soon be concluded, so that we can all concentrate on the wider issues of the quality and accessibility of the arts themselves.

Mrs. Ann Clwyd (Cynon Valley): These are difficult times for the arts. Does not the Secretary of State realise that his statement will have done nothing to reassure our deeply troubled arts organisations? Once again, he has

[Mrs. Ann Clwyd]

offered further delay and procrastination. Is his Department not giving us yet more delay and paralysis, caused by yet more analysis?

All the ideas for restructuring the Arts Council suggested in the Price Waterhouse report are nominally about reducing waste and inefficiency and redirecting resources to arts organisations. The Opposition are wholly in favour of reducing waste and inefficiency and of maximising the sum spent directly on the arts. To that extent, we welcomed the setting up of the Price Waterhouse review, with its remit to examine the structural organisation and staffing of the council. However, the fact that the right hon. Gentleman, having spent about £60,000 on the report, has opted for even more consultation will cause some disbelief. Does his decision mean that he accepts the charge made by some commentators that the review is partial, ill informed and littered with errors?

We have argued for some time that there is a case for reform of the Arts Council. Nevertheless, it would be wrong, out of enthusiasm for the report, to throw the baby out with the bath water. We believe that the Arts Council has done a notable job over the past 50 years. Its structure has been copied all over the world, and its slow death by a thousand cuts would not be welcomed.

Our real concern about the review is the motive for instigating it. Will the Secretary of State confirm that the reforms represent further cost savings for the Treasury and not any commitment to make more resources available to the arts? Will he further acknowledge that, whatever savings these reforms may produce, they will in no way offset the cut of £5 million from next year's arts budget?

Is it not the case that, merely to stand still, the arts need an increase of £10 million on the current spending plans for 1993-94, and if administrative savings are made, will the Secretary of State pledge that the resources released will be actually spent on the arts?

The Labour party has traditionally believed that the Arts Council has an important part to play in the artistic life of the nations of Britain. Has the Secretary of State read the view of the artistic director of the Royal Court theatre, who said last week:

"We have an Arts Council that is collaborating in its own suicide and a Government that is not committed to supporting the cultural life of this country".

We note the points made by the Secretary of State about improving accountability. He has promised to consult widely, and hopefully it will be more widely than merely consulting Lord Palumbo.

The Labour party is strongly committed to an enhanced role for regional arts boards which have an important element of local democratic accountability. Does the Secretary of State agree that, if more powers are to be devolved to the RABs, sufficient resources must be available to them to fulfil their enlarged responsibilities? Will he also promise to consult the regions on the appointment of five regional representatives to the Arts Council?

Does the Secretary of State now accept that the meddling interference of the Government and the resulting subservience of the Arts Council have destroyed the last vestiges of any claim to respect the arm's-length principle? As Lord Rix put it after his resignation,

"the Arts Council has been viewed with barely concealed contempt by successive Arts Ministers and their Departments . . . We have had to creep and crawl every year for our funds . . . When magnanimity has been displayed, we have gobbled up the crumbs with unseemly haste, raising fawning voices in praise of the Minister concerned."

Perhaps that is precisely what the Government want.

The Government have a long history of political appointments and the Arts Council has not been exempt. Property tycoon Lord Palumbo has already brought the worst features of the Government's ideology to the Arts Council. Will the Secretary of State deny this afternoon press reports that Jocelyn Stevens, the well-known custodian of England's heritage, may be appointed to replace Lord Palumbo next year?

The Arts Council allocation decisions announced on 8 July involved a long list of losers: Agenda, the Poetry Society, the London City Ballet, Millstream and Glyndbourne Touring Opera were all chosen for cuts, as were London orchestras. Is the Secretary of State content to see the closure of one and possibly two of London's four orchestras?

Why cannot the Secretary of State get the Arts Council to do its own dirty work instead of appointing a High Court judge to make the decision for it? Can he also tell us why regional theatres appear to have been singled out to be the sacrificial victims of Arts Council cuts? Will he confirm that there is a hit list of 10 regional theatres from which the Arts Council is intent on withdrawing funding with a real threat of closures? Is it by coincidence or design that almost all those theatres are extremely well supported by their Labour local authorities? Does he realise that, if the closures go ahead, it will leave only one major theatre in the whole of the south-west, the Northcote theatre in Exeter?

Has the Secretary of State no sense of shame that this could mean the virtual dismemberment of the system of regional theatres? Is he aware that regional theatres are the backbone of what has made British theatre among the best in the world? Does he know that all the great British actors and actresses, from Gielgud, Olivier and Albert Finney to Antony Sher, Ian McKellen, Julie Walters, Judy Dench and Glenda Jackson, came up through the regional theatre movement? [HON. MEMBERS: "What about Andrew Faulds?"] And, of course, Andrew Faulds.

Is the Secretary of State aware of the extent of opposition to the proposed withdrawal of funding from the 10 regional theatres? Does he know that, at the press conference of the Arts Council on 8 July, 10 of the 11 members of the drama board threatened to resign if the Arts Council announced that it and the regional arts boards supported the policy?

Is it not evident that the Government's arts strategy is in complete disarray? Was not *The Independent* right last week when it said:

"Mr. Brooke should realise that chipping away at a few Arts Council posts here or selling off a bit of property there is neglecting the real problem—the Government's failure to give the arts sufficient funds to enable them to plan with stability"?

The Government, who were elected on a commitment to defend arts spending, have ratted on that promise and now propose a savage cut of £5 million from the arts budget. Perhaps the Secretary of State should take time off from predicting a by-election defeat in Christchurch and spend some time sticking up for the arts. If he does not have the will or the clout to do so, he should make way for someone who has.

Mr. Brooke: The hon. Lady asked me at least two dozen questions. I know that she will forgive me if I say that they were variable in quality. I shall resist the temptation to say 17 yeses and seven noes.

The hon. Lady started by referring to what she described as "delay and procrastination". It may be a difference of opinion between Labour Members and Conservative Members, but given that it is the Arts Council that will be affected by the changes, it is much better that the council should be involved in the changes that will be made rather than that it should be imposed by fiat from the Secretary of State.

The hon. Lady referred to some scepticism about the report and suggested that it might contain some errors. I acknowledge that, in the nature of the report that was made—time was of the essence—some factual corrections need to be made in the working papers. However, none of them will affect the final analysis conducted by Price Waterhouse.

I join the hon. Lady in her praise for the Arts Council over the past 50 years. I disagree with her suggestion that we are involved in the death of the Arts Council. We are involved in its renewal and its future over the next 50 years. The hon. Lady said that the whole exercise was engaged in cost savings. If it had been engaged in cost savings, one would have taken the simple step of telling the Arts Council that it had to make the following savings in its administrative costs. But that is not what we have done.

In terms of the cut in funding of £5 million, it is a fact that the policy that the Arts Council brings to its decisions affects the use of the money. Indeed, the reactions that have already occurred in terms of some of the council's decisions show that other hon. Members share that view. I can give the hon. Lady an assurance that the savings will go to the arts. I am glad that she joins us in our preoccupation with accountability. As she knows, the matter will receive further debate.

In terms of the regional arts boards and the extra responsibilities that will be devolved to them which I announced in December 1992, the Arts Council will be engaged in a review of the ability of the regional arts boards to carry its new responsibilities during the balance of this year. In terms of consulting the regions on their choice of who should represent them—which chairmen of the regional arts boards should sit on the Arts Council—the number that we have selected is such that it will be possible for there to be a rotation on a national basis with reasonable regularity.

One of the profoundest services of the Price Waterhouse report was, by the nature of the people it consulted, both in the Arts Council and in the artistic community, to show that there were misgivings about the way in which the arm's length principle was working. To reassert it, as I have done, is the right step forward. As always, actions speak louder than words.

The hon. Lady quoted the remarks of Lord Rix. All I can say at a personal level in response is that the Minister is not seeking praise for his decisions; he is hoping that history will judge that the decisions were well exercised during his time of office.

I repudiate utterly the hon. Lady's remarks about Lord Palumbo's chairmanship. He has given distinguished service, not only to the council, but to the state. We have not yet begun the process of choosing the next candidate for the chairmanship of the Arts Council. Therefore, it would not be useful to have a series of questions about future candidates in our remaining time.

On the financial planning decisions for next year that the Arts Council announced on 8 July, the hon. Lady is not fully informed about the orchestras. The function of Lord Justice Hoffman to make recommendations to the music panel of the Arts Council, which will make the decision.

The hon. Lady made a series of references to regional theatres. I am sure that, as at Question Time last week, they will have been heard outside this House. It is for the Arts Council to make those decisions. The Arts Council made its decisions at Woodstock. It is right that it should stand up and defend and explain them. If I may say so, the hon. Lady is threatening an immediate invasion of the arm's-length principle if she wishes me to substitute my judgment for that of the Arts Council.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. The initial exchanges have taken some time and gone rather wide of the statement, so I hope that questions and answers will be brisk.

Mr. Toby Jessel (Twickenham): Is not the hon. Lady a misery? Britain is the arts capital of the world and spreads tremendous happiness. Is my right hon. Friend aware that, for the arm's-length principle to remain acceptable, it is essential for Arts Council decisions to remain broadly consistent with the public will? That is why it is welcome that my right hon. Friend said that the Arts Council should be made fully and clearly answerable to Parliament for its decisions. Far from death by a thousand cuts, this should have a tonic effect.

Mr. Brooke: It would be wrong for me to judge whether the hon. Lady is a misery. That is a judgment from which I should certainly resile. I am grateful to my hon. Friend for his reassertion of the importance of the arm's-length principle.

Mr. Robert Maclennan (Caithness and Sutherland): I am glad that I can give a broad welcome to the Secretary of State's statement. It amounts to a suspension of final judgment on the present Arts Council, at least until its activities analysis has been presented, as the right hon. Gentleman has asked, by the end of October.

There has been some risk that analysis will lead to paralysis. Many in the arts world have felt that they have been living in the twilight of the Arts Council as it took some of its, apparently, more bizarre decisions, not least putting out to tender the job of judging the future of London's orchestras. The Arts Council appears to have been threatened externally by cuts and internally by a certain loss of direction.

Following the Secretary of State's decision, will he ensure that the council's survival is dependent on the sharpness of its focus in answering the questions that he put to it, and that the accessibility and quality of the arts are not put at risk by further delay and dither?

Mr. Brooke: I agree with the hon. Gentleman's implication that uncertainty is bad both for the Arts Council and for the artistic community, which is why I seek to bring matters to a conclusion. I take the opposite view from the hon. Gentleman: I think that, if we bring matters to a successful conclusion, we can avoid paralysis and secure something much more constructive.

[Mr. Brooke]

I agree with the hon. Gentleman's remarks about the sharpness of focus that needs to be directed from now on. The process of inviting the Arts Council to look at its tasks on an incremental basis is the same process to which it subjects its clients and therefore one with which it will be familiar.

Mr. Patrick Cormack (Staffordshire, South): Does my right hon. Friend accept that by far the most eloquent plea against the £5 million cut has come from the chairman of the Arts Council? Will he heed that plea?

When my right hon. Friend reconstitutes the Arts Council, will he bear in mind that it is wrong to preclude people from the position of chairman because they cannot afford to do the job?

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): Is the hon. Gentleman looking for the job?

Mr. Cormack: No, I am not.

There would be a wide welcome in the arts world if the job were made a paid appointment so that people could afford to take it on.

Mr. Brooke: I wholly concur with my hon. Friend that, in his open letter to me, the noble Lord Palumbo was demonstrating the advocacy recommended by Price Waterhouse. On the second half of my hon. Friend's question, the Arts Council charter will require revision because of the transfer of responsibilities to Scotland and Wales. Therefore, the issue whether the chairman should be paid can be considered within that revision.

Mr. Gerald Kaufman (Manchester, Gorton): I thank the Minister for his courtesy in allowing me to see a copy of his statement in advance.

I hope that the restructuring will be successful, not only in terms of administration but in empowering the Arts Council to carry out its principal duty, which is to deliver artistic opportunity and artistic experiences to people throughout the country.

The Minister has again properly supported the Arts Council's arm's-length role, but he expressed a view about which I hope he will think again. He stressed the importance that he attached to the council's role in promoting touring. Although touring companies give people in the regions a pleasant opportunity, they are no substitute for firmly based and rooted regional companies delivering arts to their areas. The loss of companies such as the Bolton Octagon and the Oldham Coliseum would be sad. The company that operated at the Forum theatre in Wythenshawe, which has now sadly closed due to lack of funding, was such a centre of excellence that it made possible the performance of Sondheim musicals in the west end of London. The same can be said of the Haymarket theatre in Leicester.

It is not touring that is most important to us in the regions, but having our own companies rooted in our communities to provide experiences for us where we live.

Mr. Brooke: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his observations about the delivery of artistic opportunities and experiences. We shall continually return to that subject as it should be the guiding light of the Arts Council's activities. I do not seek to make touring a substitute for activity on the ground all round the country. I hope that the decision that I announced last December about the transfer of 42 artistic organisations from the Arts Council to the regional arts boards is testimony to my concern that the arts should be served on the ground in the regions.

Mr. Terry Dicks (Hayes and Harlington): The House is never as bad as when it sits here pompously considering the future of the arty-farty world. It is ridiculous that we are wasting parliamentary and ministerial time on these matters. If my right hon. Friend really wants to contribute to cost cutting, why does he not close the Arts Council, and his Department with it? The sooner he does so the better so that we can utilise the money for something worthwhile.

Mr. Brooke: When my hon. Friend reads the report of today's exchanges, I do not think that he will necessarily take the view that we are all conducting ourselves pompously. There is a particular character part which he plays, and he plays it to perfection.

Mr. Andrew Faulds (Warley, East): The right hon. Gentleman failed to comment on the project "Arts through education". What are the implications of the review on "Arts through education", an immensely important project? Does he agree with me that the introduction of the national lottery into this whole area of arts funding is simply a means of getting the Government off the hook of their funding responsibilities, and will inevitably lead to a lack of proper provision for all the arts functions throughout the country?

Mr. Brooke: The hon. Gentleman seeks to widen the debate with a general question on the issue of education. I know that he will have been encouraged by the fact that, in the statements which it made on 8 July, subsequent to its meeting at Woodstock, the Arts Council said that education was one sector in which it wished to see its role expanded.

One can take a variety of views on the lottery. In the context of the arts, where the emphasis will be on capital funding and there is a series of problems of capital deficiency which are crying out to be resolved, I do not think that the lottery will interfere with the basic function of the Arts Council, which will distribute the money for capital purposes.

Mr. Alan Howarth (Stratford-on-Avon): I welcome my right hon. Friend's reaffirmation of the arm's-length principle. Does he accept that moves to strengthen the accountability of the Arts Council to himself and the House sit delicately with that principle? Does he agree that the arts are a spendid investment for this country, generating jobs, tax revenues and benefits for the balance of payments? That fact must have something to do with the past ministrations of the Arts Council. Therefore, I welcome my right hon. Friend's cautious and pragmatic approach to reform of the Arts Council.

Will my right hon. Friend assure us that, in his conversations with the Treasury during the summer, he will vigorously stress the fact that the Government's role is to provide a stable, secure and generous contribution to the arts?

Mr. Brooke: My hon. Friend has articulated very well the role which Governments of all colours have played in the arts world. When he reads my statement, I do not think

that my hon. Friend will think that I was asking for accountability to myself. I was concerned that there should be accountability to Parliament. I might serve as a conduit through which some of that accountability could be exercised.

Mr. Robert Sheldon (Ashton-under-Lyne): I also welcome the arm's-length relationship between the Secretary of State and the Arts Council. Surely the most important aspect of the right hon. Gentleman's analysis of the activities will be the way in which it brings light to bear on some of the mysteries about the way in which the Arts Council has conducted itself.

The success of the right hon. Gentleman's analysis will be judged on how much light it sheds on some of the Arts Council's peculiar decisions, particularly its decision to transfer its responsibility to a judge. I know that that responsibility will go back to the Arts Council, but that was an extraordinary decision. I want to know more about how such decisions are made. I hope that the right hon. Gentleman's analysis will bring some of the decisions to light.

Mr. Brooke: My analysis may have the virtue of restressing the arm's-length principle and subsequently, by actions which are louder than words, upholding it. In that way we shall give the Arts Council the confidence of knowing that it will not suffer interference from Ministers but will retain accountability to the nation through the House. The Arts Council will then feel so empowered as to make it clear why it makes its decisions and, if necessary, defend them.

Mr. Gyles Brandreth (City of Chester): Will my right hon. Friend confirm that the central purpose of his statement is to ensure that more of the funding is spent at the sharp end, delivering arts, rather than on the machinery by which the money reaches those who provide the arts? Is he aware that, among the people at the sharp end, there has been concern about both the openness and the accountability of the Arts Council? There was particular anxiety that, given the extra funding that will come to the Arts Council through the national lottery, we need to be assured that the Arts Council is acting in an open and accountable way to improve the quality and range of arts available to the general public whom it seeks to serve.

Mr. Brooke: My hon. Friend follows a similar question asked by the right hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Sheldon) a moment ago. The House will join my hon. Friend in wishing that the funding that goes to what he described as the "sharp end" is not diluted on the way.

Ms Glenda Jackson (Hampstead and Highgate): If the Minister will not intervene in matters of artistic judgment, will he intervene in matters of artistic misjudgment? How can the stated aim of the Government to present the best of our arts to most of our people possibly be carried out if the Arts Council pursues its proposition of closing 10 regional theatres?

If that proposition is due to underfunding, the Minister should argue vehemently with the Treasury that cuts in the arts budget should be expunged. If it is a serious proposition, the Arts Council should be called to account by the Minister. Does he agree that, if we do not have regional theatres, we may not have London theatres in the future?

Mr. Brooke: The hon. Lady is seductive in her suggestion that I should in fact abjure the arm's-length principle as soon as I have stated it.

It may be helpful if I remind the House that the first of the Arts Council's three charter objectives is to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts. The second is to increase the accessibility of the arts to the public throughout the United Kingdom. The hon. Lady might have received more support in the House if she had implied that the second objective would need to be explained by the Arts Council if the widespread regional provision was to be removed.

Mr. Bryan Davies (Oldham, Central and Royton): Does the Minister accept that his somewhat delphic statement on the future of the Arts Council has done nothing to improve the demoralised state of the arts world that has resulted from two decisions? The first, for which the Minister is directly responsible, concerns the future cuts in Arts Council funding. The second concerns the deplorable situation regarding regional theatres, such as the Oldham Coliseum, which are on a hit list. While nothing has yet been defined, does the Minister agree that such a list would represent a threat to theatre in the regions and that that would have a detrimental effect on everyone?

Mr. Brooke: I do not know the precise circumstances under which the Arts Council has decided not to be specific about the list of theatres about which it might be making decisions. Enough has happened to enable hon. Members to air the subject, so the Arts Council may listen to the debate without having put its proposals forward.

The hon. Gentleman said that I had been "somewhat delphic". I do not know about the Labour party, but it is said in my party that morale starts in the Chamber and spreads across the nation. My preoccupation is that morale is restored within the Arts Council and that that morale then spreads across the nation.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): The Arts Council is facing clear difficulties in reorganisation and in cuts in administration, personnel and finance. Would it not be prudent of the Minister to re-examine the allocation of the administration of the national lottery funds through the Arts Council?

The Minister must be aware of the widespread dissatisfaction in the film industry and, for example, the British Film Institute at the decision to award the administration of the national lottery funds to that body. Those in the industry feel that the Arts Council has neither the enthusiasm nor the expertise to deal with the film industry.

Philistines see the film industry only as some kind of machinery. Successful British films have an enormous cascading effect on British industry. They indicate standards of excellence and manufacturing in many ways. Does the Minister agree that it is essential to encourage the British film industry so that that important element is maintained and improved?

Mr. Brooke: The hon. Gentleman and I share an affection for the game of cricket, and we have latterly discovered a mutual enthusiasm for film and the film industry. I therefore support his interests in the subject.

However, criticism was made in a debate on the Bill that I, as Secretary of State, was reserving for myself powers concerning the distribution of funds. The ability to

[Mr. Brooke]

ensure that appropriate care and attention is given to film is one such power which I would exercise through the Act. I think, however, that the hon. Gentleman's question went a little wide of my original statement.

Mr. Tam Dalyell (Linlithgow): May I take this opportunity to refer to John Bute, who died this morning. He generously lent many of the most beautiful pictures by British artists and rendered great service to the arts in Scotland in many different capacities.

The Secretary of State said that integrated planning was not working as it should. What analysis has been done as to why it was not working?

Mr. Brooke: I join the hon. Gentleman in his tribute to the late Lord Bute, whom I had the privilege of meeting in connection with some of the work that I do in my Department.

Integrated planning is a process that embraces the combined activity of the regional arts boards with the Arts Council at the centre. The conduct of integrated planning is necessarily somewhat new, because the transfer of substantial responsibility to the regional arts boards is itself new; but I believe that everyone who has so far been involved in integrated planning would agree that it is working less than perfectly. That is why Price Waterhouse flagged it up, and it is one of the reasons why all of us —I as Secretary of State, the Arts Council and the regional arts boards—will seek to make it work a great deal better.

Mr. Mark Fisher (Stoke-on-Trent, Central): Does not the Secretary of State understand that the crucial question which faces the arts is not the structure or composition of the Arts Council but the appalling lack of funding by the Government? Arts funding in Britain is one of the lowest in Europe at 0·3 per cent. of public expenditure. Is not that the issue?

Is not the consequence of that and of the further £5 million cut that he has announced for next year's Arts Council grant only too clear? The consequence is the loss of two major international and national orchestras and of 10 regional theatres. If those theatres close, they will not reopen, just as the 10 pits will not reopen, and the damage will be not only to theatre throughout the country but to the communities and town centres which, particularly at night, depend on those theatres to be a live focus for the community.

Will the Secretary of State deal with the issue of funding and, before it is too late, start fighting in Cabinet for more investment?

Mr. Brooke: I know that the hon. Gentleman was not a Member of Parliament during the period of office of the Labour Government from 1974 to 1979 when his distinguished father was a Member, but the funding which this administration provide for the arts exceeds by 44 per cent. in real terms the figure which the Labour Government bestowed in 1979. The hon. Gentleman is perfectly entitled to say that 44 per cent. is not enough, but the fact remains that his Government regarded a much lower figure as desirable for the arts in those days.

In answer to the second half of the hon. Gentleman's question, of course I give him the assurance that we are anxious to see as much money made available for the arts as the nation can afford.

Mr. Dalyell: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. My right hon. Friend the Member for Manchester, Gorton (Mr. Kaufman) said that he had received a copy of the statement. I happen to think that it is perfectly sensible and courteous of the Secretary of State to give a copy to my right hon. Friend, who is the Chairman of the Select Committee. However, if the Chairman of the National Heritage Select Committee receives one, why does not the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee—*[Interruption.]*—and my hon. Friend the Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) and the hon. Member for Linlithgow—receive a copy?

There is an argument for putting copies of statements in the Vote Office at 3 pm. The result would be that questions would be a little more informed. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander—sauce for Gorton and sauce for Bolsover.

Madam Speaker: It was courteous of the Secretary of State to make the statement available to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton (Mr. Kaufman), but it was a private arrangement which had nothing whatever to do with the Speaker.

BILL PRESENTED

LIMITATION (AMENDMENT)

Mr. David Hinchliffe, supported by Ms Dawn Primarolo, Mrs. Alice Mahon, Ms Angela Eagle, Mrs. Maria Fyfe, Mr. Ian McCartney, Mr. Keith Bradley, Mr. Eric Martlew, Mr. Kevin Hughes, Mr. John Gunnell, Mr. Malcolm Wicks and Mrs. Llin Golding, presented a Bill to amend the provisions of the Limitation Act 1980 so far as they relate to time limits for actions in respect of personal injuries and to the circumstances in which a person is to be treated as under a disability for the purposes of that Act; and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time upon Friday 23 July, and to be printed. [Bill 245.]

Broadcasting (Amendment)

4.19 pm

Mr. Bruce Grocott (The Wrekin): I beg to move,

That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Broadcasting Act 1990 so as to require the transmission of a major evening news bulletin at ten o'clock; to make provision for centres of excellence of television production in the regions; to enforce strict compliance by franchisees with the terms of their franchise applications; to provide safeguards to support a United Kingdom-based television industry comparable to the safeguards protecting national television industries in other European countries; and for connected purposes.

My Bill would amend the appalling Broadcasting Act 1990. I should declare an interest as a member of the Broadcasting, Entertainment and Cinematograph Technicians Union and a member of the National Union of Journalists, and also as someone who worked for a while for Central Independent Television, although I emphasise that I have no financial interest in the matter.

I am deeply concerned about what is happening to broadcasting. Much of what is wrong with it is attributable to the workings of the Broadcasting Act. Broadcasting, for those of us who care about it, is at the crossroads of either becoming American-style, advertising-led broadcasting or having a chance to remain as it is—a public broadcasting service that is properly and democratically regulated and that, up till now, has been admired throughout the world. Like so many other institutions in Britain, however, I fear that it is under threat from the Government's legislation.

Broadcasting is not like any other industry, because it is central to our way of life and certainly central to our recreational activity. On average, we spend 25 hours a week watching television. Televisions are in 98 per cent. of households. Massive audiences watch British television —20 million people regularly watch Coronation Street, and at peak viewing time on Christmas Day, as many as 30 million people watch television. It is something worth caring about and doing well, but, sadly, if present trends continue it will not be done well for much longer.

Television is vital for the dissemination of news and information. Public opinion shows that far more people trust broadcasters, and especially television, in the transmission of news and current affairs than trust any other medium. In a recent poll, 72 per cent. of people said that they trusted television, while only 11 per cent. trusted newspapers. I am surprised that it is as high as 11 per cent. for newspapers, but the message is crystal clear: broadcasting is essential for the transmission of news and current affairs.

We are currently facing a massive increase in the number of channels. Most of us are used to one, two, three or perhaps four channels, but by the turn of the century there could easily be as many as 130. It is no use having dozens of channels if they are transmitting tripe, which is the case in many other countries where there is a totally unregulated system.

Despite all the importance of broadcasting and the increase in the number of channels, morale among the people who make programmes is at an all-time low. The comments of Mark Tully, in his lecture in the past week, were representative of many people who work in the industry.

Not all the ills of broadcasting are directly attributable to the Broadcasting Act 1990, but many are. I shall point out some of the damage that has been done to the broadcasting industry that is directly attributable to the Act.

First, there has been tremendous pressure on the budgets of programme makers. That is partly due to the absurd lottery of the Act, which means that Yorkshire Television, for example, pays £38 million a year, whereas other television companies such as Central Television—I am delighted to say that it beat the system—and Scottish Television pay £2,000 a year. Why should the viewer have to suffer and the amount of money available for programme budgets be decreased on the basis of that silly system of allocating franchises, which has been described as poker?

There has also been tremendous pressure on budgets because of the predictable and unfair competition from cable and satellite television. It makes no sense at all that there are good and strict requirements on home-based production which apply to the BBC and to ITV, but not on satellite and cable. The figures for the home-based production programme content of television programme hours are quite horrifying.

In 1985, 56 per cent. of transmitted television programme hours were produced in the United Kingdom. Because of the proliferation of channels, that had fallen to 19 per cent. by 1992, and it is estimated that the figure will be 13 per cent. by the year 2000. That is not surprising: it is much cheaper to bring in material from, say, the United States market, where drama can be produced for about £30,000 an hour, whereas home-produced drama, which has to make all its profits in the United Kingdom, can cost as much as £400,000 an hour or more.

It is therefore no wonder that the unregulated sections of the television industry buy in programmes from abroad. It is no wonder either that our balance of payments—it does not always seem to worry everyone in this House —in television programme production, which was in surplus to the tune of £24 million in 1985, was in deficit to the tune of £100 million by 1991—and the deficit is worsening.

I cannot see why the Independent Television Commission does not have the same powers over programme content and quality in cable television as it has over the independent television sector. When "News at Ten" was threatened with being moved to another time, pressure was rightly brought to bear to stop that happening, and the ITC intervened. But cable and satellite can do what they like with programmes. They can take them off the air or close down channels, because they are not subject to regulation or control.

Another predictable result of the Act was a drift of programming southwards, and a weakening of television in the regions. That should be a matter for concern to all who value local production facilities. The closure of studios and the drift to independents inevitably mean a drift to the south.

Another issue that will assume dramatic importance next year is the threat of the takeover of British television companies by foreign companies—which will inevitably happen if we do not apply the same rules to our industry as other countries do to theirs. Most Governments have the sense to give their national television industries some protection and do not want them owned or controlled from abroad purely for profit.

The final sickness in the system to which I shall refer was shown up in the ITC's quarterly report, published last

[Mr. Bruce Grocott]

week. It says that the commercial pressures on programme makers to reduce their budgets have forced them to cut corners in a way that I never thought would happen in British broadcasting. Products are being displayed in programmes in prominent positions as a form of advertising. That is the thin end of the wedge; it deeply damages our system and the integrity of broadcasting.

People ask what I would do. I believe in a good old-fashioned dose of democratic regulation and control of the industry. That idea has been out of fashion—at least it was in the 1980s, when the prevailing madness was that everything could be governed by so-called free market forces. They simply do not deliver. With the progressive release of these market forces in broadcasting, the advertisers and the accountants have taken control. People no longer ask how good a programme is; they ask how much money it will make. Programme makers and viewers have lost out.

I am proud to say that what is required is a look back to find out what made our system the best in the world. The answer is: democratic regulation and control, to ensure standards, to provide the money properly to pay for jobs in the industry, to see that people are properly employed, and to make certain that there is none of the endless short-termism and lack of training that characterise industries not subject to democratic control.

Those who care about broadcasting—that includes almost all of us, as we spend 25 hours a week watching television—may agree with me that it is too important and too precious to be left to the whims of advertisers and accountants. It is time that we instituted democratic control, through this House, and made the system once again one to be proud of.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bruce Grocott, Ms Diane Abbott, Mr. David Clelland, Mr. Robin Corbett, Mr. Don Dixon, Miss Joan Lestor, Mr. Chris Mullin, Mr. Ken Purchase, Mr. Terry Rooney, Mr. Dennis Skinner and Mr. Dennis Turner.

BROADCASTING (AMENDMENT)

Mr. Bruce Grocott accordingly presented a Bill to amend the Broadcasting Act 1990 so as to require the transmission of a major evening news bulletin at ten o'clock; to make provision for centres of excellence of television production in the regions; to enforce strict compliance by franchisees with the terms of their franchise applications; to provide safeguards to support a United Kingdom-based television industry comparable to the safeguards protecting national television industries in other European countries; and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time upon Friday 23 July, and to be printed. [Bill 246.]

ESTIMATES DAY

[1ST ALLOTTED DAY, 2ND PART]

ESTIMATES AND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1993-94

Class VIII, Vote 1

Home Office

Domestic Violence

[Relevant documents: The Third Report from the Home Affairs Committee of Session 1992-93 on Domestic Violence (House of Commons Paper No. 245-I) and the Government Response thereto (Cm. 2269.)]

Motion made, and Question proposed,

That a further sum, not exceeding £1,807,298,000, be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st March 1994 for expenditure by the Home Office on compensation for criminal injuries, probation, police and superannuation payments for police and fire services.—*[Mr. Maclean.]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): I understand that with this it will be convenient also to discuss the next three motions relating to estimates:

That a further sum, not exceeding £745,493,000, be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st March 1994 for expenditure by the Home Office on police, the forensic science service, emergency planning, fire, the Fire Service College, court services, other services related to crime, probation and after-care, miscellaneous services, prevention of drug abuse, control of immigration and nationality, issue of passports etc., community services; and on administration (excluding the provision made for prisons administration carried on Class VIII, Vote 2).

That a further sum, not exceeding £427,760,000, be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st March 1994 for expenditure by the Lord Chancellor's Department on the court service, magistrates' courts, legal aid administration, tribunals, the court building programme, certain other legal services and a payment to the Land Registry Trading Fund.

That a further sum, not exceeding £135,693,000, be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st March 1994 for expenditure by the Crown Prosecution Service on administrative costs including the hire of private prosecuting agents.

4.29 pm

Sir Ivan Lawrence (Burton): It is not always appreciated by our constituents that Parliament—and particularly this House—often pauses in its headlong rush to get laws on to the statute book to consider general issues of national and social concern. Hon. Members do so without drama and frenzy, and without the harangue, diatribe and vitriol of party politics. One example of that vital work will be debated this afternoon as we consider the subject of domestic violence.

I am sorry that so many of our colleagues are not present at this important debate. I hope that they are at home—repairing the ravages of this Maastricht-ridden life that we have been pursuing—and that there is domestic tranquillity back at their roots.

The Home Affairs Select Committee, consisting of six Conservative Members and five Labour Members and of which I am privileged to have been elected as Chairman, decided a year ago to look in some depth at the devastating social problem of domestic violence. The evidence that we received from interested groups and individuals was prodigious, and the witnesses who gave evidence in person were many. Our report is comparatively long and we have made 42 specific recommendations for improving the way in which we tackle the problem in society.

I warmly thank my hard-working colleagues on the Committee, our dedicated Clerk, Paul Silk, and his staff, those who took the trouble to give evidence to us and those whom we met on our visits in London—the police, social workers and the victims. Finally, I thank my colleagues on the Liaison Select Committee for choosing this subject for debate today.

Our inquiries left us with no illusions about the prevalence of domestic violence in society today, or its enormous cost in financial as well as, more importantly, human terms. Paragraph 136 of our conclusions defines "that most basic of a citizen's rights: the one of living a life where violence is not feared and individual dignity is respected."
That is simply not possible when the menace of violence lurks where there ought to exist a haven of peace and tranquillity—the home.

In paragraph 6 of our report, we stress that men as well as women are affected by domestic violence, perhaps more frequently than many realise. All our recommendations therefore apply equally to men and to women.

There are many forms of domestic violence: adult children may abuse their parents and grandparents; fathers, uncles and other relatives may abuse their daughters, sons, nieces, and so on. We have had to concentrate our attention on violence between partners and ex-partners in order to keep our inquiry within manageable proportions. I hope that the House will understand and accept that.

We do not pretend that we are the first to address the subject. Our report supplements and complements the work recently done by Victim Support and the Law Commission in particular. Eighteen years ago, the Parliamentary Select Committee on Violence in the Family reported, and much has been achieved since then. There have been changes in legislation, in the way that agencies such as the police, the judiciary, social workers and the churches approach the problem, and in the attitude of Government.

The more attention has been focused on the problem, the more its full extent has been realised and the more the problem has been seen to grow. The general achievement of the attention has been to ensure that domestic violence is now treated as a serious crime by the police, prosecutors and the courts.

As the problem seems to be getting worse, either because more abuse is coming to light, or because our society is less stable and its citizens more intolerant and less tranquil, a great deal remains to be done to improve things. Most of our recommendations are for specific action which we believe needs to be taken. In our view, there is a need for better facts and statistics, to monitor arrest rates, make police domestic violence units a more central part of police work, for the Crown Prosecution Service to monitor police performance in that area and for the courts and prosecutors to adopt more victim-friendly procedures and practices.

We believe that victims should be further helped by making more child contact and victim access centres available through the establishment of a central co-ordinated policy for the provision of refuges throughout the country. Furthermore, we believe that such provision, far from increasing costs, could well be the single greatest cost-saving measure that could be taken.

We make recommendations for the perpetrators of domestic violence. Taking such attacks more seriously and punishing the perpetrators through the courts will help to increase deterrence. We recommend programmes in prison that encourage men to recognise their violent behaviour towards women and then try to change it. We recommend a variety of schemes in the community that are designed also to make perpetrators confront the iniquity of their behaviour and stop it. We address, too, the particular problems that the black and ethnic minority communities can face and the need for sensitivity in dealings between them and the criminal justice agencies.

We highlight the role of Government in addressing domestic violence. We welcome the establishment of a ministerial group on domestic violence and recommend that priority is given to tackling the problem by all Departments. We believe that the Treasury in particular should participate in the consideration of domestic violence issues, and that encouragement should be given by the Government to local inter-agency co-operation.

One of the most important aspects of our Select Committee system is that, when a Committee has reported, the Government must make a response. Such reports focus Government attention on the subject of the inquiry, as the Home Office and the Lord Chancellor's Department have clearly and carefully done with our report.

The Government's report has been measured, detailed and positive, and we would like to place on record our appreciation of the attention that has been given by the Home Office and the Lord Chancellor's Department. In the spirit of the courts charter, they have taken on board many of our recommendations, particularly in respect of proposals for the police, Crown Prosecution Service, court procedure and the support and protection of witnesses and victims, which justifies our raising the matter substantially under the estimates programme.

During the inquiry, a number of issues of particular interest and importance emerged, but as so many colleagues wish to speak I shall confine myself to mentioning just three of them briefly.

So much of the problem of violence in the home arose quite simply out of inadequate housing provision. Some issues were outside the remit of our Select Committee, which scrutinises only the work of the Home Office, the Lord Chancellor's Department and their agencies. However, that did not stop us—particularly after having seen something of the work of Chiswick Family Rescue, now renamed Refuge—making recommendations about the need for refuges, for more sympathetic housing allocation for victims and for welcoming inter-departmental co-ordination by the Government which, of course, involves the Department of the Environment.

Another matter that emerged was the importance not only of criminal law but of civil law. We found that to be in a rather confused state and, as such, not so helpful as it

[Sir Ivan Lawrence]

might be in protecting the interests of victims of domestic violence. As long ago as 1984, Lord Scarman, giving judgment in the case of Richards *v.* Richards and speaking of the proliferation of powers and remedies for dealing with violent cohabitees, said:

"The sooner the range, scope and effect of these powers are rationalised into a coherent body of statute law, the better." Since then, the frustration of the legal profession in dealing with such cases has grown.

We have therefore welcomed the Law Commission's initiative and we urge the Government to introduce legislation along the lines of the Law Commission's draft Bill which would deal more sensibly with the plethora of exclusion orders, non-molestation orders, occupation orders, ousters, property rights, attachment of powers of arrest and who should be entitled to exercise those powers.

We believe that those matters are too urgent to gather dust on library shelves like so many other Law Commission reports, and we are saddened to hear the Government's response that the timing of legislation would depend, in that old phrase, on the availability of parliamentary time.

We dissented with the Law Commission on only one proposal—the proposal to give the police third party rights in civil domestic violence actions. As a Committee, we believed that the police should concentrate on normal policing, in respect of which they are already over-stretched. For the rest, we believe that the Bill should be included in next Session's programme because it is essential that a more coherent structure be introduced into the civil law in this area—and without delay, if much unnecessary suffering is to be avoided.

The third area that I want to deal with, and which during our inquiries seemed to stir public and media interest following controversial cases in which husbands and wives had killed their spouses or cohabitees after long periods of domestic violence, relates to the law of homicide, which we dealt with in paragraphs 85 to 99.

It is a defence to a murder charge—reducing the killing to manslaughter—if the killer was provoked to retaliate. At present the law states that retaliation must take place in the heat of the moment and must be in response to provocation that would have led a reasonable man to lose his self-control and to retaliate as the killer did. Cumulative provocation does not justify the defence, although the triggering act of provocation can be relatively minor.

The women's groups who gave evidence to us, in particular, told us that provocation had been used more successfully by men who killed their partners than by women and that a nagging wife might be enough justification in some cases. The crux of the dissatisfaction was that the provocation had to be sudden, when women's resentments were often cumulative. There has been some softening of that approach in recent cases in the Court of Appeal.

While feeling sympathy towards defendants who have suffered prolonged abuse at the hands of the persons they had killed, the Committee did not want to see revenge killings committed while defendants were fully in control of their emotions and that being used to reduce murder to manslaughter.

However, we feel that there is a need for more clarity in the definition, and we endorsed the Law Commission's recommendation that one condition of the defence should be that the provocation should, in all the circumstances —including any of the defendant's personal characteristics that affect its gravity—be considered by the jury to be sufficient ground for the loss of self-control.

More generally, we propose that the Law Commission should produce a consultation document on the law of homicide and that the Government should bring forward proposals on the law in that area in the light of that consultation exercise. Unfortuantely, in their response, the Government do not believe that the Law Commission's proposals would result in more clarity and certainty. We do not share their view.

This is an estimateds day, and estimates debates are about the financing of improvements in our society. In our report on what has been a fascinating, important and urgent matter, we have proposed a variety of new measures which will undoubtedly cost money. If we were asked, we could not say precisely how much our recommendations would cost. It would be impossible to estimate such a figure. It should be obvious that it is also impossible to estimate the costs of inaction—costs which will inevitably be very substantial.

I am satisfied, and I believe that the Committee is satisfied, that the costs of domestic violence in financial and human terms far outweigh the costs of our recommendations. Spending money on reducing the scale of domestic violence at its earliest stages will undoubtedly save money which is now being spent on housing, health, education, social services and justice in an effort to remedy the misery caused by violence in the home.

As we conclude in our report in paragraph 137, we look now for a

"wide vision of what can be achieved and an ambitious programme for action."

If that does not happen, we have little doubt that it will be the victims of domestic violence who will suffer most—and no one in the House wants that to happen.

4.45 pm

Mrs. Barbara Roche (Hornsey and Wood Green): I want first to congratulate the hon. and learned Member for Burton (Sir I. Lawrence) on his speech and I would like to thank my colleagues on the Select Committee who spent so much time on this very important subject.

I am delighted that this was the first subject to be considered by the Home Affairs Select Committee in this Parliament. That demonstrates the importance of the subject, about which very many people, particularly women, feel very strongly, and the Select Committee considered the matter very seriously. I also pay tribute to the Clerks and to the witnesses.

We heard from our witnesses, and in written evidence, tragic and horrific tales of brutality against women and children and of huge public costs in terms of policing, courts and the national health service. However, we also heard of the greatly improved quality of policing of domestic violence.

As a London Member, I am aware of the excellence of my domestic violence unit which serves Hornsey and Wood Green. That improvement is not true simply in respect of my constituency: it is true throughout the Metropolitan police area. The Met deserve to be congratulated on the improvements, and particularly on the domestic violence units which have been established.

However, that is not just a unique feature of policing in London and policing. There are many other examples of good policing elsewhere in the country. One of the strong recommendations of our report is that those examples of good practice should be reproduced in the rest of the country.

The Government have given us a comprehensive response to our report. However, I believe that there are many areas where much more needs to be done and where there could have been a much better response. The first of those areas, with which I wish to deal, relates to refuge provision.

One of the strongest recommendations of the report is:

"the first priority for Government action on domestic violence should be the establishment of a central, co-ordinated policy for refuge provision throughout the country. We believe that this could well be the single greatest cost-saving measure that could be taken."

As the report points out, and as has already been said, the present number of refuge places is less than one third of the number, recommended as an initial target by the Select Committee on Violence in the Family which reported in 1975, of one family place per 10,000 of the population.

Witnesses from a variety of backgrounds—women's aid groups, police organisations, social worker representatives, local authority associations and others—emphasised the lack of provision and its consequences: crime cannot be prevented as easily, women may be deterred from following prosecutions through, and community-based sentences for offenders can cause danger to victims if refuges and refuge provision are not in place.

A crisis is taking place in refuges. I know, for example, that Refuge—an organisation that has done a tremendous amount of work—has a funding crisis. Many refuges affiliated to the Women's Aid Federation, face similar crises. The federation has made a large contribution to the debate and has done a great deal of valuable work. Haringey Women's Aid, an excellent organisation in my constituency, has to spend too much of its time raising funds every year.

Look at what has happened to child care workers in refuges. It is often forgotten that children are victims of domestic violence, but child care workers are almost an endangered species in refuges simply because there is not enough money to pay for them. We need a much greater and better Government response to that problem.

Let me quote the statement of the noble Baroness Cumberlege in another place on 29 April. When asked whether the Government had any plans to encourage the provision and funding of women's refuges, she replied only:

"the provision of funding for women's refuges is primarily a matter for local agencies."—[*Official Report, House of Lords*, 29 April 1993, c. 433.]

I strongly reject that view. What happens if a woman is the victim of domestic violence? Quite understandably, she does not want to go to the local refuge. Why? Because, when she walks down the street she might see the man who has subjected her to violence. The refuge might be round the corner from where the violence took place.

She might therefore go to a refuge in another borough, which will ask why it is funding refuge provision for women from elsewhere. All that emphasises the need for a national co-ordinated strategy, and that funding for refuges has to be put on a proper national footing.

What will be the Government's response to the interdepartmental working group on domestic violence? The Home Office should be the lead group, and it is good that there is an official working group on domestic violence, chaired by the Home Office. I gather from answers to parliamentary questions that I have recently tabled that that organisation has met twice. However, it is in the interests of open government that a variety of Government Departments should be involved.

In answer to my question about the frequency of meetings, the Minister of State said of the group:

"It will continue to meet as and when appropriate".—(*Official Report*, 9 July 1993; Vol. 228, c. *300*.)

When the Minister makes his contribution to the debate, will he agree that, in the interests of open government and in the spirit of working together to alleviate the problems of the victims of domestic violence, it will be useful to know more about the workings of the group? Exactly what is its remit, how and when is it intended to meet, and how will the results of its deliberations be disseminated? Perhaps publication of its recommendations could be considered.

We also considered court procedure. Welsh Women's Aid, in its written evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee, gave graphic accounts of women's experiences in court. In one case, a woman called

"Elisabeth had to sit in close proximity with the man who had abused her physically, sexually and emotionally. There was absolutely nowhere else for her to wait."

Another woman

"was waiting in the waiting area of the court when she was punched in the mouth by her violent ex-partner. He also threatened the barrister"

who represented her

"and was abusive to the judge. He was threatened with 'contempt' but this was not followed through".

Another victim said:

"I went to a magistrates court for a protection order. It was awful, I wanted to run away but I needed that order. The entrance hall was full of men mostly in handcuffs. I was afraid of them but there was nowhere else to go; they all stared at me."

With cases like that, it is a miracle that women ever press charges.

Of course, not all court experiences are as bad as that: there is some excellent practice. I hope that the House will forgive me for mentioning my constituency again, but Wood Green Crown court, which I visited on Friday, is one of the pioneers of witness services. I met the volunteers who staff the service on Friday. They are well trained, committed and courteous and, while being careful not to interfere with the details of the case, provide support in the form of a comfortable waiting area, explanation of court procedure and a tour of an empty court. They also give emotional support and practical help with childminding, liaison with employers and transport to court.

All the people I spoke to at the court, from the clerks to the Crown Prosecution Service, spoke highly of that witness service. It is important that more such services are introduced, because 38 out of 74 Crown courts do not have them. I look forward to hearing from the Minister what will happen in those courts.

The victims charter says that the latest design standards for new Crown court buildings provide for ample witness waiting rooms per courtroom, with separate doors leading directly to the witness box in the courtroom. What is happening to courts which are not new build and have not been specially designed? What provisions will be made there?

[Mrs. Barbara Roche]

Perhaps more importantly, what is happening in the magistrates courts? Magistrates courts are frequently in very old buildings and—as a member of the Bar who has practised in the courts, frequently on this type of case—I know at first hand that the accounts that I quoted are accurate, because women have to go through quite an ordeal in magistrates courts before their case starts. That is a high priority if we want more women to come to court and more proceedings to take place.

I also want to mention organisations that help women who are members of the black and ethnic minority communities. I pay tribute to the work of Asian Women's Aid in my constituency, and I recently had the pleasure of helping to launch Jewish Women's Aid. Perhaps the most famous organisation is Southall Black Sisters, which has done impressive work with black and ethnic minority women. It gave excellent evidence to our Committee and was able to describe the plight of women who come into the country to join husbands, or whose husbands have refugee status, and who have no rights of their own. Under our immigration rules they come in for an initial 12 months.

What happens to those women if they are the subject of domestic violence during that time? They cannot call on public funds. The rule is that they must have no recourse to public funds during that period, which often makes them totally dependent on their husband and his family. If they leave the family, the Home Office often wrongly assumes that the marriage was only one of convenience.

As Southall Black Sisters said in a submission to Amnesty International's hearing on human rights on 8 June this year:

"We come across many cases of women and children who have experienced violence and abuse and are unable to seek help for fear of being deported. This double bind can become life threatening. The choice is stark—on the one hand, women risk their lives, and those of their children, if they stay in violent situations, on the other hand, they risk being deported to their countries of origin, where they face open hostility, intense discrimination and risk to their health and lives".

I emphasise that only a few women are involved, but the cost to those women's lives is absolutely vital.

It is an important omission—again, I shall be interested to hear the Minister's comments—that the ministerial working group on domestic violence does not include the immigration and nationality department, given the serious problems for women whose immigration status is not secure. Will the Minister ensure that that section is included in future? It is a very important issue.

I would be extremely interested to know how many women are deported each year after leaving their violent husbands. The Government, in their response to the Select Committee, assert that the immigration and nationality department is alert to the difficulties faced by some women who have insecure immigration status and a violent partner, but the experience of groups campaigning for women contradicts that.

My own view is that no woman should be deported when there is even a possibility that she is suffering at the hands of a violent partner. Unless something is done about the problem, such women will continue to die or face a living death.

Hon. Members will wish to comment on provocation. It is a great pity that the Government could not agree with the Select Committee and the Law Commission. We believe that the law should be changed and clarified. We also await the Government's response to the Select Committee's report on legal aid—a vital matter. If women are to obtain injunctions and have the protection of civil remedies, they need a proper legal aid system.

In our report we say that we wish to return to the subject of domestic violence. I was extremely glad that the Government agree with the Select Committee on the importance of increasing public awareness of domestic violence. The Metropolitan police referred to Canada. Sandra Horley, a witness who appeared before the Committee, has made a great study of the system in Canada, where, because of publicity campaigns, there is heightened awareness of domestic violence.

Domestic violence is a crime—it is that message that we have to get across. We have to change the culture of our society from an early stage. A properly funded and directed campaign of public education would bring together the other recommendations in our report. I hope that, by the time the Select Committee returns to the subject, such a campaign will have been undertaken and will have lessened the incidence of such a shocking, tragic and brutal crime for so many women.

5.2 pm

Mr. John Greenway (Ryedale): I have had the privilege of serving on the Home Affairs Select Committee for six years. In terms of seniority in this House, a period of six years does not count for very much, but such has been the changing membership of the Select Committee that I am now one of its longest-serving members.

I am not sure whether six years is long enough to show the validity of my point, but no Committee produces more reports than ours—seven or eight each Session. I have never known the Select Committee to spend so much time carefully discussing the issues in our report and coming to our conclusions. That was not difficult, because often there was a party political dispute between the two sides of the Committee.

We very carefully considered all the evidence that we received, which was carefully prepared and painstakingly given. Some issues in our report need great consideration, and answers to them are not easily found. That is particularly true about whether there should be a change in the law on murder.

The Select Committee often sat until almost midnight, even though the House had adjourned some hours before, and long before 10 o'clock. It is fortunate that hon. Members have understanding families.

I welcome the opportunity for another debate on the Floor of the House. We have published our recommendations. The Government's swift, detailed response is also available to hon. Members. In this debate, we need merely to draw attention to some key issues.

We must consider how big a problem domestic violence is. It is very difficult to provide precise statistics, but, at the end of our inquiry, I was left with the clear impression that the incidence of domestic violence in Britain today is infinitely worse than the figures show.

Hon. Members who visited the domestic violence unit at Islington will recall that the staff in the little office there seemed to be doing a tremendous job for the local community. They appeared to have a record of a domestic violence incident in one out of every 30 families in the borough of Islington. We were told that that was by no

means extraordinary in that inner-London Metropolitan police district. That is a staggering figure, and it shows the huge social cost which domestic violence represents for society today.

As my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Burton (Sir I. Lawrence) pointed out, although our inquiry concentrated on assaults on women by men, it became increasingly clear that, in many families in which domestic violence is prevalent, it is the children who suffer greatly. Hon. Members see the effects of abuse of and violence to children in our constituencies, even in some of the more affluent parts of Britain. It is right and proper to pay tribute to the work not only of refuges that support some of the women who have been on the receiving end—the victims of domestic violence—but of some child support agencies.

The next issue is to what extent we should treat domestic violence differently from other forms of violence. Violence is violence, and as such is unacceptable. Murder is murder, and serious assault is serious assault. Whether violence occurs in the home or in the world at large should not affect the seriousness with which we treat it.

Another problem is that, unless we can identify violence in families throughout Britain, we cannot possibly hope to begin to deal with it. To that extent, we need different solutions and programmes to remedy what is going wrong. One is challenged by the thought that the circumstances of violence could be a mitigating factor or could make the violence much more serious and less acceptable.

As our inquiry unfolded, and as we visited refuges in London, it became apparent that some women have been the victims of violence but have retaliated against it—only to find themselves in court charged with assault and, in one tragic case, with murder.

What response should the police make to incidents of domestic violence? Should it be different from their response to violence in other circumstances? Over recent years, the police have made great strides in the way that they deal with the problem. As the House knows, during the 1960s I served for five years as a policeman in London's west end. The police culture then was that domestic disorder was not a matter for the police service. If I remember correctly—it was 28 years ago—some of our training pointed us in that direction.

Of course, that attitude is no longer acceptable. It should reassure hon. Members to know that Her Majesty's inspectorate of constabulary, and chief constables throughout the country, have made considerable progress in ensuring that the police give a more appropriate response to incidents of domestic violence.

What should the police do when they are called to such incidents? Should they arrest the husband who has beaten his wife? What happens when that man is released from the police station, where he may have been for some hours? Where does he go? Obviously, he goes home. Discussion of these matters throws up challenging issues. There is a need for the highest possible standard of training and the dissemination of best practice throughout the police service, so that an appropriate response is made in each case.

In the Metropolitan police area, priority has been given to the creation of domestic violence units. Parts of my constituency, especially the rural areas, are often 20 or 30 miles from the nearest police station, which is not necessarily manned 24 hours a day, as many of them close at night. Therefore, it would not be easy for the North Yorkshire police force to set up special units similar to those in Islington and other parts of London.

My constituency may be more sparsely populated than inner-city areas, but we should not ignore the fact that domestic violence occurs throughout the country. It does not occur just in inner cities, albeit that, because of the concentration of population, they have more incidents. We must remember that when we respond to the Government's White Paper on the structure of the police service, and when we decide what to do about the Sheehy report.

Police in rural areas have to be jacks of all trades, with the training, skill and professionalism to deal with all possible incidents. There is not enough manpower, and never could be, to staff the specialist units enjoyed by the Metropolitan police.

Best practice and training does not stop with the police service—it extends to the Crown Prosecution Service in the processing of cases. I am pleased that the Government's response to our report included the republishing of the CPS guidelines on how domestic violence cases should be treated. Just as the police have a difficult decision to make on whether or not to arrest, so the CPS has a difficult decision to make on whether or not to prosecute a husband or partner still living in the same house as the woman. Prosecution might make the position worse. Despite that, the Committee felt that prosecutions were not brought often enough.

One reason for that view is that, if someone is prosecuted and pleads guilty or is found guilty by magistrates or a jury, the court then has some influence over his punishment, and may direct that he has some treatment. If the treatment were voluntary, the offender could quickly give up, but with the compulsion of the court order as part of his sentence, there is a better chance that the treatment will continue and eventually produce a statisfactory result. Another benefit of bringing such a case before the courts is that agencies that can support the family can be brought into play more easily.

Recommendation No. 5 in the report says that resource limitation should not be an excuse for inaction. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Burton, the Chairman of our Committee, mentioned that. The truth is that refuge provision is inadequate. Those of us who visited the refuges and met some of the women living in them found vivid examples of the ludicrous problems caused by a lack of flexibility in housing provision.

In one refuge in Hammersmith, a woman with three or four children had been living in a single room for nine months. It would be an insult to the refuge to paint too grim a picture of her living conditions, but those of us who saw them felt that they were quite unsatisfactory. That woman was in receipt of housing benefit in two separate locations and there appeared to be a total inability to find an answer to her problems because of the inflexibility of the two local authorities involved. I am sure that there are many similar cases.

We therefore welcome the response from the Department of the Environment, contained in the Government's response, about improved guidelines for housing authorities. It is simply not good enough to say that a woman fleeing with her children from serious violence against her in the matrimonial home is making herself intentionally homeless, and is therefore not eligible to be housed by the local authority.

[Mr. John Greenway]

We must also look to the future. We need to change the guidelines and to encourage greater flexibility and better practice, but we also need to ensure that people do not abuse the system. In calling for a more flexible approach, I believe that we should go even further than what was recommended in our report.

Most of my constituency no longer has council houses, because they have all been successfully transferred to housing associations. That provides a good opportunity to increase housing provision and the level of repairs to the existing stock of property available for rent. I want housing associations to make an assessment of the problem in the areas they serve—particularly those associations that have taken over council homes—and to make the necessary provision.

As to whether the Government should reconsider aspects of the law on murder, I echo the disappointment expressed by my hon. and learned Friend and the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Mrs. Roche) at the Government's response. We did not reach our recommendation lightly, but responded to evidence that the present law is unsatisfactory. Given that our view was in line with the Law Commission's recommendation, I find it difficult to understand why the Government are so reluctant to re-examine that issue.

Since making our report—this relates to a different issue, but one related to the law on murder—there was the shocking case last week of the acquittal in a murder trial of Joseph Elliott, whose defence counsel successfully argued that Elliott had acted in self-defence. I am sure that the whole House feels that the law on self-defence, as well as on provocation, needs to be re-examined.

The Government may, after further examination, reach the negative conclusion that change would be difficult, but many of us feel that the present situation is unsatisfactory. We do not pretend that there is an easy solution, but that issue ought to be considered.

Having chided the Minister in that respect, I should add that I welcome much of the Government's response, which was largely positive, and highlighted the great steps that are already being taken. I hope that the interdepartmental working party will find practical solutions to many of the problems that our inquiries identified.

As our report itself concluded, unless improvements are made, it is not right hon. and hon. Members, or even the great majority of the British people who will suffer, but the victims of domestic violence.

5.22 pm

Ms Liz Lynne (Rochdale): I welcome this opportunity to debate domestic violence, especially as we have discussed family values extensively over the past few months. Not all families hold to the values that we expect. Half the women killed are killed by their husband, partner or ex-partner. One third of reported crimes against women are crimes of domestic violence, and one quarter of all assaults occur in domestic circumstances. Those statistics are not generally acknowledged. We tend to view family life through rose-tinted spectacles, assume that all families get on well and believe that children are best brought up in a family atmosphere—but they are not if that atmosphere includes violence.

Much of the improvement over the past few years is the result of the establishment of domestic violence units. Many more women now feel more able to report domestic violence—but not Asian women, many of whom still feel that there is a stigma attached to reporting domestic violence. Many of them are 20 years behind the rest of the community in that respect. I hope that will improve, and we must do all in our power to encourage Asian women to report domestic violence in the same way as other women. Many other hon. Members and I have dealt with such cases.

Before domestic violence units were established in London in 1986, there were only 860 reported cases of domestic violence. By 1991, that figure had increased to 8,000. We must congratulate those responsible for that success. They are not always brillant, but the situation is far better than in the past. Many women do not report domestic violence to the police but go to hospital casualty departments. I should like women social workers in particular to be immediately on hand there, to help women who turn up at the hospital with a black eye, broken ribs, a broken limb or any of the other injuries synonymous with domestic violence. A social worker could then do follow-on work with the family.

Although the situation has improved, a large problem remains. Recent evidence from Canada suggests that a woman has to be assaulted 30 times before reporting domestic violence, and I am sure that the experience in this country is very similar—that is extremely frightening. Many women fail to report violence against them because of lack of money. They fear that they will be unable to survive on their own. They see leaving their husband or partner as the inevitable result of reporting violence and are afraid of then being unable to manage financially. They fear reprisals, not only from their husband or partner but from his relatives.

Alcohol is a predominant factor in many incidents of domestic violence. Turning Point and Alcohol Concern say that between 50 and 60 per cent. of domestic violence involves alcohol and alcohol abuse. I urge the Government to reconsider removing the ring fencing of the drug and alcohol abuse budget. If a man who seeks help—having acknowledged that he is abusing his wife and that his children are being affected—cannot find a way out by entering a Turning Point hostel or getting help from another agency, the violence will continue.

Unemployment and poverty also lead to a lack of self-esteem. When someone lacks self-esteem, he wants to make someone else feel lower than he does. That person is invariably his partner or wife. The individual with low esteem will take it out on his partner, so that he feels big, adequate and masculine. We all know that that is not true, but such an attitude is usually brought on by low self-esteem.

Twenty-four hour helplines are also needed. The Department of Health is funding the Women's Aid Federation to the tune of £136,000, but it cannot operate a 24-hour helpline. I understand that that is the only money coming from central Government. Compare that £136,000 with the situation in Canada, where spending to combat domestic violence is $136 million.

Local authorities are responsible for refuges, of which there are very few. I agree with other hon. Members that a national strategy is needed to provide them throughout the country. At present, 27 per cent. of local authorities provide no refuges, 11 per cent. provide only one and only

5 per cent. provide more than three. That is not acceptable, given the continual increase in domestic violence. Proper national funding would ultimately prove cost effective, reducing the number of problems—especially those related to health—that currently force Government Departments and agencies to pick up the pieces.

Women's Aid and Chiswick Family Rescue—now known as Refuge—estimates that it needs £270,000 a year just to keep going. It is finding it difficult to cope. It is not raising the money that it needs, and it has already had to cut services. It will cut others next month, and it has said today that it fears that it may have to close completely in 1994 if the money is not forthcoming. It is scandalous that the first women's aid refuge to be set up should face such a funding crisis. We should be finding more money to set up more refuges, rather than allowing money to be taken away. In today's economic climate, people find it difficult to give to charities.

The problem is the same throughout the country. What happens to women when refuges close? They have nowhere to go but the streets. The current homelessness problem makes life very hard for them. The Rochdale safer cities project estimates that 25 per cent. of Rochdale's homelessness is the result of domestic violence. That problem, too, exists throughout the country.

Today's debate concerns abuse of partners, but children who witness such abuse are scarred for life. It has been recorded that more than half the children living in a violent home in West Yorkshire witnessed or experienced abuse. One third of those children tried to protect their mother. We do not do enough to counsel and help such children; services are cut time and again, and, without the necessary counselling, love and affection, the children may ultimately become abusers themselves. That is well documented. It is a great shame that we cannot do more.

As others have pointed out, it must be made easier for mothers to cross local authority boundaries. Even if an authority can rehouse a women, and accept that she did not make herself homeless intentionally, what women wants to be rehoused in the same street as a violent partner, or a few streets away from him? Women fear that, when they are out shopping, they will bump into the person who has abused them persistently for years, or that their children will be terrified going to school knowing that he may be around any corner.

Local authority homelessness sections should employ more women who are properly trained to pinpoint homelessness resulting from domestic violence. Many women still refuse to admit that they have been beaten up or otherwise abused, because they feel that it is a fault in some way. They feel that they have done something wrong, or that they are inadequate; they will not accept that it is the man concerned who is inadequate, sensing that they are themselves failures. Trained people would be able to spot that, and perhaps act on their perception more quickly than is possible now.

More emergency legal aid provision is also needed. I am very worried about the current proposals, which will prevent many women from acting against violent partners. This is at the heart of the problem. Many women who have left their husbands and want to take them to court accuse their former partners and then decide not to give evidence. The Crown Prosecution Service must prosecute far more often; it should not be up to the women concerned to initiate such action.

I know that the probation service is doing a very good job, but we must ensure that all aspects of domestic violence are taken seriously. Part of the problem is the fact that a range of Departments must deal with domestic violence. Recently, in another place, Earl Ferrers mentioned the forming of an interdepartmental group. Will the Minister tell us whether such a group has met? I hope that all Departments will recognise their responsibility in regard to women who have been subjected to domestic violence.

I welcome the Government's response to the Select Committee on Home Affairs, but I want them to go further. I hope that the Minister will take on board all that has been said by hon. Members on both sides of the House.

5.36 pm

Ms Jean Corston (Bristol, East): I congratulate the Select Committee on Home Affairs on choosing such an important topic for its first report to the House. It reflects the current concern about domestic violence, particularly that felt by women.

Domestic violence is not an isolated phenomenon, as hon. Members have made clear today. It is widespread, and it is no respecter of social class. Indeed, it has an ancient tradition. All hon. Members will be familiar with the phrase "rule of thumb"; how many know what it means? In the past, a man was permitted to beat his wife as long as he used a stick no thicker than his own thumb. Thus, violence was legitimised for a long time, and passed into folklore. Only 20 years ago, it was still seen as solely a matter of feminist concern: it was then that Erin Pizzey wrote her seminal book "Scream Quietly or the Neighbours Will Hear".

The hon. Member for Rochdale (Ms Lynne) and others have mentioned the effect of domestic violence on children and the cycle that builds up. One of the saddest things that I recall hearing in recent years was a friend's account of enduring 17 years of domestic violence. Finally, she left her husband with her two children. Only after talking to other people did she discover that such violence was not the norm. Her father had beaten her mother, and her husband had beaten her; she considered that to be normal married behaviour. Moreover, her case is not an isolated instance.

Our domestic violence legislation completely fails women who are brave enough to go to court. The law is a mess—I say that as someone who, before becoming a Member of Parliament, was a barrister specialising in domestic violence law. The law is spread among different Acts of Parliament, all attested to in the Select Committee's excellent report. That means that a woman has to deal with a maze of legislation, and it is difficult for any barrister or solicitor trying to advise her to find a remedy that offers protection to her and to her children.

The Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act 1976 and the Domestic Proceedings and Magistrates' Courts Act 1978—both introduced by the Labour Government, I am pleased to say—still stand as the basic corpus of domestic violence law. However, the Domestic Proceedings and Magistrates' Courts Act, which is obviously more widely available because it falls within the jurisdiction of magistrates, applies only to married people, not to people who are cohabiting. We know that in a large proportion of "marriage" relationships people have not gone through the marriage ceremony but are simply cohabiting. The Domestic Violence and Matrimonial

[Ms Jean Corston]

Proceedings Act is available to co-habitees only in the jurisdiction of the county court, which means that people often have to travel long distances to get to the court and apply for an injunction.

The Select Committee report and the Law Commission have attested to the way in which domestic violence legislation makes if difficult to obtain injunctions. One of the most iniquitous aspects is the fact that it is difficult for a woman to get an injunction if she has not applied to the court quickly. There is supposed to be an obvious element of urgency, yet I have known of many cases in which a woman has been traumatised by the violence, has needed to recover from her injuries, or has needed to escape the relationship and find somewhere else to live.

There has been a delay while she has adjusted to the injuries that she has received, and to having fled from home, and that is seen by the courts as a reason not to grant the injunction. They say that she could not possibly really need an injunction, because she did not go to court as soon as the incident happened. I suspect that most women who are beaten up repeatedly in violent relationships want to get away from the relationship, to seek medical attention and to get better, and to make sure that their children are safe. Going before a county court judge is not necessarily No. 1 on their list of things to do.

The law also fails women because of the way in which it treats as strangers people who have been but are no longer cohabiting. The only remedy available is a tort injunction—one of the old torts of assault, battery or trespass. The difficulty with those is that, if a woman goes to someone else's house to stay, perhaps as a lodger, or returns to her parents' home or that of another relative, she cannot obtain a trespass injunction because she is not the tenant or the owner-occupier; therefore, in law she cannot apply for such an injunction. She cannot apply for an injunction to stop the man coming to the place where she is living and assaulting her. There is no tort of harassment.

Moreover, no tort injunction carries the power of arrest, and that power is so important for women in such circumstances. If there is a power of arrest, at least if the man comes near her the police have an absolute obligation to arrest him and bring him before a court at the earliest opportunity.

My hon. Friend the Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Mrs. Roche) referred to domestic violence suffered by women from ethnic minorities involved in what we could describe as immigration cases. I endorse what my hon. Friend said. If a woman leaves a violent husband within 12 months of marriage, she risks deportation. I know that because a constituency case was recently brought to me, involving a woman who had obtained a judicial separation after eight months of marriage. The judge found that her husband's behaviour was such that it was unreasonable to expect her to continue to live with him, yet she has now received a letter from the immigration and nationality department telling her that she is on 28 days' notice to leave the country. That has happened through no fault of her own. That woman is a victim, and she is being treated shamefully by the application of our immigration rules.

We should also deal with the questions raised by the programme "The Bounty Hunter", which was on BBC2 some time ago, and which revealed how men in the Asian community make a nice living out of hunting like animals women who flee from domestic violence and violent relationships. The subterfuges that the bounty hunters use to track down women and drag them back home are alarming, and I hope that the Government will deal with the matter. I hope that the Minister will say something about it when he responds to the debate.

Reference has already been made to the attitude of the police. I welcome the change in their attitude, and have spoken to police officers in Bristol who have told me that they no longer treat such incidents as merely domestic matters, as they so often used to do in the past. In 1977, I took a friend who had been severely beaten up by her partner to the police station, and I remember being appalled by the pressure that was put on her not to bring proceedings. The police kept saying, "You'll have to go to court, and in the meantime you've got to live with him, so wouldn't it be better if you went home and patched things up?"

It is good that there have been some changes in attitudes, but it is important to recognise that both the police and the legal profession tend to give such work to young inexperienced people. In the legal profession it is seen as the "rough trade", and police officers tell me that such work is often given to people with little experience. As a barrister, I grew sick and tired of hearing other lawyers say, "I went to represent this woman and she said she was going to go back home. What a stupid woman!"

That attitude totally fails to recognise the position of most women who suffer domestic violence, which, as other hon. Members have said, often involves homelessness, and the way in which the rules on intentional homelessness operate. If one asks women victims of domestic violence what they want, they usually say, "I want things at home to go on as they are, except that I don't want him to beat me up any more." It would be a good thing if the police and the legal profession would adopt those changes in attitude.

With regard to the criminal law, we need different definitions of provocation and self-defence as defences to charges of murder and manslaughter, and we should also examine the way in which the rules of evidence operate against women. The law on self-defence is based on the notion of a punch-up in a pub, and the definition of provocation is based on the notion of a threat to a man's potency or virility. The way in which those definitions operate means that any victim of domestic violence who has not responded immediately is without the law. A well-founded fear of domestic violence should be a defence against such charges. We should also change rules such as the corroboration warning in the law on rape. That is an outrage to all women, and the House ought not to allow it to continue.

I welcome the Government's response to the part of the Select Committee report that deals with refuges. In 1988, I visited a refuge in a small town in central Sweden. It was beautifully appointed and well furnished, yet the people there apologised to me because they felt that it was not quite as smart as it might have been. Any woman who had seen a refuge in this country would have been astonished at how well appointed the Swedish refuge was. There was also immediate internal alarm contact with the local police.

National funding for a proper network of refuges is vital so that women can seek refuge quickly and safely for

themselves and their children, and there must be mechanisms for ensuring that those refuges become staging posts to enable women to escape from violent relationships and to rebuild their lives.

The law of this country cannot possibly be respected or properly applied when such a large section of the population feels that the remedies that ought to be there do not exist. The resources that ought to be in place are not there. It is important for the House to make it clear to men that such behaviour is not acceptable, it is not their right, we condemn it and it ought to stop.

5.49 pm

Sir Dudley Smith (Warwick and Leamington): I had not intended to speak, but I was so interested in the various speeches that have been made that I wanted to refer briefly to one point.

I very much welcome the speeches of my hon. Friend the Member for Ryedale (Mr. Greenway) and the hon. Member for Rochdale (Ms Lynne), with most of which I agree. I would part company with the hon. Member for Bristol East (Ms Corston), in that it is not my experience that the police are giving enough attention to what we broadly call domestic violence.

My worry as a constituency Member of Parliament, which is probably replicated throughout the House, is that, because of the declining moral fabric of Britain over the past 25 years, many more people live together, often on a short-term basis. There are many cases where a woman, probably unwisely, has taken a man in or formed a liaison with him, and then discovered to her cost that he is a violent type because of drink, or is naturally violent. She then has the utmost difficulty in getting rid of him.

A number of cases have been brought to my attention in which women have been badly beaten up on a regular basis after barring their attacker from the house. The offences are committed with a great deal of guile. Harassment is the order of the day; it is not just banging on the door and coming in: there are all kinds of sneaky ways of getting into the house and attacking the woman on her way home from work or going out. One woman said to me, "It is all very well being battered around occasionally, but do I really have to be killed, seriously injured or hospitalised before something is done about it?"

We all know that the police are under great pressure because of rising crime statistics, and domestic cases have always taken a fairly low priority. When couples are not married and the man is on a determined course repeatedly to attack and batter the woman, action ought to be taken.

I agree with the hon. Member for Rochdale that women should not have to take this. Society ought to make an example of men who carry on in that way. The sooner we do it the better it will be, and the sooner the statistics will improve. It is all too easy for the wrong kind of man to be able to get away with it.

5.52 pm

Mr. Malcolm Chisholm (Edinburgh, Leith): Everyone must agree that we are debating a serious and urgent issue when we consider that one in five murder victims are women killed by their partners or ex-partners, and one in three of all reported crimes against women result from domestic violence. We should also remember the high level of unreported domestic violence which has blighted our society for hundreds of years, as my hon. Friend the Member for Bristol, East (Ms Corston) has reminded us.

I join other hon. Members in welcoming the Select Committee's decision to investigate these matters. I also welcome the recommendations in the Select Committee report. However, I have one or two minor reservations. Why is there no recommendation on legal aid, although there are laudable words about its inadequacy? Why is there no recommendation about the training of the judiciary, which is equally important? I was also rather disappointed that there was no mention of the prosecution service having to lay down some guidelines. It is sometimes rather a mystery why the prosecution service proceeds or does not proceed with prosecutions.

The Government's response contains much that is to be welcomed, but I have some serious reservations. First, I join other hon. Members in regretting their decision not to have even consultation on the law of homicide.

We all know of several well publicised instances of women unjustly condemned on a charge of murder. The attention drawn to the subject by the soap opera "Brookside" will bring it into the public eye even more in the months ahead. I do not know how many hon. Members watch the series, but the plot deals with the reasons why women may kill their partners or ex-partners.

I wonder why the Select Committee ruled out a defence of self-preservation, as that would be another way of approaching the problem. Another reservation of mine concerns funding, which I shall refer to later. I am also concerned about the note of delay which creeps into the Government's response to the recommendation of a public education and awareness campaign. Perhaps they are a little reluctant to go down that path.

I want to say something about public education and awareness campaigns. In Edinburgh, part of which I represent, over the past few months there has been a high-profile and highly successful public education and awareness campaign called the zero tolerance campaign. I know that other local authorities are examining this initiative, and I hope that more local authorities and central Government will also look at it.

It is based fundamentally on challenging male behaviour. Those who have visited Edinburgh over the past few months will have seen a large number of posters with messages directed at men. For example, the fundamental message of the campaign is "Zero tolerance of violence against women". Another notable message is "Male abuse of power is a crime". There are many other messages that are challenging certain male assumptions.

Edinburgh district council's women's committee, which initiated the campaign, took the view at the end of the day that the root of the problem was the unequal power relations between men and women in society. There is a continuum from male attitudes of superiority to the slapping of women, which has been supported publicly by Sean Connery and many others. Just a few days ago, I saw a popular comedy programme just casually accepting that view. That level of violence is tolerated by thousands of people when it should not be, and the continuum proceeds to more drastic and serious violence.

The zero tolerance campaign aims to challenge those male attitudes and to link domestic violence with other male abuses of power. It has highlighted the crimes of rape and sexual abuse.

[Mr. Malcolm Chisholm]

The campaign has also enlisted the support of the local newspaper, *The Edinburgh Evening News*, which has given it a great deal of coverage. That has helped to give the campaign a high profile, and I pay tribute to the newspaper, and to Jean West, the reporter who covered it so brilliantly.

I also suggest to the Government that, as all that work has been done in Edinburgh, and as they are supposed to be considering a public awareness campaign, perhaps they should consider extending it to the whole of Scotland. I am aware that the report refers only to England and Wales and that some of the detailed recommendations would have to be different for Scotland, but the issues are fundamentally the same. Perhaps the Government would like to consider extending the zero tolerance campaign as a pilot scheme throughout Scotland. Of course, I should like it to be extended throughout the United Kingdom.

There is a campaign by the Scottish Office, which is all right as far as it goes, but it targets women, telling them to behave in this way and take care in that way. It is okay as far as it goes. However, the Scottish Office campaign makes no attempt to target male behaviour, although that is the fundamental requirement of a public education and awareness campaign. I hope that that will be taken on board by the Scottish Office in Scotland and the Home Office in England and Wales.

Leaving aside the fundamental aspect of prevention and turning to the terrible realities that go on around us daily, I endorse what the Committee said about the importance of treating domestic violence as a crime and prosecuting people who perpetrate it. I am sure that we all agree that that has not been done enough in the past and, although it is improving, there is still plenty of room for improvement. I hope that the police and the prosecution service will take that on board.

As well as prosecution, women must be protected. Civil law is important in terms of the protection of women. Many good suggestions in the report will apply to England and Wales and in a slightly different way to Scotland. Many civil law remedies are available to a large number of women only if they have access to legal aid. Therefore, the section of the report that criticised the Government's legal aid cuts is important.

As I said, it is unfortunate that there was not a specific recommendation relating to legal aid. Nevertheless, there is the message that many women are not able to pursue civil remedies because of the cuts in legal aid and the reduction of the income level at which legal aid becomes applicable. Certainly, the Government will have to address that. I hope that they will get the message in the Select Committee report on that subject.

Another important aspect of protection relates to refuges. Clearly, there is a serious problem and, unless the Government are prepared to put money into refuges, it will continue. I am worried because I remember a Select Committee report in 1975 which said that there should be one family refuge place for every 10,000 people in the population, yet less than a third of that number exist at present. With this report, I hope that we will not have a similar gap between what is asked for and what is delivered. Aberdeen is the only city in Scotland with the level of refuges that was recommended by the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities.

The whole thrust of the Government's response is that all of the funding issues are for local authorities. At the end of the day, local authorities are largely funded by the Government, so there must be a role for central Government finance. If the Government are putting all of this emphasis on local authorities, why cannot we have ring-fenced money specifically for refuges? Unless we have refuges, many of the other recommendations in the report will fall down.

My hon. Friend the Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Mrs. Roche) referred to the sort of things that are happening because there is not enough money. We heard that help lines are being shut down and there are no child care services. Perhaps some hon. Members saw the programme "First Sex" a couple of weeks ago, which showed that the organisation Refuge was at risk of being shut down because there was not enough money. Clearly, there is a crisis with regard to refuges. As the Select Committee emphasises, that is one of the central recommendations—if not the central one—in the report.

Time is running out, so I shall not talk about the other issues that I wanted to talk about. My hon. Friend the Member for Leyton (Mr. Cohen) may talk about the Child Support Act, which impacts on this issue. I shall say a word about the social fund, which has not been mentioned. Domestic violence victims were removed from the highest category of that fund and that is another issue. Clearly, there are many issues. The Government said that they will accept some of them. I hope that they will accept more of them, and act with urgency on the ones that they seriously support.

6.3 pm

Mr. Mike O'Brien (Warwickshire, North): The Select Committee on Home Affairs, of which I am a member, published a strong report containing 42 positive recommendations. The Government's response was acceptable in a number of areas. However, in other areas, it seemed to have something of the cold antiseptic voice of the quiet man in the warm office trying to make the right sympathetic noises without committing the needed resources. The Government's sympathy was there.

Undoubtedly, Ministers are genuinely horrified by domestic violence and wish to reduce it. However, we need more than just sympathy—we need political will and, as the report calls for, political momentum to deal with the problems. Words of sympathy come cheap; action requires resources. The Government must be prepared to commit resources.

During the inquiry, we saw the extent of the problem. The hon. Member for Ryedale (Mr. Greenway) referred to an important visit that we made to the Islington police station. There we saw a card-index system that showed that one in 30 households in that area reported a domestic violence incident to the police. If we accept what the hon. Member for Rochdale (Ms Lynne) said—that only a small proportion of domestic violence incidents are reported—the incidence of domestic violence could well be much higher. It may even be as high as one in 10 households. Almost certainly, domestic violence incidents take place in most communities and on most streets in Britain.

The size of the problem does not seem to be recognised by the Government, local authorities and some of the other agencies that deal with the issue. I exempt from that criticism the police who, because of the increasing need to

deal with the problem, have demonstrated a willingness to examine it seriously. They are prepared to tackle the problem and amend their ways.

The Government have not been prepared to take the necessary initiatives. My hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh, Leith (Mr. Chisholm) referred to one important initiative—the need to ensure that people are aware of the size of the problem. More awareness is needed to encourage preventive work and protective work. We must encourage people to recognise the need to spend money on an issue. We must ensure that attitudes in society are sufficiently censorious of domestic violence so that people report it to the police when they hear about it in other households. If people mention domestic violence in the pub or wherever, others must ensure that they are censorious of such behaviour and create a widespread view that it is unacceptable.

We must reduce the tolerance to domestic violence in some communities and raise awareness of the penalties for those who commit acts of domestic violence and the help that is available to victims of it. That is why, in recommendation 12, the Committee called for a campaign designed to raise the awareness, especially of the perpetrators and potential perpetrators as well as victims, of the criminality of domestic violence, the possibilities of redress and the seriousness with which the authorities view the matter.

The Government's response to the Committee is unclear. They appear to recognise the importance of the issue but are unwilling to fund and back the necessary public campaign. They have referred to the need for sensitivity, and we all accept that. However, the need for sensitivity should not prevent them from taking the action necessary to show the importance of the issue and ensure that people are fully aware of it.

The Metropolitan police gave this evidence to the Committee:

"the examples of good practice in Canada, North America and Australia, where there is far more public awareness of domestic violence and policy due to an overall state-wide publicity programme. The programme includes Central Government and local Government publicised policy. There are television advertisements, roadside advertisements—a heightened public awareness through leaflets and statutory agencies".

The result of such a campaign can be social condemnation of domestic violence and a reduction of it. Therefore, it is important for the Government to commit resources to such a campaign.

It is also essential for the Government to commit resources to refuges. An all-party committee was able to reach a consensus on the importance of and the need for a national policy on refuges. The Government were vague and did not seem to appreciate the need for that sort of national policy. They were prepared to leave it to local authorities. The Government must recognise the importance of the provision of refuges. I hope that the Minister will respond more positively than he did in his written response to the Select Committee.

We need to ensure that there are more resources for legal aid, as the hon. Member for Rochdale rightly said. If victims of domestic violence, primarily women, face the withdrawal of access to legal aid, they face the withdrawal of access to remedies and the protection that they need. It is no good pretending that somehow everyone either has access to legal aid or can fund a court action to seek a remedy. That is simply not the case. A restriction on legal aid, such as we have seen, is a restriction on access to the courts and justice. The Government must respond much more positively to that.

I call on the Government to reconsider their view on provocation. I endorse the views of the hon. Member for Ryedale. He stated eloquently that our Select Committee looked with carer at the issues of law on this, and that, although some of us were not convinced at the start, we were all certainly convinced by the end that the Government needed to look into the defence of provocation. The law is hung up on the issue of the time in which an incident occurs. Time is not the issue. The issue is whether the killing was a direct result of the perpetration of violence and the loss of self-control. The Government failed to address that in their response.

Southall Black Sisters produced poignant, forceful evidence about the problems of immigrants who come to marry, particularly women from the Indian sub-continent. Sometimes they face domestic violence within a year of arriving in Britain. Immigration laws fail to deal with that effectively. Simply to say that we shall treat each case on its merits is not good enough. The extent of the issue must be considered, yet the Government, in their response, do not seem to be prepared to do so.

The aim of the report is to give political momentum to tackling domestic violence. We need to increase awareness of the issue. Resources need to be committed. The Government, local authorities and agencies must give the issue appropriate priority. I hope that the Minister will do more today than simply make the right sympathetic noises. We want an expression of political will, an expression of willingness to find political momentum and an expression of willingness to provide the necessary resources. Will he give it?

6.12 pm

Mr. Harry Cohen (Leyton): I, too, welcome the Select Committee report. The Government should give priority to implementing its recommendations and finding the necessary resources. Mary Tuck, the former head of a working party set up by the Home Office, said:

"Dealing with domestic violence is the single most preventive strategy we could put into practice against violent crime. Domestic violence is a central problem for society."

Therefore, the Home Office has concluded that in its own report.

Many statistics have been cited today and I shall refer to some of them. Islington council police unit commissioned a survey of domestic violence in north London, which reported at the end of March. Of those surveyed, 37 per cent. suffered from mental cruelty, for example being ridiculed, being deprived of money, clothes and sleep or being prevented from going out; 27 per cent. suffered from threats of violence or force; 32 per cent. suffered from actual violence, such, as being grabbed, punched or shaken; 26 per cent. suffered from a black eye; and 23 per cent. had been raped—made to have sex without consent. One of the most worrying aspects of the report is that only 37 per cent. of the men interviewed said that they would never respond violently to a partner. That is an appalling statistic. That attitude needs to be remedied until the figure is 100 per cent.

This Session I have introduced two Bills. One was on the defence of provocation and the other sought to change the law on rape. The Government deferred the matter of rape in marriage to the Law Commission, which

[Mr. Harry Cohen]

recommended that statute law should be changed—yet the Government have not acted on that. It is a scandal to leave it to common law, because what can be changed by judges can be changed back by judges. It should be on the statute that rape in marriage is a criminal office. I intended to read a letter I received about those Bills, but I have no time. In fact, I had lots of mail. Women describe horrific experiences, such as being used as a punchbag. Day after day, women and their children are at risk and could face terrible consequences.

Society's attitude to domestic violence is split. We think that all decent people, or at least the overwhelming majority, oppose domestic violence. The truth is that many think it permissible and part of machoism. Some men joke about it, while others deny its existence. That trend is getting worse as economic and other circumstances worsen. The hon. Member for Rochdale (Ms Lynne) rightly pointed out how people with low self-esteem sometimes take out their feelings of frustration on their partners. The situation is worsening. The Government must initiate a public awareness campaign and take a stand in favour of zero tolerance of such behaviour.

I support what has been said about Southall Black Sisters. I know of many cases where women in a violent marriage depend on their husband for their status here and without him could be thrown out of the country. The Minister should regard domestic violence as an exceptional circumstance and allow such women to remain here as of right.

Hon. Members have referred to refuges. We should have a proper refuge network throughout the country, centrally co-ordinated and funded by the Government. The London Housing Unit in its research on England and Wales showed a considerable shortfall. The Government should deal urgently with that matter, especially with refuges that face considerable financial difficulties.

The Government's response to my Bill on the defence of provocation has been extremely disappointing. The current definition of provocation is inadequate and far too narrow. The Government do not recognise domestic violence as a mitigating circumstance. As a result, 30 or 40 women are probably in prison unjustly. I am campaigning on behalf of Sara Thornton. Those cases should be reviewed, and in my view the women should be released. Many such women do not get a fair trial. Often, at the time of the death they are suffering from dreadful trauma and guilt, so they cannot put up a proper defence. The law is inadequate in many respects. Our mandatory life sentence for murder is wholly inappropriate in such cases.

Concern has been expressed about revenge killings. We are talking about desperate women. It can be proved that they are desperate and have suffered cumulative violence. My Bill intended to make such a plea available to them. Most people, in the House and the country, argue that it should be on the statutue book. Ultimately it is for the authorities—the Crown Prosecution Service—and juries to decide whether a case is a revenge killing or whether there are mitigating circumstances, but the law should allow people to make that plea.

This is one of the most vital issues that the House should be tackling. I strongly support what has already been said—that the Government should act to find the necessary resources, should have a public awareness campaign, and should also adopt a policy of zero tolerance of domestic violence.

6.19 pm

Ms Joan Ruddock (Lewisham, Deptford): First, I congratulate the Select Committee on producing such a comprehensive report on this important issue. It is unusual to hear the concerns of women raised in the House, and I only regret that this time the subject is so painful. It is customary for those on the Opposition Front Bench to congratulate all hon. Friends, but I should like to congratulate all hon. Members who have spoken in the debate, which has been thoughtful and useful.

In the current climate of public concern about the level of crime and the increase in violent crime, the debate is opportune. Domestic violence is a crime—a violent crime and primarily a crime against women. I remind the House that almost half of all homicides of women are killings by a partner or ex-partner. A third of all reported crimes against women are domestic. Domestic violence is more common than street violence. It is a crime of epidemic proportions. In Greater London alone, reported attacks have almost doubled in the past two years; 9,200 attacks were reported last year and 30,000 women and children sought help and refuge during the same period. A further 100,000 contacted Women's Aid for support.

Domestic violence is not a new crime. The difference now is that women are increasingly less prepared to tolerate violence and more prepared to report it to the police and other agencies. One of the principal reasons why women finally come forward is for the sake of their children. Two out of every three women who go to refuges have young children, and evidence submitted by the Children's Legal Centre to the Select Committee showed that many children will have been assaulted and are already mentally and emotionally scarred from what they have witnessed, with untold results. Concern for their future is another reason for welcoming the seriousness with which domestic violence is beginning to be viewed.

In the past 18 months alone, a series of excellent reports have been published by Victim Support, the Law Commission and now the report that is the subject of this debate. What is remarkable about the reports is the consensus evident in the analysis and in the recommendations for action. Attention, however, is a long way from remedy and action. I welcome the fact that the Government have responded so quickly to the Home Affairs Select Committee report and I shall comment on it in detail later, but the Government's response is less than the wholehearted commitment to action that we and the Select Committee seek. I only hope that the inter-departmental working party on domestic violence, which I welcome, will take the Select Committee's recommendations further.

Domestic violence impacts on many areas of public policy and the law, and the Home Affairs Select Committee report was wide-ranging in its remit. I have time to comment on only a few of those areas, the first of which is public awareness.

Domestic violence cannot be viewed simply as another crime or a legal problem which can be eradicated by appropriate legal remedies. The reports that I have already mentioned all share the understanding that domestic violence is part of a wider social problem of women's

unequal position in society. Too often still, women are dependent on men socially and economically. Attempts by women to assert their independence and leave the marital home when necessary are constrained by that basic inequality.

At least 6 million women in Britain today earn poverty wages. The gap between men and women's earnings has barely narrowed in the past 15 years. Full-time working women still earn only about 70 per cent. of male earnings. Women also head up two thirds of the homeless families in Britain and, as the report published by the Commission on Social Justice this week showed, the number of homeless families rose by 46 per cent. during the 1980s, with 20 per cent. of people on incomes of less than £3,500 a year.

Equality for women in the workplace is essential if they are to control other aspects of their lives. I fear that, until we have a Labour Government and a Ministry for Women, British women will continue to be seriously disadvantaged in this society.

Social attitudes still reflect deep-seated views about the role of women and men in the family. Women are still accused in some circumstances of wanting to be abused or of deserving it. Conversely, they are blamed for not leaving after they have been beaten up. Their ambivalent feelings about leaving a man with whom they may have had a long relationship and may still be in love are viewed as a weakness. Domestic violence is thus often portrayed as a woman's rather than a man's problem, which is why it is crucial to raise public awareness.

I welcome the Select Committee's recommendation and hope that the Government will really—truly—adopt it. I strongly endorse everything said by my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh, Leith (Mr. Chisholm) about the zero tolerance campaign run in Edinburgh, which is a good example of an effective and sensitive campaign dealing with the issue of men's attitudes.

One of the basic tools for raising awareness must be adequate information, yet we still do not know the real extent of domestic violence. The Select Committee's first recommendation is that there must be nationally collected statistics on the issue, from which a proper strategy can be developed. I welcome the Government's acceptance that the present statistics are incomplete. I also welcome the additional studies being conducted by the Home Office.

Other hon. Members have mentioned women from minority ethnic communities. When violence towards a woman occurs in an ethnic minority community, the problems she faces are compounded. It may appear to her to be too daunting or even a betrayal to seek help outside her community. It may even be harder for her to become economically independent. Women from ethnic minority communities may also face, as we have heard today, racism and interrogation about their immigration status. We support the Select Committee's recommendation for further research into that problem.

As we have heard, under current immigration rules a spouse will normally be given permission to remain in the United Kingdom for a limited period of 12 months in which, in a sense, the marriage is tested by the Home Office. But women experiencing violence during that period and who leave home are faced with a possibility of deportation to their country of origin, where they may risk isolation, stigmatisation and have no economic independence. The case of Mamta Chopra, who was forced to flee and now faces deportation, shows that that 12-month rule is deeply discriminatory against women from ethnic minority communities in abusive relationships. I endorse the request by my hon. Friend the Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Mrs. Roche) that the immigration service be represented on the working group.

When a woman finally decides that she must leave and that she has no option, she is likely to be afraid, demoralised, undermined and desperate. Making that decision to leave leads her into a difficult legal and bureaucratic maze which she must negotiate and in which she needs support. One of the most powerful reasons for women having to stay is that they have nowhere to go, which is why the network of refuges in Britain is so tremendously important. As we have repeatedly heard, the provision is totally inadequate, and there is no excuse whatever for that. Eighteen years ago, the last Select Committee on the subject called for one refuge place per 10,000 population, but we still have less than one third of that number. The Minister must deal with that point today.

Many refuges are at crisis point because hard-pressed local authorities are cutting their grants. Local authorities cannot be expected to bear all the financial burden. It is clearly the responsibility of central Government to put resources into a network of women's refuges. I remind the Minister again of the Committee's strongly worded recommendation

"that the first priority for Government action on domestic violence should be the establishment of a central, co-ordinated policy for refuge provision throughout the country."

Interdepartmental discussions on refuge provision are not enough. Pushing the problem back to local authorities is totally unacceptable. The Government must take the lead in establishing a nationally funded network of refuges. The Government should recognise the extent of support for the proposals from all the relevant agencies, which recognise that, if women have no immediate place of shelter, all the agencies' good work will be wasted.

I also want to add my support to the recommendation that local authorities and housing associations give priority to victims of domestic violence for rehousing. In many areas, including mine, the new guidance is working, but there is a desperate shortage of affordable housing —a shortage which occurs directly because of Government policies. Once again, the Government are asking local authorities to do the impossible: to give priority to the most needy and at the same time to be fair to those thousands on the waiting lists. That cannot be done unless local authorities are allowed to produce the council housing that they know is needed in their areas to meet both ordinary need and the priority need of people fleeing domestic violence.

We know that there are many excellent initiatives involving inter-agency co-operation at local level. Such initiatives need to be encouraged. Local authorities and the police are now working in co-operation to co-ordinate the services and help available to women fleeing domestic violence. The Select Committee has made a number of recommendations relating to police practice, all of which are sensible and ought to be supported. The thrust of the recommendations is to ensure that police work on domestic violence is not marginalised in the police service or squeezed out by competing demands for funds. The Committee also recommends changes that will more clearly demonstrate to the public, particularly women, that the police are taking the issue seriously.

[Ms Joan Ruddock]

I am aware of many good practices which are being developed, although the police in their evidence agreed that progress was patchy nationwide. The domestic violence units established by the Metropolitan police in 62 of its 69 divisions have been successful, as they have been elsewhere, but it was clear from the evidence given to the Select Committee that a major reason for such units not being established in some areas was lack of resources.

There is now a widespread feeling that existing specialist and time-consuming work, such as that involved in domestic violence units, is threatened by the market philosophy of the Sheehy report. Perhaps the Minister—if he is listening—will tell the House how the work that is done in domestic violence units would be assessed by performance-related pay. While improvements in police practice still remain to be made, the most effective response comes from joint action. I commend, as others have, the practical example of joint action in Islington where the police, the probation service, the local authority and the safer cities programme have established a sound counselling and advice service.

I invite hon. Members to welcome a new initiative in my constituency, where the police have set up a specialist vulnerable persons unit incorporating the victims of domestic violence and racial attacks, and abused elderly victims all within one unit. The unit has, I believe, eight staff, and it will be an important experimental project which we should monitor carefully. Many of the initiatives have worked closely with the safer cities programme, but many of them are now jeopardised because the Government are cutting grants and closing some of the existing safer city projects. If the initiatives are worth while, surely they are worth supporting.

As the hon. and learned Member for Burton (Sir I. Lawrence) clearly outlined in his report, the Committee considered changes in both the criminal and civil law. I shall mention the issue of provocation, referred to by other hon. Members. It has been rightly argued that the present law is confused and disadvantageous to women. An integral part of the law of provocation is that there must be sudden and temporary loss of self-control. However, a sudden loss of self-control and an immediate response to violence by a woman is likely to bring greater violence upon herself.

The case for provocation to take account of the slow burn—the reaction of a woman over many months, even years—is a strong one. While we believe that justice has now been achieved in the case of Kiranjit Ahluwalia, I must put on record our continuing concern for the fate of Sara Thornton, Sally Hyams and Emma Humphrys. All those cases have been taken up by the Rights of Women, and the women involved still seek justice in this country.

A change in the law on the issue would be a complex task and likely to attract strong opinions from practitioners and the public. For that reason, I endorse the Committee's recommendation to make a request to the Law Commission to produce a consultative document on the law of homicide and to the Government to bring forward proposals. Once again, the Government have given a disappointing reply which has completely failed to respond to the arguments made by so many influential and distinguished people. I hope that the unanimity in the House today will make an impression on the Minister.

Tackling domestic violence needs not only fine words, but concrete actions; it also needs money. The Government must not think that they can place all the responsibility on the shoulders of the police, local authorities or voluntary organisations. I look forward very much to a positive programme of action from the interdepartmental working group, which I hope will soon be announced to the House.

Whatever the financial cost to the Government of implementing all the recommendations of the Select Committee, the cost of not implementing them would be very much greater in terms of individual misery, and suffering among women, families and society. There would be a tremendous cost to the nation in terms of our police and social services, and our children's future.

6.37 pm

The Minister of State, Home Office (Mr. David Maclean): I am grateful to the House for this opportunity —my first—to discuss the serious problem of domestic violence.

We have all benefited today from the depth of knowledge evident on both sides of the House, and particularly from the recent work of the Select Committee on Home Affairs, described by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Burton (Sir I. Lawrence), the Committee's Chairman. The members of the Committee are to be congratulated on their thoughtful investigation into the problems associated with domestic violence and the measures needed to tackle it.

The Government's response to the Committee was published on 29 June by my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary, my right hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General and my noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor. That response reaffirmed our commitment to ensuring that domestic violence is tackled vigorously, and is treated as the crime it is. We also agreed with the Committee on the need for action against domestic violence to go beyond the criminal justice system, to meet the special needs of women and children affected by violence in the home, and to work towards prevention in the long term.

I am also grateful to the House for the warm welcome that the Government's response has received. I know that some Opposition Members would like the response to have gone further than it did, but there has been a general welcome to it tonight. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Burton described our response as measured, detailed and positive. The Select Committee's response may be a unique one from such a Committee to a Government.

Significant efforts have been made in recent years to improve the response to domestic violence, putting the needs of the victim at the centre of that response. The police and the courts are treating incidents of domestic violence with increasing seriousness. As a consequence, the signs are that more such crimes are coming out into the open.

Last week, it was brought home to me how dramatic the change can be. I paid a visit to Scotland Yard and spoke to the inspector in charge of co-ordinating the Metropolitan police's response to domestic violence, in which it is doing an excellent job. She told me that, in 1985, 770 cases of domestic violence assaults were recorded by

the police. Last year, there were over 9,800 recorded cases, and a quarter of all recorded assaults in London last year were domestic.

We still do not have a complete picture of the true extent of domestic violence. New surveys are planned to help us to find out more, but figures like those held by Scotland Yard will leave no one in any doubt of the challenges that are facing the police, local agencies and others in dealing with domestic violence.

Our response to the Select Committee report set out the plans we have to take work forward across Government and consider what new initiatives may be needed. In many areas, such as the criminal justice response, civil provisions, the welfare of victims, encouraging local action and long-term prevention, we are actively pursuing improvements.

Recent initiatives have been directed chiefly towards ensuring that the police and courts treat violence within relationships as seriously as assaults by total strangers. Three years ago this month, the Government issued guidance to police throughout United Kingdom on the need for a quick and effective response, taking account of the overriding need to protect victims. Within a year of the guidance, all police forces in England and Wales had developed clear policies on domestic violence, and most had introduced specific improvements to their response.

The Government agree with the Select Committee on the need to ensure that new policies lead to real changes. That is why a study is assessing the impact of the guidance on police forces in England and Wales in handling cases of domestic violence. An initial survey provided an overall picture in all forces. Interviews are now being conducted in five selected force areas with victims, police officers and other agencies in contact with the police.

In response to the Committee's recommendation, Her Majesty's inspectorate of constabulary has decided that domestic violence is to be a core subject for next year's inspection programme. The inspectorate will also formulate advice for police forces to ensure that domestic violence units are not marginalised.

In addition, researchers who are monitoring the arrest of suspects and decisions that are taken by the police in relation to proceedings have been asked to classify incidents involving domestic violence separately from other types of violence. The findings from all these exercises will inform future action, and will help to develop further the police response to violence within the home.

One of the key elements of strategy for tackling domestic violence is that perpetrators are brought to justice. As with the police response, there needs to be a consistent approach, and to that end the Crown Prosecution Service has issued guidance to all chief prosecutors about how they and their staff should deal with such cases. The CPS has also published a statement of its prosecution policy, which explains the factors relevant to the review and prosecution of domestic violence cases.

We will continue to stress the importance of treating domestic violence as seriously as we would treat violence outside the home. We also need to bear in mind the special needs of the victims of the crimes. Those needs were brought home to me when I visited the domestic violence unit run by Wandsworth police, and heard from two victims who had suffered over a number of years.

The Government recognise how important it is to provide immediate support and places of safety for those who are escaping from domestic violence. The guidance issued to the police stressed that victims of assault should be put in touch with support services. Such services can play a vital role in providing women not only with practical help and advice but with the emotional support they need—assuring them that they are not alone and that the violence is not their fault. That point was made by some hon. Members. Some 375 local victim support services are benefiting this year from Government funding of £8·4 million. In addition, the four women's aid federations also receive grant aid from the Government.

As we made clear in the response to the Select Committee's report, we also recognise the valuable role that is played by refuges in providing emergency accommodation and more long-term support for victims of domestic violence. We paid close attention to the points made by the Committee about the level of refuge provision in this country and the effect that that could have on overall response to domestic violence.

However, in principle we maintain the view that effective local support services, including refuges, are best provided at local level. Such provision can be based on an assessment of local needs and take into account the wider local response. Moreover, in the long term we must continue to pursue policies in other areas that will help more women to stay in their homes and reduce the need for such an enormous and desperate upheaval.

Refuge provision is to be one of a number of matters that will be discussed by the interdepartmental group on domestic violence. I have listened carefully to the views expressed here this afternoon, and tomorrow I am to meet the Women's Aid Federation of England. I want to hear its ideas, and I will think carefully about what it has to say as we take this work forward.

The Government welcome the Committee's endorsement of a number of permanent and experimental schemes that are being funded to provide support for victims during the legal process. To assist those who are attending court, the Crown court witness scheme started on a pilot basis in 1990 has now been permanently established. There are now schemes in 36 Crown court centres, with more planned to provide practical advice and emotional support to witnesses in criminal cases.

The Home Office programme development unit was set up last year to fund innovative local projects in the field of crime and criminal justice. Two such programmes are concerned with increasing and improving the criminal justice response to domestic violence, backed up with an increased range of services to support women and meet their welfare needs.

I saw that the Committee visited one of the projects in Islington, where, since February, a skilled civilian team has been attached to the police to work with women victims. The team can undertake immediate crisis counselling, to provide information and to refer women to other agencies in the area with whom the team has established close links. The project aims to encourage the use of legal sanctions, a prompt response to referrals and greater awareness of domestic violence within the community.

In Leeds, a package of projects has been set up to help identify the problems that are experienced by victims of domestic violence in gaining access to support services and to experiment with different responses. A civil court and criminal justice forum has been established to encourage understanding of the victim's needs and to provide an advocacy service to support women who are going to

[Mr. David Maclean]

court. Specialised counsellors have also been attached to two local GP surgeries to provide specialised help and information.

Those two different experimental approaches are being evaluated closely. The findings will be disseminated widely to share the lessons that have been learned, and will inform future practical policy development.

Sir Dudley Smith: My hon. Friend has no responsibility for the judiciary, but will he tell me whether magistrates are being encompassed in the extra information which will be disseminated to give an end result of a better approach to the problem?

Mr. Maclean: I assure my hon. Friend that we want to ensure that all involved in criminal law, including magistrates, are fully informed of the resources and information available, particularly when it comes to sentencing offenders. The Government will make sure that magistrates are aware of the range of possibilities open to them.

The Select Commitee rightly identified the need for action against domestic violence which went beyond the criminal justice system. A wider response, involving not only Government but communities and local agencies, is essential. The Government have a role in encouraging local action and in disseminating good practice. More than 100 local schemes to help victims of domestic violence have been funded through the Home Office safer cities projects. In Derby, Hull, Islington and Tower Hamlets, safer cities money is funding domestic violence workers.

In Leicester, a major initiative has been set up to fit emergency alarms in the homes of women at risk from their partners. Similar schemes operate in Bradford and Islington. Multi-agency groups designed to improve local co-ordination have started in Coventry, Hull and Wandsworth. We what to build on the many excellent local initiatives which are being developed throughout the country.

Ms Corston: If that is the case, will the Minister explain why the Government have found it appropriate to cut safer cities funding?

Mr. Maclean: The hon. Lady will probably be slightly embarrassed when she discovers that we have expanded the safer cities programme. We expect to increase the number of cities covered from 20 to 40.

One of the tasks of the interdepartmental working group will be to consider how good practice can best be promoted. In particular, we shall consider ways of strengthening co-ordination at local level. Statutory and non-statutory organisations involved in tackling domestic violence have much to gain from exchanging ideas and practices and developing a shared understanding of how they can best respond collectively to domestic violence. Above all, the victims of domestic violence will benefit most from improved local co-ordination.

The way forward must also include steps to prevent domestic violence. One form of prevention which the Select Committee considered involved work with offenders to prevent future reoffending. The Home Office and the Scottish Office are jointly funding a research study to evaluate two innovative projects—the CHANGE project in Central region and the probation project in Lothian. Those projects aim to change the behaviour of men who abuse their partner.

We recognise the importance of raising awareness throughout society of domestic violence in schools, among professionals in services which may come into contact with domestic violence and among the public at large. The National Curriculum Council's guidance to schools on health education suggests that both sex education and family life education should be key components of the curriculum.

We agree with the Select Committee that there is a clear need for more public information on domestic violence. Such information should emphasise that domestic violence is against the law. It should encourage victims to seek help and advice, and it should explain where such assistance is to be found. The interdepartmental group will give thought to what more can be done and how it might be achieved.

Many hon. Members referred to the law on provocation in homicide. If the House will permit me, I should like to remind it of what we said in our response:

"As the Committee noted, the law has responded with flexibility to the particular circumstances of domestic violence victims, whilst maintaining the distinction between a less culpable (though still unlawful) reaction to provocation and murder. The Government does not consider that the Law Commission's proposal on provocation would improve the courts' ability to draw that distinction in individual cases and has no current plans to amend the law in this area. The Government takes the view that the law on provocation, particularly in the light of the Lord Chief Justice's remarks in *Ahluwalia*, maintains a proper balance between a reluctance on the one hand to exonerate pre-meditated revenge killing and a desire to leave a judgment on the facts of the individual case to the jury. The law does not, in the Government's view, require the reaction to provocation to be instantaneous. However, it is quite right that evidence of pre-meditation should undermine a defence of provocation. A delay between the provoking circumstance and the act of killing may also provide evidence to undermine such a defence, but that is for the jury to decide on the facts before them. The Government does not share the Committee's view that the law is uncertain or unclear."

Mrs. Roche: The Minister rightly quoted the Lord Chief Justice. Does he agree that the Lord Chief Justice's remarks on provocation are obiter dicta? Does he feel that a new definition of the law is therefore necessary?

Mr. Maclean: No, I do not agree. The Select Committee's point was that the law was inflexible and could not respond to modern circumstances. It is clear that the law can be flexible and can change, as we have seen in the development of cases which resulted in Ahluwalia.

Mr. Cohen: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Maclean: No. I must allow my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Burton a few minutes to respond.

In the short time available to me today, I hope that I have provided an idea of the range of work currently in hand, and of our plans for the future. I have shown that progress has been made in recent years. But the Government accept that more can and should be done.

Since the Select Committee finished its investigation, we have begun the process of developing our proposals for future action in a committed and co-ordinated way. Several hon. Members, including the hon. Members for Rochdale (Ms Lynne) and for Hornsey and Wood Green (Mrs. Roche), asked me whether the group had met. The

official working group on domestic violence has met twice. It has discussed areas in which work can be taken forward at national and local level.

I can inform the hon. Member for Edinburgh, Leith (Mr. Chisholm) that, thanks to the Scottish Office representatives in Edinburgh, the Edinburgh zero tolerance campaign was brought before the interdepartmental working group. The group has discussed and examined the campaign.

We believe that the interdepartmental group will make a significant contribution to co-ordinating our policies to tackle all facets of domestic violence. It is certainly not the end of the matter simply because the Select Committee has produced a report, the Government have responded to it, and we have had this debate. I assure the House that we shall continue to give this serious and widespread problem the priority that it deserves.

6.56 pm

Sir Ivan Lawrence: We have had an excellent debate, and I shall highlight some of the features that have made it so. First, there was cross-party agreement. There was a lot of light and little heat, which will have made it appallingly bad television. Secondly, there was agreement about the size of the problem and the matters which needed to be dealt with. Thirdly, the need for more refuges was highlighted. Such refuges need central funding, whether it is dispensed by local authorities or not.

Fourthly, there was a common welcome for the change in police culture. Domestic violence is now treated as a crime. The fact of arrest may provide a deterrent. Fifthly, there was agreement on the confusion of the law, which needs to be simplified. Out of that should also come better access to legal aid for afflicted women, and more victim-friendly court procedures.

Sixthly, the value of publicity was emphasised. We should bring it home to people that they are not alone if they go to complain about the treatment that they have received in their home. Seventhly, the problems of ethnic minority women were well covered in the debate.

Eighthly, disappointment was expressed that the changes which the Committee recommended on provocation were not welcomed by the Government. I hope that they will reconsider, because the feeling in the Committee was strongly that there should be some clarification. If the Law Commission has decided that the changes would be a good thing, a good thing they are likely to be. I do not suppose for a moment that the Lord Chief Justice would oppose the wishes of the Law Commission on that matter.

Ninthly, there was a broad welcome for the report. It is unusual for Select Committee reports to receive that response. It is also unusual to receive a reasonably enthusiastic response from the Government. The Government response was not unreasonable in all the circumstances. There may even have been some indication that there is a need for positive action and that the cost of meeting some of our requirements and our recommendations would be more than covered by the savings in the rest of system if there is inaction.

For all those reasons, it has been an excellent debate. It provides justification for the Select Committee system, it provides justification for having half a day to debate its provisions, and, hopefully, the beneficiaries of it all will be the victims of domestic violence.

It being Seven o'clock, MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *interrupted the proceedings, pursuant to paragraph (3) of Standing Order No. 52 (Consideration of estimates), and the Question necessary to dispose of the proceedings was deferred, pursuant to paragraph (4) of Standing Order No. 52 (Consideration of estimates).*

Croydon Tramlink Bill *[Lords]*

Order for Second Reading read.

7 pm

Mr. David Congdon (Croydon, North-East): I beg to move, That the Bill be now read a Second time.

This private Bill is jointly promoted by London Regional Transport and the London borough of Croydon, and I am pleased to introduce it. The purpose of the Bill is to seek powers to enable the construction and operation of a tram system to be known as tramlink, connecting the centre of Croydon to Wimbledon, Beckenham, Elmers End and New Addington.

London Regional Transport has a general duty to provide or secure the provision of public passenger transport services in Greater London. It must pay due regard to the current transport needs of Greater London, and to the efficiency, economy and safety of operation. Croydon council has numerous statutory duties, especially as a highway planning authority, and is also empowered to produce an economic strategy. The new unitary development plan for Croydon has identified the need to develop efficient and reliable public transport as an attractive alternative to the car, while, at the same time, promoting environmental policies as an important consideration in any new developments. The council considers tramlink——

Mr. Andrew F. Bennett (Denton and Reddish): To take up the hon. Gentleman's point about environmental policies, why have the promoters not been able to respond to the petition from the Open Spaces Society and the Ramblers Association? They suggest that, since much of the scheme will take up public open space, it would be logical for the promoters to find compensatory open space for the land.

Mr. Congdon: The scheme has been designed to minimise the impact on open space. I shall say a few more words about that later. However, there is already a large amount of valuable open space in Croydon and the promoters believe that the impact on open space would be limited; therefore, they were not able to meet the demands that have been outlined by the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennett). It is significant that the Association of Croydon Conservation Societies supports the Bill.

I am sure that hon. Members are aware that London is suffering from severe congestion in its public transportation system, both on roads and on the public transport network. The CBI has estimated that the cost of the congestion of London's transport system amounts to a staggering £10 billion per annum. Hon. Members will also be aware of the pollution effects of cars on the environment. Studies have been undertaken to propose long-term solutions to those problems in central and Greater London.

Following the successful promotion of the scheme to authorise the construction of the Docklands light railway, London Regional Transport and British Rail carried out a joint study into the contribution that light railways could make to the improvement of transport in London. A report published in 1986 identified a number of areas where light railways could be of value. Chief among those was a system based on Croydon, using a mixture of BR lines and new construction to link Croydon with its adjoining boroughs. Further work was carried out with the active co-operation of the local council, and in 1987 a system of three routes was identified as economically viable, physically possible and of great benefit to the economic life of the area.

In 1989, further reports were prepared for the Department of Transport on the transport problems of various parts of London. One of those, the south London assessment study, related to Croydon and its adjoining boroughs. The report identified existing traffic problems and traffic congestion as the most important issue. Those reports generated a lot of concern in south London, because their key proposal to alleviate the transport problem in London was major, massive road building. Politicians of all parties and local interest groups objected strongly to those proposals, and they were rightly dropped.

The reports also examined other proposals such as traffic management measures, junction improvements, road widening and new routes. Bus priority measures and the restructuring of bus and British Rail routes were also included. Croydon council has implemented many of those road and junction improvements to make better use of the existing road network, but it also concluded that a more ambitious approach to the problems of congestion was required, which, at the same time, would offer substantial environmental and economic benefits.

Mr. Piers Merchant (Beckenham): I follow my hon. Friend's logic about the need to ease congestion, and I share his feelings about problems with building more roads, but does he agree that it would be far better to use existing British Rail infrastructure to improve links in that part of London rather than put in new infrastructure? Does he accept that running trams down the centre of roads in Croydon will hardly ease traffic congestion?

Mr. Congdon: The Bill proposes using a lot of existing British Rail track. However, there are problems because British Rail track is quite inflexible and difficult to extend to other areas. One of the advantages of introducing a light rail system is the greater flexibility to extend it to other areas.

My hon. Friend is right to mention impact on roads where light rail has to run, but it is possible, with good design and traffic management measures, to minimise any impact to enable the light rail to run on existing roads.

Mr. Nick Hawkins (Blackpool, South): My hon. Friend will be aware that the first constituency in the country to use electric trams was my own of Blackpool. We were the one town, not only in this country but in western Europe, never to abandon trams. We are delighted that my hon. Friend and his colleagues in Croydon are proposing to bring back trams, because they are very successful. I know that his scheme is based on the one that is already operating in Manchester. I strongly support his comments about the ability of tram schemes to lessen congestion and to run along roads.

Mr. Congdon: I welcome my hon. Friend's comments. Like many hon. Members, I have experienced the joys of a Blackpool tram on a wet and windy night at certain party conferences in that illustrious resort. I have also visited Manchester. The small impact of Manchester's light rail system in terms of noise and visual intrusion is striking. At one stage during the drawing up of the proposals for the

light rail system, I had the pleasure of visiting Wimbledon. The contrast between the noise of British Rail trains on the track and light rail has to be heard to be believed.

Dr. Charles Goodson-Wickes (Wimbledon): I am delighted that my hon. Friend has trodden the path between Croydon and Wimbledon, a path that we hope will become a light rail in due course. I look forward to much interchange between our constituencies.

To take up the logic of my hon. Friend's point about using existing rail, as would be the case in my constituency, that is nonsense if one does not continue the logic so that the rail ends where the existing rail at present terminates at Wimbledon station. I understand that the proposals are for a terminus elsewhere, which would be nonsense for my constituency.

Mr. Congdon: I am grateful to my hon. Friend. There is no doubt that the promoters would have preferred an interchange into platform 10 at Wimbledon station. When the Bill was deposited, it was quite clear that no agreement could be reached with British Rail, which understandably took the view that it might want to extend other services for which it would use platform 10. That has caused my hon. Friend some concern, as it has some people in Merton. Now that the issue has been reviewed, although it was thought at one stage that the proposal would run into the buffers, British Rail considers that there is merit in looking at it again. A feasibility study by BR has stated that in principle it is prepared to allow tramlink to use platform 10.

I know that the promoters hope that discussions with BR will continue, to arrive at the solution that my hon. Friend the Member for Wimbledon (Dr. Goodson-Wickes)—and they—would like, as the scheme would greatly benefit from a full interchange at Wimbledon station. There is no doubt that the proposal in the Bill has always been viewed as a second best alternative. We would like the full interchange at Wimbledon along the lines that my hon. Friend suggests.

Earlier, I was discussing the studies carried out in Croydon. The council concluded that the tramlink scheme offered the prospect of a revitalised public transport system and a credible alternative to transport by car. It also concluded that the system could be reliable, quiet, efficient and accessible to all. It would improve the environment and the amenities of the locality. As a result of this conclusion, Croydon council resolved to develop tramlink in conjunction with LRT.

Before becoming a Member of this House I had the pleasure of serving as a councillor in Croydon for 16 years, the last six of them as deputy leader to Sir Peter Bowness. In that capacity, I was a member of the tramlink working party, set up to enable senior members from both sides of the council—including the leader, deputy leader, Councillor Mary Walker, who was leader of the Labour group, and others—to make progress with the proposal and to offer guidance to officers working on the complex issues involved.

I pay tribute to the genuinely bipartisan approach adopted by all in that exercise. I also pay tribute to the commitment of members and officers of the council. From this cross-party coalition there emerged a recognition of the significant benefits that the scheme would bring to the area. I hope that the same bipartisan approach will be shown in the House tonight.

The project is, and has been, an example of how good cross-party support for a scheme can bring great benefits to an area. It is also an excellent example of local government working well to the benefit of its people.

The scheme would connect central Croydon with Wimbledon, Beckenham, Elmers End and New Addington. The Wimbledon branch would extend from the terminus near or—I hope—at the BR station to central Croydon. The line will use the existing BR branch line and will replace the rail service between Wimbledon and West Croydon. It will provide for an interchange with other BR services at Wimbledon, Mitcham junction and West Croydon. The line will provide a more frequent and attractive service, with additional stops connecting residential areas with rail services into London.

The branch connecting central Croydon to Beckenham will share an existing alignment with British Rail services. A disused British Rail alignment will also be used, and new track will be constructed where necessary. This line will connect the highly developed commuter areas of Beckenham, Elmers End and Woodside with Croydon, as well as providing an interchange with British Rail services at Beckenham.

Mr. Merchant: Will my hon. Friend confirm that the interchange at Beckenham junction will not run into Beckenham junction station but, like the one at Wimbledon, will be of the type that will involve passengers wishing to change from tramlink to British Rail, or vice versa, coming out of one station, walking down the road and going into another? It is thus incorrect to describe it as an interchange.

Secondly, is my hon. Friend aware of the strong opposition to the scheme in my constituency? It also is bipartisan, embracing the Labour and Conservative parties in the area.

Mr. Congdon: I understand some of my hon. Friend's concerns about Beckenham, but I should have thought that the interchange was a reasonable way of enabling people to transfer from one service to another. I emphasise that the whole link, from the edge of the borough of Croydon into Beckenham junction, runs along existing British Rail track. We are not even talking about taking up track, as we would be in some parts of Croydon. The track is still on the ground, providing BR services.

Mr. Merchant: I apologise for pressing my hon. Friend on this, but I must correct him. He has just told the House that a section of the line will be newly built, running in my constituency along parts of South Norwood country park.

Mr. Congdon: I apologise if I have misled my hon. Friend. I was taking into account the fact that, under a proposal recently agreed by the Boundary Commission, the park will shortly become part of the London borough of Croydon. Anyhow, once the line leaves the country park, it runs entirely on British Rail's existing track. I am happy to clarify the matter.

The third route, the light rail branch to New Addington, starts off using a partly disused British Rail alignment, but thereafter most of the route into New Addington has to be built through open land. By that I mean that, in the main, it goes along the edge of open space, not across the middle of it. This new line will provide the first ever rail service to the New Addington

[Mr. Congdon]

estate. New Addington has a population of about 25,000 and is the largest residential area in London without a rail service.

The central section of tramlink comprises a loop connecting West and East Croydon BR stations to the Wimbledon, Beckenham and New Addington branches of tramlink. This section will be built in the street as a conventional tramway, incorporating a variety of road traffic schemes to integrate the new system with the transport network.

The promoters are anxious that tramlink should meet, as far as possible, the needs of all members of the community, with particular attention to the needs of the elderly and the disabled. Accordingly, they are committed to making the whole system accessible to people with disabilities. All aspects of the scheme, including the design of the stops and rolling stock, will be subject to the closest scrutiny, to maximise accessibility. An important example of this is the fact that the floor level of the trams will be very low, allowing easy access from raised footways and low platforms to be provided at tram stops.

I know from my involvement with the working party in Croydon that great care has been taken to minimise the impact on homes and on the environment. For example, to connect New Addington with central Croydon, the system has to cross some very sensitive environmental areas—especially Addington hills, an attractive wooded area. Members of the working party were most concerned that the initial proposals would have meant a line running straight through the middle of this valuable open land. That working party felt it essential that the line should, instead, run up the edge of Addington hills. After a lot of technical discussion, the experts, I am pleased to say, came up with the proposal in the Bill. Consequently, the route runs along the edge of the road and does not cut straight through Addington hills.

That is a very good example of the promoters' desire not to cause environmental difficulties, particularly to valuable open space. I am pleased to say that that sensitive approach to crucial environmental issues adopted by the working party and the promoters has underpinned the development of the scheme. I believe that it now achieves its objectives with the minimum impact on the local environment.

Hon. Members will be pleased to know that I do not intend to go through the Bill clause by clause, although they will want to know about one or two of its important features. It is promoted by London Regional Transport and Croydon council. It is intended that the construction and operation of tramlink will be undertaken by the private sector, which will bear the commercial risks and responsibility for the success of the system.

Mr. Bennett: Assuming that the Bill gains Royal Assent, will the hon. Gentleman confirm that the whole scheme will be completed as one entity, or is there a risk that the private sector may decide that one bit is financially viable and other bits are not?

Mr. Congdon: I welcome the hon. Member's intervention. The promoters' intention, as I understand it, is that all parts of the scheme will be built and financed by the private sector and that it will stand or fall in its entirety.

A very important part of the system is the link to New Addington. That link is a costly part of the scheme because it involves the construction of much new track. It provides a valuable link to the large community of 25,000 people, who currently do not have a rail link and are totally dependent on buses or cars. We all know the problems of getting into urban centres in the rush hour, when we can be subject to all sorts of delay. The proposed link will offer those people a particular benefit, and that is why it is part of the integral system.

The key part of the scheme is that the commercial risks and responsibilities rest with the private sector. It will provide the major part of the funding. An element of Government funding could well be required, but that would have to reflect the public benefits that the scheme will generate, especially to other route users. The major proportion of the total construction cost would still be provided by the private sector. No subsidy will be provided by London Transport or Croydon council for the operation of the system.

The scheme is an excellent example of how the private sector can make a valuable contribution to the provision of transport infrastructure. I know that the Government attach great importance to the private sector assuming such a role, and it is a further reason why I am happy to support the Bill.

Such an arrangement has the distinct advantages of easing the burden on the public purse by maximising the private sector contribution to the scheme at a time when there are many competing demands for new transport projects. It will also reap the benefits of private sector enterprise and expertise. Such active co-operation will allow the promoters to call upon considerable worldwide expertise in the introduction and operation of modern light railway systems.

The private sector is already heavily involved in the scheme. The project development group, comprising London Regional Transport, Croydon council and their three selected private sector partners—including a major British construction company—has begun to take forward the development and detailed design of tramlink. The private sector participants are already—I stress the word "already"—committing their own resources to the process.

The scheme enjoys the unanimous support of Croydon council, which has voted in favour of it, and is strongly supported by the Croydon chamber of commerce and industry, which is a consortium of 1,300 local businesses. The scheme is also supported in principle by local trade associations, environmental groups and the neighbouring boroughs of Bromley, Sutton and Merton. A high degree of public support for it was expressed during the consultation period. There are some local objectors, and I welcome the fact that they will have the opportunity to express their concern in Committee.

Tramlink provides an exciting opportunity to introduce a modern, clean, reliable and, above all, safe transport system, which will enhance the quality of public transport in a large area of south London. It will improve the environment by encouraging the use of tramlink for many business and leisure journeys. It will offer for the first time a congestion-free alternative to using a car for travel between major commercial, retail and residential centres. London needs and deserves the best system of modern, environmentally friendly and convenient public transport.

The Bill has completed all its stages in the other place, and has been closely scrutinised by a Select Committee

there. I hope that hon. Members will agree that it is a most worthwhile scheme that should be given every encouragement. I urge the House to give the Bill a Second Reading, so that a Select Committee of the House can have the same opportunity to examine the scheme in detail.

7.25 pm

Mr. Andrew F. Bennett (Denton and Reddish): I do not plan to oppose the Bill at this stage, but I wish to make it clear that I have some misgivings about it. I am firmly in favour of the development of new tramways, because if we are to solve congestion on our roads, they have a very useful future.

It is important that the people who promote such new schemes persuade the local communities that the entire scheme is worth while. At least one Conservative Member has referred to the experience gained in Manchester. It should be noted that in Manchester the schemes that have been brought into use have basically used existing British Rail track and service. A small amount of track has been constructed within the city centre. In trying to develop new schemes in Greater Manchester, considerable problems have arisen when the developers have wanted to run the tramway down residential roads. I know that you will call me to order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I say too much about Manchester, but it is important to recognise that that system represents the transfer from a railway system to a tramway system.

On many occasions in the House, I have suggested that the procedure in which we are involved is a total farce. This may be the last occasion that the House has to go through this pantomime with a works Bill. Most hon. Members will be aware that, some 18 months ago, the House passed the Transport and Works Act 1992, under which we developed a much more sensible way in which to deal with such Bills.

The only reason that we are dealing with the Bill now is that it officially started its progress in the House of Lords under the old procedure. It was generally accepted that anything that had been originally presented as a private Bill should be allowed to continue in that fashion, but that we would not let any future Bills follow that process.

I think that the Bill demonstrates the faults in the old procedure. It must be nearly two years since the Bill was originally tabled. The whole process of private Bills was designed to encourage the promoters to negotiate with the petitioners and agree a solution that was acceptable to everyone. It is quite clear that the Bill had a heavily contested passage through the House of Lords and, equally, it will have a heavily contested passage through the House.

I am very disappointed that the promoters have not taken more time to meet the ramblers and others who have objections to the loss of open space without compensation, and to find a way of meeting their objections. I would plead with the promoters, even at this late stage, to enter into negotiation.

As many hon. Members know, it is easy to spin out the procedures involved in this type of Bill. No doubt, in a week or two, we will have a carry-over motion, where there will be scope for several hours of debate. It may be necessary for the promoters to find 100 Members for the closure. Depending on the day on which the motion is tabled, that could cause considerable difficulty.

Then there will be the Committee stage, which is supposed to be a very judicial process, in which four hon. Members, who know nothing about the scheme, are selected to listen to the objectors. We know that there are often manipulations behind the scenes concerning who is selected as Chairman of the Committee. Two votes may well decide the outcome of the scheme. If the Government are enthusiastic, the Chairman will come from the Government side. That seems to have more influence on how a proposal progresses than all the arguments of the objectors. Even when the Bill has been through that process, there can still be a Committee stage with amendments and a whole series of other procedures that can drag it out.

If the scheme is really worthy, it seems logical for the promoters to do some deals at this stage to get rid of the objections and find a compromise with the objectors so that they can speed the Bill on its way. I hope that it will not be necessary for me to return to the subject.

I will concentrate my remarks now on the points put to me by the Open Spaces Society and the Ramblers Association. If such schemes are worth while and if they are going to reduce congestion and speed up transport, it should be possible to compensate for the open space that is taken by the scheme with other pieces of open space. In most places, promoters of light public transport schemes have made great efforts to find compensating land.

It is sad that, on this occasion, Croydon council and London Regional Transport have been unwilling to find that compensating land, not because it is impossible to find any, but because of the economics involved. I stand to be corrected, but I think that it is London Regional Transport that wants to make a profit out of land that it can sell on the open market and LRT is not prepared to offer it as compensation for the land that has been taken.

I would argue strongly that, in almost all our urban areas, preserving open space is important. Obviously, it must sometimes be taken for schemes, but it is usually possible to find some land to compensate for it.

Mr. Merchant: I support the point that the hon. Gentleman makes. Is he aware that the same problem exists in the southern end of the Beckenham area, where the South Norwood country park will be traversed by new construction for tramlink? That will detract from a valuable amenity in the area and people feel that, if that has to be done, compensating land should be provided.

Mr. Bennett: I do not want to get into the detailed geography of the area, because I do not know it very well, having looked at the area on the map at fairly short notice, and also because it has been a long time since my grandmother lived in Beckenham and I used to go out to some of those places. If I were pushed, I could take the House on a ramble around my childhood activities in the area and point out that—[HON. MEMBERS: "Go on."] No, I will not be tempted tonight, but I might have to do so on another occasion.

I could point out that many of the places over which I could have rambled some 40 years ago have now been built on. One of the problems in most of our urban areas is that open space has been substantially taken up by housing. As a result, we lose the open space for animals and vegetation. Often, the land becomes fragmented and its quality is destroyed.

[Mr. Bennett]

Kids also lose open space where they can go and, without breaking the law, get up to a certain amount of mischief. Such activity can be extremely annoying if it occurs at the bottom of one's garden or on a street corner where a gang of teenagers congregate. Kids often make a noise. When someone comes out and tries to move them on, there may be a bit of friction. It might become a bit of a game, people may become annoyed and then the police are called in.

It is very difficult for the police if, strictly speaking, the law is not being broken. However, the police want to try to calm such situations down. If there is informal open space, youngsters almost always disappear there and do not annoy adults or pensioners. Where space is taken in such a scheme, it is very important that some space is provided as compensation.

Mr. Congdon: The particular piece of open space to which my hon. Friend the Member for Beckenham (Mr. Merchant) referred is South Norwood country park, which was created only a few years ago. It comprises 150 acres of open space. Even if we accept the objectors' statement about tramlink taking 13 acres—frankly, nowhere near that amount will be taken—we must put that into context and bear in mind the 150 acres, which were created as open space, on which it had been proposed to build housing and put light industry. The fact that the council decided to designate the land as a country park shows the seriousness that it attaches to creating open space. The council would certainly not wish to see any open space destroyed.

Mr. Bennett: The hon. Gentleman referred to 13 acres. Let us not argue about whether it is 10 acres or 13 acres. Let us just see whether some land can be provided as compensation. I wonder whether the hon. Gentleman can tell me how much of Croydon and the surrounding authority areas has been lost to housing and other developments since 1970. I suspect that a very large area of those authorities has been lost as open space.

I accept that part of the scheme crosses the country park. However, would it not be far more useful if compensation for that—if it cannot be added to the surroundings of the country park, which may be very good from the point of view of nature conservation—were provided in areas which, according to the map, appear to be very densely populated and which lack informal space where youngsters can get away from adults and not commit crime, but give vent to high spirits? Such activity is only natural for youngsters, but it can be very annoying if it happens at the bottom of one's garden or close to it.

I do not want to delay the House much longer today, but I want to set down a very firm marker. Under this procedure or under the new procedure for making orders, we should encourage people to believe that if they produce tramway schemes or any other works scheme that would take open space, they should look around for open space to compensate for that.

It would be particularly unfortunate if the argument for not providing compensatory land was not that such land is impossible to find, but that there are costs involved in providing that compensatory scheme. Although I will not vote against Second Reading today, I set down a marker that, if the promoters want to get the scheme into place quickly, they should find some way of meeting the objections of ramblers and the Open Spaces Society.

7.38 pm

Mr. Richard Ottaway (Croydon, South): I support the Bill and agree with the sentiments of the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennett) about the procedures that we are following. Many of the concerns that the hon. Gentleman raised have been raised locally and I am glad that he is prepared to keep his options open at the moment and will not oppose the Bill at this stage.

After all, the Bill relates to the principle of tramlink. It is certainly not the final word. It is an enabling Bill which simply provides for the transfer of powers to a private operator to construct and operate tramlink. The promoters can analyse whether they can raise the necessary funding and whether the construction is viable. They can then come back and persuade everyone that they have the right answers.

The tramlink scheme does not affect the south of the borough, which I have the privilege to represent. There are no proposals for lines to go down to Croydon, South, but I support the Bill because I believe that the economic development of Croydon is paramount, and that the tramlink will assist the economic development of Croydon and London. The financial viability of London as the commercial capital of the world has to be supported, and such projects will assist in maintaining the status of London, and Croydon as a part of London.

Those of us who pass through Croydon, or indeed Beckenham, know how much traffic congestion there is. If I have one beef about Government transport policy, it is the transport infrastructure black hole that exists in south London. I have approached my hon. Friend the Minister for Transport in London more than once about that. I have to accept that steps are being made to improve the infrastructure locally, and the access to Croydon and the proposed Coulsdon bypass are something for which the Government can take credit.

Mr. Merchant: I am sure that my hon. Friend speaks accurately about his constituency. He described an infrastructure black hole in south London. Is he aware that in my constituency, which measures three miles by two miles, there are 14 open and working British Rail stations? Does he call that a black hole?

Mr. Ottaway: I am sorry if I misled my hon. Friend. I was talking about road infrastructure. In my constituency there are 14 British Rail stations and we have excellent train links to the centre of London, which I shall mention later. However, no new roads are proposed for south London. Those of us who drive up the M23 from Gatwick, cross over the M25 and look at the stump of the old M23 will have to agree that it is a sorry sight. Sadly, if there was one blow that the Government struck against the borough of Croydon it was the abandonment of the M23 in 1979, for reasons that were valid at the time but did nothing to help access to Croydon, which is essential for its financial importance and interests. The proposed east-west link, which will complement the spokes that go in and out of London, will vastly improve access to Croydon.

I am impressed by three points. First, the proposal has wide support from the council, from the chambers of commerce and the vast number of corporate entities

affiliated to them, and from local trade associations. I accept that some people object to the Bill, and my hon. Friend the Member for Beckenham (Mr. Merchant) will no doubt develop his objections in due course. However, the House of Lords has already listened to the various objectors and was not overwhelmed by their objections. In paragraph 10 of its findings it said that it did not find against the Bill on the basis of the objections, but made the useful comment that

"the promoters seem to us to have demonstrated a sympathetic understanding of these petitioners' situation and a willingness to try to mitigate the effects of Tramlink on them."

That comment shows the effectiveness of petitioning, but it is not grounds to oppose the Bill.

Mr. Bennett: Did not the House of Lords Committee hint that the promoters should negotiate with the petitioners between the House of Lords stage and the Committee in this House? As I understand it, the promoters have made few concessions, and hardly any of the petitions have been withdrawn.

Mr. Ottaway: The hon. Gentleman is referring to the next sentence in the summary. I confess that I am not privy to negotiations between the promoters and the objectors, but I understand that some steps have been taken and I accept that the House of Lords has recommended that an effort be made to reach a consensus.

Secondly, I am impressed by the relatively small number of properties affected by the proposals. I understand that only 25 houses are affected, which for a rail link 18 miles long is a relatively small number.

Sir Paul Beresford (Croydon, Central): My hon. Friend says that few houses are affected. Will he explain what he means? Does he mean affected to such a degree that they need to be purchased, or is his description broader?

Mr. Ottaway: My hon. Friend comes to my next point. I meant that 25 houses will have to be purchased. There is a wider degree of blight, as is inevitable with such a proposal. The third point that impresses me, however, is that the promoters have undertaken that where blight notices have been served they will deal with them sympathetically and with minimum delay. I hope that my hon. Friend the Member for Beckenham, who I know is most concerned about possible delays as a result of blight, will take note of that. Those three proposals remove many subjects of concern to me and enable me to support the Bill.

I still have four concerns, however, which I shall briefly mention. The first is that, frankly, there is still a lot of iffiness about the funding of the proposal. Understandably, there is no Government commitment at this point, but the promoters of the scheme will not start unless they are convinced that it will be financially viable. As a result, there is a higher standard of assessment of the risk. That is why private loans do not feature in the public sector borrowing requirement. Such loans tend to be more tightly controlled than Government loans and are therefore less risky.

That argument is at the heart of the privatisation debate. Private organisations tend to make a more detailed analysis of the financial risks. I hope that we can have greater clarity about how much public money may be forthcoming and how much might be needed to remove many of the concerns being expressed about funding.

On funding, one point has not been properly aired. Property that is enhanced by the proximity of the line will increase in value, and the beneficiaries might like to chip in towards the line's construction costs. That is not without precedent. My hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, Central (Sir P. Beresford) smiles. He knows much more about local government than I do, but a precedent was established when the developers of Canary wharf, which will benefit from the construction of the Jubilee line, undertook to chip in towards the cost of that line.

The borough council owns some property near the tramlink route, but lacks the powers to sell it at the enhanced value and apply the proceeds to the scheme. I hope that in due course the Government will consider what powers might be needed to facilitate the sale, because that money should be readily available.

Sir Paul Beresford: Will my hon. Friend welcome the opportunity to visit the residents association of Lynden Hyrst, for example, where the residents feel that when they step on to the pavement the tramlink will virtually run across their toenails? Perhaps he would like to ask them how they feel about the benefit, and whether they would care to donate towards the scheme.

Mr. Ottaway: My hon. Friend's argument is valid, but it has nothing to do with my argument. If property is financially enhanced by the proximity of the line, its owners might like to chip in towards the cost of the scheme. Of course there are objectors. I have dealt with the objectors who are affected. The line is not going through my constituency, and none of my constituents objects to it. My hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, Central has constituents who object. No doubt he will deal with the matter in his skilful way.

My second concern is the disruption that might take place during construction of the scheme. I understand that in the city of Sheffield, as a result of traffic congestion, retailing fell by about 30 per cent. during the construction of the light railway. There is a pattern to shoppers' habits. If they know that they are likely to run into traffic jams in a certain area, they do not go there, and local retail trade tends to drop.

My third concern is the British content of the proposed scheme. I appreciate the promoters' efforts, but it must be accepted that two out of three promoters in the group are not British. What is the matter with the British? It is not much of a compliment to British industry if we have to rely on foreign input to build a tramlink in the middle of Croydon.

Hon. Members who have attended Transport Question Time, or, indeed, Prime Minister's Question Time, will have heard the hon. Member for York (Mr. Bayley) banging on about subsidies that might be given to Asea Brown Boveri, which is based in his constituency. I happened to be driving past ABB in Derby the other day and I thought that I would look in and see how it was getting on. It certainly does not need help from the Government to get off the ground. I was impressed to hear that it recently won the contract to supply all the tram rolling stock in Strasbourg, of all places, the heart of the European Community and the home of the European Parliament.

Why cannot ABB try to win the contract in Croydon so that we could have a genuine British element in the

[Mr. Ottaway]

scheme? I hope that there will be a fair chance for British bids to be fully appreciated. Of course we need a fair competitive basis for tendering.

My fourth concern is the possible spur off the proposed tramlink to Purley. I hope that, during analysis of the scheme, such a possibility will not be ruled out. Trams used to go to Purley, and that could happen again. My initial soundings reveal that there is no overwhelming local enthusiasm one way or the other for such an idea, but it should be discussed. Indeed, I approached the Purley and Woodcote residents association on that point. My hon. Friend the Minister for Transport in London will be pleased to hear that the association says that it already has reasonable bus and rail links from Purley to Croydon. However, trains from Purley to Croydon do not operate so regularly as trams would.

The scheme is imaginative, it has been well thought out, it will do much to ease traffic congestion in the Croydon area, it will add to Croydon's prosperity, and it has my full support.

7.52 pm

Mr. Andrew Mackinlay (Thurrock): On behalf of the Labour party, I also welcome the Bill. Its concept of rapid, modern transport, which we have envisaged in our manifestos in recent general elections—circumstances have frustrated us in developing such themes—is greatly welcomed. The innovation and pioneering concept of the Bill's promoters should be recognised.

For a country the size of ours, very few modern transport projects have been promoted by any town or city since the second world war. Reference has been made to Manchester, and there is obviously docklands and Tyne and Wear, but there have not been many initiatives by local authorities, transport undertakings or, for that matter, Governments of either colour to modernise our transport system. This is a new and welcome departure, particularly as the scheme is in Greater London.

The immediate beneficiaries will be people who live in and near Elmers End, Beckenham, New Addington, Wimbledon, and along the routes linking those areas with the strategic shopping and commercial centre of Croydon. However, other residential areas and parts of south London will also benefit from the project. The link to Wimbledon will enable people who live along the Network SouthEast line serving Kingston and Sunbury to have much greater access to the eastern side of the Greater London region south of the Thames, but to avoid the necessity of going to Clapham junction.

That theme can be developed further if one considers that people from Guildford travelling via Surbiton to Wimbledon will have access to Beckenham and Croydon while avoiding congested Clapham junction. They will have less travelling time. To complete the picture, I refer also to people who reside in Hampton Court or along the Chessington-Tolworth-Malden Manor line. There will be a great travel benefit to those people, too, if the line is linked with Wimbledon.

It has already been said that the project has all-party support in Croydon. As far as one can ascertain, there is demonstrable support for the project among the people of Croydon. That is very important, notwithstanding the representations of the hon. Member for Beckenham (Mr. Merchant). The councils of the London borough of Merton and the London borough of Bromley wish the Bill well, at least in principle.

The Bill is only the first chapter in the project. If the project is to succeed and be constructed and, more important, be realised operationally, there is much to be done. Probably the most important aspect is the need for reassurance on funding of the project. We look to the Minister to give an idea of the extent to which, in terms of money and spirit, the Government will back the project. It is certainly a large project. We are talking about £140 million at a time of recession and commercial uncertainty. Therefore, we need significant backing and enthusiasm from the Department of Transport.

Many people who support the project are looking for reassurances either from the promoters or from the Department of Transport that it will be part of an integrated network. Implicit in that is the fact that tramlink must have a system of through ticketing with buses, Network SouthEast and, I hope, the London underground.

In a debate which, to a large extent, will be bipartisan, I hesitate to mention travelcard, but it is important that the Opposition should again remind the Minister for Transport in London that he and his Department have failed to give guarantees about the future of travelcard for existing public transport networks in London. That is bad and it is causing great disquiet. As we try to develop new systems of public transport in Greater London, the need for low-cost transferable ticketing throughout the various modes of transport in Greater London is underlined yet again. We should like a guarantee that travelcard will be not only used on existing transport networks but be extended to the Croydon tramlink.

It is inevitable that, in preparing for today's debate, hon. Members studied the report of the debate in another place. I was concerned to note that the principal sponsor, Baroness Gardner of Parkes, hinted that there might be a need for premium pricing to fund what is demonstrably an expensive project. That would be more than disappointing and would go against the spirit of promoting a modern, swift and cheap new form of public transport within Greater London. I hope that the sponsors and the Department bear that in mind during the Bill's parliamentary stages.

From my reading of the debate in another place, it appears that there were those who expressed an over-confident opinion about the funding for and the viability of the project. Although I wish it well and believe that it could and should be funded, it is somewhat shortsighted for their Lordships to take the view that the scheme will be largely financed by private capital and therefore

"subject to the most intense expert scrutiny by those putting up the money."

There needs to be an undertaking from the Government about funding of construction and an undertaking that once the project is operational it will not be allowed to go bust, in any circumstances. That might appear to be an extreme scenario, but throughout the 20th century many public transport projects have subsequently been found not to be financially viable in strict commercial terms.

Once the project is completed, Governments of whatever colour must ensure that it survives. By then, where people live and work and much commercial activity will be based on the existence of that public transport

system. Therefore, once the Bill receives Royal Assent, that commits all future Governments to being the ultimate guarantor——

Mr. Bennett: We want a guarantee not just that the project will survive, but that it will survive in its entirety. With any privately funded scheme, the concern is always that those putting up the money might say, "We have looked at the economics and part A is all right, but we are not going to put up the money for the other parts." If people are to lose open spaces and suffer other disadvantages, it is important that in return they get the whole scheme, with all the advantages, not just part of it. That is especially true in areas such as New Addington.

Mr. Mackinlay: I accept my hon. Friend's point, which he puts more ably than me, that Parliament will be making a decision that morally binds future Governments to maintaining the project once it is constructed.

Sir Paul Beresford: Does the hon. Gentleman agree that the crux of the scheme is private funding and that that will involve bidding? To give any guarantee along the lines that he suggested would undermine the likelihood of realistic bidding from the private sector.

Mr. Mackinlay: I accept that the concept of the Bill is that the project should be commercially viable and that there will be bidders and franchises. During our debates on the Railways Bill, the Government stressed that entrepreneurs, companies and consortiums were prepared to fund transport systems and make a stab at operating them. The jury is still out on that. The hon. Gentleman buttressed the argument for privatisation by supporting the Bill in the Lobby. Therefore, I am surprised that he should question that principle in respect of the Croydon Tramlink Bill.

Sir Paul Beresford: The hon. Gentleman is talking about two different cases. The British Rail proposal involves negative bidding. The rail system exists and we want to keep it running. The Croydon Tramlink Bill is quite different. We are talking about the construction and running of a system. Because that has not started, any Government guarantee on finance would undercut the sharpness of the bidding from the private sector.

Mr. Mackinlay: I was not inviting the Government to issue a blank cheque or give a commitment that, as from this evening, they will underwrite the project. It would be naive of me to expect that from this Government. If there were a Labour Government, they, too, would hesitate to write a blank cheque. Nevertheless, if the Bill receives Royal Assent and some consortium constructs and subsequently runs this exciting project, but 20 years down the road it fails, the party that is in government must not allow the tramlines to be pulled up. That would be foolhardy. That is why we are at such an important stage; it sets the agenda not only for this project but for future projects.

Mr. Congdon: I fully understand the hon. Gentleman's point, but I urge him not to go too far down that track —if he will excuse the pun—because one of the important parts of the project is to put the bulk of the risk in the private sector. The private sector must be under no illusion in its bidding. It must rigorously go through, as it has, the estimates of demand, usage and fares, in the knowledge that it will not be bailed out in 12 months if it gets it wrong; to do so would be a misuse of public funds. Nevertheless, I accept the hon. Gentleman's point that in the very long run it would be disappointing, to say the least, if we had the infrastructure but it was not used for trams. We need to strike a balance between ensuring that the risk is firmly in the private sector and avoiding a difficult problem 20 years ahead.

Mr. Mackinlay: I am content to say, "Hear, hear" to the hon. Gentleman's remarks. There is not a blade of grass between us on this point. He has expressed himself in the same spirit in which the Labour party approaches the project and with some confidence and hope that private finance can be found.

Like a number of hon. Members, I have some knowledge of and association with Croydon. I stood in Croydon, Central as a Labour candidate in the 1983 general election and, subsequently, in a much wider sphere as a European parliamentary candidate in 1984. I have some identification with and appreciation of not only the territory but some of the personalities involved—both those promoting the Bill and, in one or two cases, those petitioning against it. I am aware of the beautiful open spaces along the proposed route. I urge the Bill's promoters to remember that many of the points raised by petitioners are legitimate. An urgent attempt should be made to assuage their anxieties. Meeting some of those points would not be fatal to the project.

I want to mention a few of the points made by petitioners. In the other place, Lord Lytton argued that, before Royal Assent, there should be a scheme in place to ensure that blighted properties are bought, if the owners so request, with the utmost expedition. I hope that such purchases will not be confined to the 25 properties to which reference has been made. I hope that common sense and good will will prevail in respect of other properties that may suffer some degree of blight, or where personal circumstances—particularly affecting elderly or retired occupants—ought to be taken into account.

Many petitioners are not yet confident—although I believe that their concerns may be overcome—about the proposed design. The scheme should be sensitive to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, particularly where the link goes through open areas such as Lloyd park. Also, the rail cars should take into account the needs of the infirm and semi-ambulant. Wherever possible, the line of route should segregate the trams from cars and lorries, if not from other forms of public transport.

Mention was made of the need to attempt to reinstate high-value land and to replace land that is lost. My hon. Friend the Member for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennett) made the valid point—this is a flaw in the Bill —that an assumption is made that the promoters cannot or will not find land to compensate for that used by the tramlink. Parliament should send a signal that, notwithstanding Croydon council's extremely good record of providing land on its own initiative, an effort should be made to replace land used for the route. One cannot be satisfied at this stage that that principle has been taken on board by the promoters.

The hon. Member for Croydon, South (Mr. Ottaway), replying to an intervention, argued that a contribution could be made by those who will benefit from the line of route. I am not opposed to that principle, but inevitably there are people who have a rapacious appetite for commercially exploiting new public projects. There is

[Mr. Mackinlay]

anxiety in Croydon that Sainsbury would like to develop 36 acres at the bottom of Gravel hill on the Kent Gate way. Croydon borough council, as the co-promoter, has made it abundantly clear that it is opposed to that land being developed by Sainsbury—but it will not be able to stop Sainsbury legitimately pursuing through the planning process and a public inquiry an opportunity to exploit land that abuts the tramlink.

Prospective developers and others will inevitably seek to offer to contribute to the project in return for some advantage to themselves. That is a commercially legitimate practice, but we should be on guard against attracting resources to fund the project in a way that compromises good planning principles.

Mr. Merchant: Is not the hon. Gentleman also concerned that, if and when the tramlink starts operating, there might be pressure—particularly from the operator of the New Addington line—to construct park-and-ride areas? Given that the line will run through two miles of countryside and will attract few passengers, except from New Addington, the operator might want to provide park-and-ride areas to make that line more viable.

Mr. Mackinlay: The hon. Gentleman makes a legitimate point, about which I am not unsympathetic. In a number of areas, there will inevitably be a temptation to create park-and-ride facilities where none is currently planned. Equally, Croydon council is anxious not to eat further into open spaces or the green belt by making substantial and frequent provisions for park-and-ride. More thought must be given to providing a balance. The hon. Member for Beckenham suggests that New Addington will become one big car park, because that major junction will attract traffic from Biggin Hill and other areas adjoining Bromley.

There would also be extensive opportunities for undesirable parking in the Lloyd park area, in a number of streets off Coombe road. However, that is not an argument for frustrating the passage of the Bill tonight, but the Bill's promoters must give greater consideration to this point of great anxiety among the petitioners.

Mr. Ottaway: There are two aspects to be considered. The first is the Canary Wharf principle, whereby private developers that enjoy enhanced value could, as a condition of relevant planning permission, chip into the construction cost. I take the point about safety, but that could be a condition of planning permission. That concept is not unknown. Secondly, I understand that one or two derelict acres in the centre of Croydon, next to a railway line, belong to the local authority. That land will have enhanced value, but the borough does not have the power to sell it and plough the proceeds into the scheme. Perhaps the Government could address that matter.

Mr. Mackinlay: I am sure that the Minister and the promoters have taken note of that point. It is new to me, but it appears to justify further consideration.

Notwithstanding bus deregulation and privatisation, London Regional Transport should use its good offices to ensure that extensive Hoppa bus services feed the tram stops without causing unnecessary traffic congestion and parking problems.

Mr. Congdon: The hon. Gentleman makes an important point about possible further encroachment on open space as a result of further planning permission being granted for a superstore or park-and-ride facilities. Is the hon. Gentleman aware that Croydon council's urban development plan strengthens the safeguards in respect of the Kent Gate way? Although Sainsbury is fighting an inquiry, the company will be strongly resisted, as it should be.

There is a link between that and park-and-ride because other people take the view that the same land would make a wonderful park-and-ride site. I believe that it would be disastrous to use open space in that way, and I am pleased that the promoters take a similar view. They believe that the demand for the tramlink will be such that park-and-ride facilities would have only a small effect on the level of patronage. The promoters consider that the tramlink will be economically viable without park-and-ride facilities, and have not included them in the Bill for that reason. The promoters have no desire to see park-and-ride facilities provided.

Mr. Mackinlay: A number of petitioners consider that that point deserves more consideration; I agree, although I support the concept of the Bill. We do not suggest that there should be extensive park-and-ride facilities, for the reasons cited by the hon. Gentleman. I entirely agree with him about the Kent Gate way site: I would expect the London borough of Croydon to resist any applications to develop that land, just as I would expect Sainsbury to try —legitimately, from its selfish point of view—to obtain planning permission.

No doubt that will be sorted out later. The point is that the promoters do not seem to want to consider the parking that will be generated in New Addington, and in and around the Lloyd park area. More homework needs to be done.

The promoters' plans are very imaginative, but they will raise an eyebrow or two among those who are familiar with a very congested part of south London. It is proposed that much of Addiscombe road and the area immediately outside East Croydon station should be used almost exclusively for the tramlink; that will involve the redirection of traffic around Chepstow road, Barclay road and the vicinity of the Fairfield halls. Do the promoters really believe that—even given the widening of the area involved—there will be sufficient capacity to absorb the heavy traffic that must negotiate it? I feel that an alternative must be found.

Sir Paul Beresford: I understand that the current road widening is not related to the tramlink—so they say.

Mr. Mackinlay: So they say; but road widening is in progress. My point is that, whatever the motive and the funding for it, the promoters should reconsider the idea that the tramlink road should monopolise the area immediately outside East Croydon station.

We welcome the Bill in principle. It will be good for people living in the boroughs of Bromley, Croydon and Merton; it will also produce increasing benefits for those living and working in a much wider area of south London and north Surrey. We hope that it will have a good run in the House, and that those who examine it will bear in mind the need to explore new ways of providing mobility at low cost—in regard to both the workplace and recreation.

8.22 pm

The Minister for Transport in London (Mr. Steve Norris): I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, North-East (Mr. Congdon) on his skilful and persuasive presentation. He helped me greatly: now I need not detain the House long in explaining the Government's position.

We see the advantages of the proposed tramlink. In its non-technical summary of the environmental statement, Halcrow Fox said that the link was being promoted because

"present widespread traffic congestion at peak times in Croydon is predicted to increase by 15 to 20 per cent. between 1986 and 2001, affecting travel by bus and car and commerical operations and increasing problems of 'rat-running', noise, air pollution and other adverse environmental effects; scope for increasing capacity through new road building or widening existing roads is severely constrained and very unpopular with the public."

According to the summary, Croydon council's transport strategy suggests that public transport should play a greater role in meeting the predicted demand for movement; light rail provides an attractive alternative to road building, increasing capacity on key routes with minimum environmental impact, and offers a real choice to travellers as against the car or bus. The Government consider that to be an accurate summary of the scheme's advantages. It involves a 17·5 mile link—or 28 km, as I should say nowadays—centred on Croydon, with branches to Wimbledon, Beckenham, Elmers End and New Addington.

There is no doubt that traffic congestion is a serious issue in Croydon, and that communications should be improved. I do not think that many people would suggest that a massive road-building programme is the answer; certainly, I do not believe that there is any local enthusiasm for such a move—even from my hon. Friend the Member for Beckenham (Mr. Merchant), whose reservations will be appreciated by other hon. Members.

However, a light railway system has advantages. For instance, it involves minimal environmental intrusion, and is energy efficient. No harmful fumes are emitted, as they are from cars and other vehicles. Moreover, choice is enhanced: passengers have a real alternative to the car or bus. The Government consider the tramlink scheme worth while, and accordingly support the Bill in principle.

As my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, North-East pointed out, this is essentially a private sector project. That is very much in accordance with the Government's policy of involving the skills of that sector, as well as its capital, to the maximum extent to allow the transport infrastructure to provide the best value for money for both taxpayers and, ultimately, users. My hon. Friend referred to the work of the project development group. I can confirm that the promoters are making good progress: they have already appointed a private sector project development group.

My hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, South (Mr. Ottaway) pointed out that two of the companies involved were not British. They are Transdev, the French operator of transport systems, and AEG(UK). Although AEG is not a British company—it is building the rolling stock—AEG(UK) will provide the United Kingdom with substantial employment opportunities. Tarmac—a British company—is also involved in building the infrastructure for the line.

Those companies are funding the development work themselves: private capital is going into the project development group. The work is now well advanced. Subject to parliamentary approval of the Bill, the promoters expect to be able to invite private sector bids for the concession to build and operate the scheme early next year, including one from the project development group.

Let me make two points about the way in which the project development group will work in relation to eventual bidding for the scheme. I suspect, from what was said by my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, South, that there may be a hint of misapprehension about the group's role. In wishing to ensure that the taxpayer's involvement was minimal at this stage, the promoters determined to use the device of a project development group funded by the private sector, with expertise drawn from the relevant sectors.

Those companies would, in effect, prepare a development brief which would then be the subject of tenders for the various aspects of the line—for its construction, for the construction of the rolling stock and for the operation of the line. At that point the project would be open for any company to bid, within EC rules. I should be disappointed if the only bid forthcoming was from the promoters.

Of course the promoters have become involved in the project, because they believe that it has a future, and no doubt they will want to tender for the work. I applaud their initiative in doing what they have done to provide mechanisms in the process for considering tenders that will ensure that members of the project development group do not enjoy an unreasonable advantage—that would be improper—but that, none the less, if the promoters do not win the contract, the costs that they have borne so far will be passed on to the successful bidders.

The members of the project development group are applying their skills to working the scheme up, and no doubt they look forward to bidding for the tender in open competition in due course. However, there is no guarantee whatever that they will be successful. If my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, South is keen that British companies should be involved in tendering for the project, as he is the Parliamentary Private Secretary to my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade he should use his extensive contacts to encourage as many British companies as possible to bid for the contract and beat off the foreign competition. The Government applaud and welcome the approach that the promoters have adopted towards the project development group. We think that that is the right way to proceed.

Grants have been mentioned, and my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, North-East said that an element of grant might be sought to support the project. I am sure that he and the promoters, and other hon. Members, including the hon. Member for Thurrock (Mr. Mackinlay), will understand the grant position well. The Government will consider any application for grant on its merits by examining the public benefits that will be secured by the scheme—those are conventionally known as the non-user benefits—and relating them to the amount of grant sought. I must not disguise the fact that we shall have to do that against the background of competing schemes and the overall availability of funds. The scheme is attractive, but it would be wrong of me to give guarantees about any level of grant that may be forthcoming in due course.

[Mr. Steve Norris]

It is a great pleasure to see the hon. Member for Thurrock in his place. He is the Labour mascot for the other 15 Members of Parliament who represent Essex in the Tory interest. He is much loved by all of us and, I hate to say, will be greatly missed. However, if he will forgive me, I must tell him that I took exception to his accusation —I believe that I noted it accurately—that I had failed to give guarantees on travelcard.

Mr. Mackinlay *indicated assent.*

Mr. Norris: The hon. Gentleman nods in assent. I do not know what I am supposed to say that would reassure him. He is a fairly literate chap, so I need not descend to monosyllables to make my point.

I was recently reported in the *Evening Standard* as having offered my resignation if travelcard were not to survive. As it happens, I had not done that, but when the next journalist rang to ask me whether it was true I thought that I had better say yes, because otherwise he might say that I was trying to climb down from the commitment.

Since then, I have repeatedly pointed out, and I welcome the opportunity to do so in the House, that anyone who understands how public transport operates in the capital city recognises that travelcard is not an option, but is essential. It is the method by which millions of people in this city make their journeys. If one did not preserve and develop the advantages of multimodal travel such as the scheme now offers, one would not be doing the residents of this great city a service.

Were it not for the appalling precedent, I would have been tempted to ask the hon. Gentleman to read my lips, but remembering when that expression was previously used, I thought that it might be ill advised. None the less, I tell the hon. Gentleman in the clearest possible terms that the travelcard is in no danger. It is safe in my hands—there I go again, with yet another inappropriate reference. I hope that I have made it clear to the hon. Gentleman that he should not be disturbed.

Indeed, I fear that my normally generous sense of humour might wane if he were to continue along that line, because I do not believe that he is the kind of chap who would like to mislead millions of people in this city and leave them in doubt about the continued availability of the most popular device for getting around it.

Mr. Mackinlay *rose——*

Mr. Cohen *rose——*

Mr. Norris: Before I give way to the hon. Member for Thurrock, may I give way to my good friend the hon. Member for Leyton (Mr. Cohen)?

Mr. Cohen: I am grateful to my good friend the Minister for giving way to me. May I ask him two questions? First, will the travelcard apply to tramlink? Secondly, although I appreciate that he is saying that he strongly favours keeping the travelcard, could that not mean a card completely different from the present travelcard? People can use the existing card all day to make as many journeys as they like, but could not the travelcard that the Minister means be one that runs out if someone makes too many journeys? Would that not be a completely different travelcard?

Mr. Norris: O, ye of little faith. It is important to relate travelcard to the Bill, and I am glad to be able to tell the hon. Gentleman that everyone involved in the development of the scheme recognises that it should be part of the travelcard system, especially as about 70 per cent. of the people who will use tramlink will move on to other modes of travel.

Mr. Bennett: Where does it say that in the Bill?

Mr. Norris: It is not appropriate for that to be in the Bill, any more than it appears specifically in, for example, the Railways Bill. However, the hon. Gentleman will know that the Secretary of State will give the franchising director powers to require potential franchisees to be members of travelcard. I have made it plain that, with the leave of the House, I intend to introduce similar clauses in forthcoming legislation on the deregulation of buses in London. However, I must tell the hon. Members for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennett) and for Leyton that negotiating the precise terms of entry into travelcard for Croydon tramlink is a matter for the promoters, for LT and for the other members of travelcard.

Mr. Mackinlay *rose——*

Mr. Norris: Before I give way to the hon. Member for Thurrock, I shall answer the second question asked by the hon. Member for Leyton by saying that his fears are unfounded. The card will continue in the form that he and I—and millions of people in this city—recognise. No doubt the system will develop. For example, I believe that stored value ticketing, which will enable us to use the same facilities for transport as the phonecard currently provides for telephoning, is likely to be widely taken up.

Passengers will enjoy having a simple ticket, like the phonecard, which, if they need to get on the tube or the bus, will obviate the need for change so that they can use the system more easily. There is a great deal of merit in that. When one is totally convinced of the importance of the device in the public transport system, one is beyond the political stage of bantering about whether or not travelcard will survive. That parrot is well and truly dead.

Mr. Mackinlay: I welcome the Minister's reiteration that travelcard is safe: he has, in fairness, spelt that out in explicit terms this evening. Anyone reading the *Official Report* tomorrow morning who believed his utterances and his point to me in their entirety would also believe St. Paul who said within the walls of Damascus, "Quite honestly, I have always been preaching Christianity".

There was a stage when the Minister did wobble, to say the least, on the future of travelcard. The political reality —a London borough election next year—no doubt concentrated his mind. I welcome what he has said and if we can put the matter to rest, so be it, but it was important that we should have raised it tonight both in terms of the capacity of people to have the choice of ticketing throughout Greater London, through various modes of transport, and specifically in relation to the new, exciting tramlink. I hope that the Government and their successor will ensure that they are locked into a travelcard system as we presently know it.

Mr. Norris: I am sorry at the hint of sadness in the hon. Gentleman's voice that was implied by his reluctant acceptance that we might actually mean what we say. Of course, I understand that his deep knowledge of scripture

brought to mind the concept of Pauline conversion, but neither that nor the London borough elections figured in my mind.

It is perfectly sensible, and it is important in the context of the Croydon tramlink, that the overwhelming view of operators, private and currently public, is that there is no need for legislative underpinning of a travelcard scheme because they believe that it offers huge advantages. They think that using a travelcard enables bus operators to get people on board much more quickly than currently. However, such an option to enter travelcard would not satisfy either hon. Members on either side of the House or myself. That is why I made it clear and quite explicit that travelcard will continue.

I sense that I would stray from the principal purposes of our proceedings tonight were I to digress further on the subject of travelcard and I shall not do so, but it is important. Of course, if 70 per cent. of the users of the Croydon tramlink transfer to other modes of travel, they will almost certainly want to do so with a travelcard. Therefore, the House should be aware that negotiations are foreseen by which Croydon tramlink would be part of the system. How revenue is apportioned is a complex calculation, as the hon. Gentleman knows, so I shall not go into it further.

The hon. Member for Thurrock said that he had been a prospective Member for Parliament for Croydon, although in my experience he had been a prospective Member for Parliament for most constituences before his happy arrival in the charming spot that he represents in God's own county. He asked for a guarantee that the scheme would not go bust. That was a breathtaking request, because it illustrates a profound ignorance of the way in which any market system works.

It certainly points me to the conclusion that one ought to draw to the hon. Gentleman's attention the definition of the word "risk". The concept of transferring the risk in the project to the private sector is that it will be the job of the private sector to make sure that it is a profitable railway that offers a standard of service which customers appreciate and therefore continue their patronage of the railway. However, I cannot disguise from the House the accuracy of the remarks of my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon North-East, the sponsor of the Bill, when he said that the essence of risk was precisely that there could be circumstances in which the owners of the project might have to seek alternative financing for it and that might result in the diminution of their own equity or even in its extinguishment.

The substantive point about which the House was concerned was whether the promoters could bring forward the Bill and then simply build parts of the tramlink. That point was raised by the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish, among others. As the House knows, I am not the sponsor of the Bill; my hon. Friend has done that job very ably in the House tonight. I merely remind the House that the Committee will no doubt wish to look at the guarantee that the whole project will be built. It will be a matter for the Committee. Its members are as yet unnamed and I can therefore say with some assurance that I know they will treat that matter with assiduity.

Mr. Bennett: I am sure that the Minister is aware that the Department normally gives evidence to the Committee on a Bill such as this. Will he confirm that, in his evidence, he will be asking for guarantees that the whole scheme is built, not just the more profitable bits of it?

Mr. Norris: I fear that I cannot give the hon. Gentleman that assurance. He has been in the House long enough to know why. It is not appropriate for the Department to say that; it is for the Committee to determine whether it is appropriate and, if it is, to obtain it from the promoters of the Bill.

The Department will give evidence as to the desirability of the scheme, and the transport implications of the scheme; and, as I have told the House, the Department will be indicating that it favours the scheme.

The Bill has already passed its Second Reading and opposed Committee stages in the other place. The Committee there decided, as my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, South said, that the promoters had made out a case for the Bill to proceed and it was very complimentary about the scheme. There remain those who object to the scheme on various grounds and to various degrees—including, as I understand it, my hon. Friend the Member for Beckenham.

Mr. Merchant: I paused for a moment before intervening because I thought that my hon. Friend might be coming to a point which the hon. Member for Thurrock (Mr. Mackinlay) raised earlier and which still presents quite a serious problem. What happens if the budget goes ahead and the railway is built? Historically, railways have often gone bankrupt, sometimes quite soon after they are built. Given that there is a good deal of injury to the people affected by the route being built, what happens if they find themselves with a new railway that has worked for two years and then cannot sustain itself?

Mr. Norris: My hon. Friend will understand that I am not speaking as the sponsor of the Bill but merely offering advice which I hope will be of help to him and his constituents.

Let me first explain that there will be no question but that compensation which is due to any person who is entitled to such compensation under the terms of the Bill, and in light of the scheme, will be paid. If the operators of the system become insolvent, no doubt they will have to seek an arrangement with their creditors, and if an arrangement ultimately results in their bankruptcy or liquidation, the responsibility for operating the railway will pass to another. As it will pass at a price which reflects the then partronage and ability to render the railway profitable, it will also ensure its rapid transition and its continuence.

My hon. Friend is well aware that there are many great buildings in London built by developers who did not survive. I remember reading an article in *The Times* by Simon Jenkins that pointed out that Cubitt and Nash, not to mention Reichmann, had all gone bust while building the greatest buildings in London. It may be a fate that will perennially beset developers with imagination. The last thing that happened was that the local council occupied the building or knocked it down. The facility is there and it will continue.

The merits of the scheme embodied in the Bill are such that I can invite the House to support it. The Government support it. *[Interruption.]* I am grateful to my hon. Friend the Member for St. Ives (Mr. Harris), who says that if I say

[Mr. Norris]

so, that is good enough for him. I look forward to him joining me in the Lobby later if required, although I hope that the Bill will receive an unopposed Second Reading.

I point out to those hon. Members who have it in mind to oppose the Bill—not that I believe that such a thought would pass through the minds of hon. Members—that it is an enabling measure. It will facilitate the development of the scheme to the point at which, for example, the project development group is able to make an application for grant. The amount of grant required and the efficacy of the scheme that is produced will ultimately be the test of whether the scheme will proceed.

The Committee will ensure that the legitimate interests of those affected by the Bill are properly dealt with. I have no doubt that it will examine carefully the point raised by the hon. Members for Thurrock and for Denton and Reddish about the necessity for adequate compensation. Knowing the promoters well—as the hon. Gentleman and I do—I recognise that they are organisations of substance and are not in the business of short-changing those with legitimate claims for disturbance or other compensation.

Although it is proper for hon. Members to express their concerns about the Bill, it is proper for the Bill to receive a Second Reading tonight so that it can proceed on its way to what it can represent—a valuable piece of imaginative and creative infrastructure in one of the most important development centres in the country, Croydon. On that basis, I commend the Bill to the House.

8.52 pm

Mr. Malcolm Wicks (Croydon, North-West): Before I add my support to the Bill, I was amused to hear the Minister refer to my hon. Friend the Member for Thurrock (Mr. Mackinlay) as the Labour mascot in Essex. I see him more as a beacon and a forerunner. Indeed, I know that role in formerly Tory Croydon, so I sympathise with my coileague.

While I welcome the Minister's support, I advise him, albeit humbly, to renew his acquaintance with a dictionary of political quotations over the summer recess. As he recognised when he was reciting them, to support the travelcard with "read my lips" and "safe in our hands" falls short of what we require. For a moment, I thought that we would get some Neville Chamberlain—waving the travelcard, the Minister would proclaim, "a travelcard in our time". The people of Croydon are locking up their travelcards tonight as they wait to get into hospitals that are safe in the Government's hands.

I have started on entirely the wrong note, because I rose to confirm the view of the hon. Member for Croydon, North-East (Mr. Congdon) that the Bill has bipartisan support and the unanimous support of the substantial Labour group and the majority Conservative group on the Croydon council. Councillors have given their support after assessing the environmental factor and other factors that have been discussed today. They care about their environment and do not lightly support the measure. There is a strong consensus in Croydon for the measure, but there are some legitimate concerns that we need to recognise.

I have been told that Croydon last saw trams in 1951. Historians can correct me if I have got that slightly wrong. I am pleased that trams—albeit different, more modern and more energy-efficient ones—may soon be returning to Croydon as the first place in greater London for that to happen. That is an important factor.

I support the Bill for three major reasons: social, economic and environmental. I support it for social reasons because I am aware that the New Addington housing estate is isolated from the centre of Croydon in many respects. The estate has many strengths as well as many problems. In a sense, it is poor testimony to that phase of our housing and planning policy when such large estates were built.

Anything that we can do to enable the people in New Addington in the constituency of the hon. Member for Croydon, Central (Sir. P. Beresford) to get better and faster access to the centre of Croydon, not least for employment purposes, will be an improvement. That is important because more than a third of the people of New Addington have no access to a car. As has been pointed out, there is no rail link for a substantial town of 25,000 people. In peak times, it takes a bus 45 minutes to get from Addington to the centre of Croydon.

Those are all important facts and powerful reasons for supporting a modern transport system, not least for the people of New Addington. It is certainly important for employment because Croydon, like other areas in the south, suffers from unemployment. According to official Department of Employment figures, 18·8 per cent. of the men in New Addington are unemployed. If we enable them to have better access to a wider employment market, that may make a helpful impression on that high unemployment figure. Therefore, I support the measure for social reasons.

Another social factor is the great diligence shown by the planners to make tramlink accessible to people with frailties or those who have difficulty gaining access to buses or trains. I am thinking of people with disabilities, especially those in wheelchairs, as well as people with heavy shopping or people pushing buggies. All those groups will welcome tramlink. The Bill is impressive in terms of the regard shown by the planners for ramps and ticket machines that will be accessible to people with disabilities. It will be possible for people to take their wheelchairs on to tramlink easily and information will be provided in braille for blind people or those with poor sight. I am impressed by the social policy aspect of the measure.

Like many business people and others in Croydon, I believe that the measure will have a positive impact on the economic health of Croydon. As has been said, it has been welcomed by the Croydon chamber of commerce. It improves, by definition, the east-west transport links. Therefore, its economic impact along the route could, broadly speaking, be beneficial. It also relates to a more national concern that was well articulated in 1989 by the Confederation of British Industry in a report on transport.

The CBI said, among other things, that the nation's transport infrastructure was hopelessly inadequate, that congestion had enormous economic costs and estimated them at £15 billion a year or in excess of £10 a week for every household—the costs of poor transport on our economy and our business often not calculated, often hidden. It went on to say:

"Public transport facilities should be greatly improved."

Within our local economy of Croydon and other economies, tramlink helps to move things in the right direction.

We have rightly heard a lot about the environmental impact of the measure and clearly there are still doubts which have been articulated and which need further thought, as the hon. Member for Croydon, North-East is the first to recognise. We are still at the beginning of this story and there is time to improve on these matters. We need to make a balanced assessment and calculate both the potential negative impact on the environment and the beneficial impacts. We have heard about the former, but not the latter.

Obviously, there are negative impacts. It may seem as though only a few houses will be affected, but if we lived in one of them, we would not want the railroad running through the middle of it. I will not break into song, although I remember one of that title. There may be only a few houses, but to those affected it is their house and it is important. I recognise that a larger number of houses will suffer an adverse environmental impact.

We must be greatly concerned about the impact on open spaces and the ancient woodland along the route. I am worried about these matters. An hon. Friend, who told me earlier that he had to leave the Chamber for a meeting, made some important points about open spaces. I do not know the details, but if we can persuade London Transport not to sell some open land for development, but to keep it as open space, perhaps we can make some environmental gain. I would be worried if we lost too many trees.

Let us see whether, through planting a wide variety of trees, we may come out of the scheme with more rather than fewer trees. I shall certainly urge the planners, as will my colleagues on the other side of the House who represent Croydon, to talk to the Ramblers Association and other organisations about these matters. I am bound to say that I am impressed by the way in which the planners, together with Labour and Conservative councillors, have loked at many of these things sensitively and in detail to develop a route that does the least environmental harm.

We have heard less about different types of environmental gains. We all know that in congested city areas, not least areas such as Croydon, the great enemy is the motor car. Many of us drive motor cars, so we cannot afford to be sanctimonious about this. We need to develop public transport systems with the right mix of public and private funding, which enable people often to opt for public transport rather than take the car.

The other day I looked at the 1991 census figures for Croydon and noticed that in part of the borough—indeed, in the constituency of the hon. Member for Croydon, South (Mr. Ottaway)—some 10 per cent. of households now have three or more cars. We do not need to be very clever or great experts on conservation and the environment to know that we cannot go on buying more and more cars and using them more and more often. If, as a result of schemes such as Croydon tramlink, more of us are persuaded to use public transport rather than our own cars, environmental and energy gains become substantial.

I have been looking at figures and I am told that the car and motor vehicles more generally generate some 45 per cent. of the main greenhouse gas—carbon dioxide—and up to half the man-made emissions of nitrogen oxide. Those emissions contribute to acid rain. If one assesses the environmental impact as one should and develops an environmental impact statement for Croydon tramlink, there are items on both sides of the balance sheet, not just one. My judgment is that the environmental gains of the scheme outweigh the disadvantages. In Committee and through more consultation, we can look at those questions in more detail than perhaps we have so far.

Mr. Merchant: I accept the thrust of the hon. Gentleman's argument on pollution, and so on, but does he accept that tramlink would not be helpful in reducing pollution emissions from motor cars because the promoters say that only 10 per cent. of people who travel on tramlink will be taken from motor cars?

Mr. Wicks: It depends whether one regards that 10 per cent. as a significant or a small proportion. In the battle against the motor car and people's obsession with it, a 10 per cent. gain is important. It remains to be seen whether the atmosphere in the centre of Croydon will be improved if we can couple the tramlink with greater pedestrianisation and more curbs on the use of private cars. As in many other towns and cities, atmospheric pollution in Croydon is above EC guidelines and we should be concerned about that. I would welcome a 10 per cent. impact.

Concerns have been expressed by many groups and I want to meet those groups and hear more about their concerns. I wish to remain as open-minded as I can on those matters. Nevertheless, I am struck by the fact that the Association of Croydon Conservation Societies supports the measure in principle. I suppose that it welcomes its environmental impact.

For those three reasons—social, economic and environmental—I support the Bill. However, my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, South made a good point when he talked of the need to enable and encourage British companies to contribute fully to the scheme. As one of his humble constituents, I like to agree with him, and I agree with him on that matter—*[Interruption.]* I never tell people how I vote.

Asea Brown Boveri has already been mentioned. My hon. Friend the Member for York (Mr. Bayley) has in his constituency the works that are currently building trams. ABB is now building trams for Strasbourg, which is another important European city, alongside Croydon. It is building something called a "supertram". My hon. Friend has invited me to York to look at those trams——

Mr. Ottaway: The trams are being built in Derby. I know, because I went there the other day.

Mr. Wicks: I hope to go to York soon and have a more fruitful discussion with my hon. Friend the Member for York about the building of the trams. Things can happen in two places at almost the same time. My hon. Friend the Member for York is clear about where some of the trams are being built. If we can encourage British firms to put in good bids, gains will be made all round.

I am glad that the first trams in London for 40 years or more will be introduced before too long, with support from both sides of the House, in London's largest borough. In terms of population, Croydon would count as England's tenth city. I am bipartisan in regarding it as becoming a modern European town. It is already a major centre of business and retailing, but it has a council and community who care deeply about their environment and they support the measure for environmental as well as social and economic reasons.

[Mr. Wicks]

I support the Bill introduced by my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, North-East. The tramlink is good for Croydon and is on the right lines.

9.7 pm

Sir Paul Beresford (Croydon, Central): It was intriguing to listen to the hon. Member for Croydon, North-West (Mr. Wicks), who justified much of his position on this evening's debate on rambling. He said that he had been rambling through my constituency.

I entirely agree with many of the points that have been made, particularly those about New Addington. I welcome the prospect of a decent transport system for people in that area. I shall ignore the fact that the hon. Gentleman has pre-empted great portions of my speech while rambling across my constituency and the parks.

Considerable credit must be, and has been, given to Croydon council. It unanimously supported the Bill, and promoted and pushed it forward in conjuction with London Transport.

Many comments have been made about the positive aspects of tramlink—the light rail idea—and bringing together so many different councils, including Croydon, Merton, Sutton and Bromley, as well as London Transport and British Transport. That shows the difficulty which the council, as promoter, must have had when bringing together the different organisations involved in the project.

The scheme is essentially to be constructed and funded by the private sector. The fact that it is anticipated that it will be self-financing when it is up and running also highlights the extraordinary ability of the promoters in pushing the scheme forward.

The scheme's benefits have been mentioned. It will be a quiet, low-pollution service linking central Croydon with Wimbledon, New Addington and Beckenham—I suspect that there may be some dispute about that later. It will link trams, trains, buses. Many of the stations involved have been mentioned, including Wimbledon, West Croydon, East Croydon, Elmers End, Beckenham Junction, Mitcham Junction and Birkbeck. The potential benefits have been extensively promoted this evening.

I wish that, over the years, the same approach had been taken by the council and the Department of Transport to the M25 link with Croydon—but that issue related to earlier events today.

Much credit must be given to the promoters for the care and thought given to assisting passengers, particularly for shoppers and those using wheelchairs, prams and trollies, through the use of canopies over the bus stops and train stations, as well as modern technological devices such as automated ticket machines and information displays and television cameras. Those issues were mentioned by the hon. Member for Croydon, North-West.

It is worth quoting from a fact sheet produced by the tramlink team in August 1992, which states:

"Whilst tramlink has been promoted by London Transport and the London borough of Croydon, it is intended that the scheme will be financed, constructed, and operated, by the private sector".

That is an extremely commendable and bold statement, which greatly enhanced my attitude towards tramlink.

Unfortunately, the very next sentence in the statement states:

"A public sector contribution may be required to reflect the benefits to other road users of easing congestion".

That may cause some Conservative Members difficulties. Such a scheme, which anticipates considerable public benefit, must strongly tempt my hon. Friend the Minister for Transport in London to slip into the scheme a pump-priming sum. However, such a proposal presupposes that, despite all the demands on the limited budget for future years, the funds will be available. It also presupposes that it would be only a small pump-priming fund.

The prospect of a tramlink in an urban district such as Croydon presents considerable difficulties for many people along the route, particularly where the route is new. Many residents live along the route that is already under way between Wimbledon and Croydon. Much of the route which runs through to New Addington is new. It has raised many fears with residents which may or may not turn out to be justified.

Certainly the residents' fears have been all too real for them since the initial planning of the development. The fears have been greatest among those who wish to sell their houses and move. The scheme will affect many of those people—certainly in their own minds, and those of the estate agents. Their properties will fall outside the normal remit of compensation. I know that purchase of the properties would be prompt, but many of the residents who qualify for compensation do not wish to have their properties purchased, but wish to remain.

I wonder why such a long and tedious technique—the use of the private Bill procedure to take the Bill through both Houses—was chosen. An alternative, which was available, has been mentioned. Given the openness and relative speed offered by the alternative, I was a little surprised that the private Bill procedure was chosen. There has been considerable consultation, and some support, but there has been also considerable vocal and written opposition. I have received one letter in favour of tramlink, but I have received hundreds—not all of which were organised—against the scheme. People are worried.

Nevertheless, the hundreds who wrote opposing the scheme will be probably portrayed as few compared with the numbers of people who will be served by the tramlink and who live further from the area of development.

I add my congratulations to the promoters. Many of the arguments in petitions have been met. Variations in the routes have been considered—perhaps the rambling of the hon. Member for Croydon, North-West (Mr. Wicks) will be allowed to continue freely through my constituency.

Many points, even if they have not been met, have been carefully looked at and assessed, but a few things need elaboration, because we have still to come to the Committee on the subject.

Mention was made earlier of the Park Hill area. Many residents of Park Hill—with considerable justification—feel anger at the widening of Barclay road, Fairfield road and Chepstow road, and the bulldozing of trees that that has made necessary. I accept that the council has tried to replace the trees, but the claim that the project was needed but was not related to tramlink stretches the credibility somewhat.

The tram will run adjacent to properties in Addiscombe road and through the frontage of Lloyd park. There is justifiable concern in those areas. Many protestors anticipate environmental damage, and I have mentioned that the Lynden Hyrst residents association has been

particularly vocal. I will use a slight exaggeration, but the residents feel that their toenails are trimmed by the scheme when they step out of their properties on to the pavement.

Many estate agents in the area believe that the development has reduced the value of local properties, but that will be overridden when the tramlink is running. I suspect that the estate agents will then use a reverse process and say that a property is worth more because the tramlink service is there, but until that day, there will be a considerable blight.

Going a little further, the tramlink service will progress down Gravel hill. The majority of local residents will be relatively unaffected—they will be across a multi-lane highway from the service, and also above it—but it is worth mentioning one petitioner; a lady who purchased a property before the announcement of the plans.

Her property is situated at what is effectively the bottom of the hill, where it is proposed that the tramlink will cross the multi-lane highway using an extensive and complicated system of lights. One can see in the plans that drawings that relate to tramlink noticeably—one could say, cynically—skirt the boundary of her property in such a way as to remove from the tramlink scheme the obligation of purchasing the property.

The lady would prefer to stay in her home—she has bought and extended it—but she does not want to stay with the tramlink running across her toes at the front of her garden. If tramlink proceeds, she would prefer to have her property purchased with full compensation. She would then move and start again. I believe that the promoters are looking seriously at the situation, and I encourage that. The knowledge that some public utilities may need to be changed in that area may well mean that the lady's hopes will be met.

It needs to be mentioned that the route will have a negative effect on the residents of the New Addington section in my constituency. Mention has been made of the prospect of park-and ride problems, and those problems need to be faced. However, the residents of Parkway and Central parade who live adjacent to the proposed tramlink face the prospect of living cheek by jowl with the route. That is particularly so when the route has to deviate to go around the medical centre. During the run-up to building the link, the perceived blight for those people will be considerable, even though the road is narrow at that point.

I expect that the blight will be considerable even when the tramlink is built, because that area is the stopping point at which the tram will move up to a blind junction and reverse down in front of and close to the properties of several people. Worst of all, I suspect that the rules and regulations on compensation are such that those residents will receive no compensation. I hope that I am proven wrong.

It is right that this paving Bill should progress through the House. The details show that it proposes a 10-year period during which commencement of building must be undertaken. At this stage, we face the prospect of a £140 million building programme, but it appears that there is a touch of guesstimate rather than estimate in that figure.

Many of us are aware that the full assessment of the costs of key factors such as the realignment of public utilities has yet to be completed. I suspect that the original estimate of those costs may prove to be on the low side.

We need to bear in mind the importance of Croydon to such utilities as British Telecom, Thames Water, electricity suppliers, gas suppliers, cable companies and so on. I understand that building the tramlink will cause particular difficulties for British Telecom, because it has a key junction with key facilities at an important point. As I understand it, the effect of that has not yet been taken into account.

My personal view is that any funding beyond pump priming from national coffers would be wrong.

Mr. Merchant: My hon. Friend's point about British Telecom is a fair one. Is he aware that interference from electrical discharges would have an impact on British Telecom apparatus, and that large quantities of that apparatus would have to be moved? Does he agree that that charge should be levied on the promoters of the scheme?

Sir Paul Beresford: I understand that British Telecom will be a petitioner in Committee. It will probably be more appropriate to discuss points of such technical difficulty at that stage.

The promoters expect that the line will be self-sufficient once it is up and running. On that point, the most sceptical eyebrows have been raised. For example, the link between Wimbledon and West Croydon has been running for many years under the gentle hand of British Rail. The line is poorly utilised, and I understand that it is accepted as a loss maker. Anticipation of a marked improvement in use to such a degree that the viability of that line in revenue terms would be increased stretches credibility.

When one takes into account the fact that commuters may be required to pay a premium, especially at key peak times, one wonders about the potential viability of the line in the light of the competition that will definitely come from bus services as a result of deregulation and lower bus fares in real terms.

Mr. Congdon: Does my hon. Friend concede that one of the problems of the West Croydon to Wimbledon link is that British Rail has ensured that the service runs only once every 45 minutes, which misses out much of the market? More significantly, it would be linked only between West Croydon and Wimbledon, whereas tramlink links not only West Croydon and Wimbledon, but Wimbledon right through to East Croydon and beyond. That link to East Croydon is especially critical because it links Victoria and further south.

Sir Paul Beresford: I thank my hon. Friend for his points. The infrequency of the link could be related more to supply meeting demand, which, in that context, was not considered. I remain unconvinced that, apart from myself, the use of a line from Wimbledon straight through to New Addington would be of tremendous advantage to anyone. The attraction of using tramlink to travel from Wimbledon to Croydon and on to New Addington or Beckenham probably passes by most of the residents of Wimbledon and may continue to do so for some time, but I may be proved wrong.

There is the possibility that the Bill will be passed and left on the shelf for 10 years because the finances to build and run the scheme will not materialise. It worries me that, if that occurred, it would be difficult to remove the Bill from the statute book during that time. The plans will therefore blight the area for a further 10 years unless something is built into the Bill to allow Croydon council, perhaps, as one of the promoters, to withdraw it in the event that it proves not to be economically viable.

[Sir Paul Beresford]

Nevertheless, I support the Bill, as it is a paving Bill, because the crunch decision time will be when the bids are made.

9.27 pm

Mr. Harry Cohen (Leyton): I shall try to be brief, as I know that the hon. Member for Beckenham (Mr. Merchant) wants to speak.

I am a supporter of trams in London, although they are more like light railways these days than the old trams. Trams are an alternative to road building, and that is to be welcomed. I went to Croydon to look at the proposals for the scheme yesterday and also meant to see those who object, but due to the usual muddle, for which I take responsibility, I did not see them and I apologise to them.

There are merits in the proposals, as my hon. Friends the Members for Thurrock (Mr. Mackinlay) and for Croydon, North-West (Mr. Wicks) said earlier. There would be big benefits in terms of creating employment, especially in the New Addington area, where 17 per cent. of the population of 25,000 are unemployed. The residents there are currently inadequately served, and under the scheme they would have the opportunity to get into central Croydon in 17 minutes, they would have access to part-time work in Purley, and they would have easy access to British Rail stations in central London. Those benefits should be taken into account.

Other advantages of an efficient public transport are the saving of travelling time, and a reduction in accidents and overall traffic congestion. However, I take on board the representations made by the objectors, that other traffic-calming measures would also be necessary if overall congestion is to be reduced.

My hon. Friend the Member for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennett) made some good points about open space. One of my concerns was that the scheme would use the edge of woodlands, although it could be argued that it gives access to those woodlands. However, compensatory land and trees need to be provided, and the objections of the ramblers, for example, should be fully taken into account.

There should also be better compensation for those who are affected by blight. Such compensation relates not only to this scheme, but to many others where it is unfair that people on the edge of schemes do not receive compensation. The Department should look into improving the compensation schemes for people just outside the affected areas.

The trouble is that the schemes seem to be chosen at random—first docklands, now Croydon. Although they are worth while, there may be other areas that would benefit even more from similar projects. There is no co-ordinated Government approach to trams, and there have been no studies of where they might best be sited in London. There has been no commitment of public money, and local authorities have not been helped to encourage the private investment which the Government claim to want.

This is a serious criticism. The Government have not co-ordinated tram projects and light railways in London. There is plenty of scope for trams in east London; the docklands light railway could be extended to my part of the world——

Mr. Norris: The hon. Gentleman is being a little unfair. The Manchester metro receives substantial Government support, as does the south Yorkshire supertram project. Indeed, the very purpose of section 56 is to provide grants for systems such as this. The hon. Gentleman's reference to east London reminds me of Barking, which has expressed an interest in a light rail project. We shall be interested to see what it comes up with.

The hon. Gentleman should bear in mind the fact that it would be quite wrong of the Department to set a national plan for light rail systems. Local communities should develop their own plans and then submit them to the Department. Such cases may be eligible for grant, and the Department considers each on its merits.

Mr. Cohen: I am grateful for that statement. I welcome the projects in Manchester and elsewhere. London lags behind the rest of the country. The Department has been a factor in that. Many local authorities wonder whether they would really find approval in the Department for schemes that may involve pump priming with public money.

Mr. Bennett: Would it not also be an advantage if rolling stock were interchangeable, and if encouragement were given to the buying of rolling stock made in Britain?

Mr. Cohen: Those are both good points, and they make the case for involving the Department and promoting trams throughout the country, particularly in London.

If mainly private money is involved, that is fine by me, but the gap will have to be filled with public funds. The hon. Member for Croydon, Central (Sir P. Beresford) talked about a small element of pump priming, but for this scheme alone that is likely to amount to £45 million—probably good value for money, but hardly a small sum. I repeat that the Government should decide which areas should be given tram systems as a matter of priority, particularly in London. That is another argument for Department of Transport involvement.

There is some concern that fares may rise. I hope that they will be properly regulated, and that operators will not be given carte blanche to charge what they like. I also hope that pensioners will still be able to use their concessionary fare cards on the trams. With those provisos, I still think that there is merit in the scheme.

9.33 pm

Mr. Piers Merchant (Beckenham): My views on this Bill seem to have had a good airing this evening already. It is almost as if, by a process of osmosis, hon. Members have discovered what I intended to say.

It will come as no surprise to the House to learn that I have serious reservations about the Bill: in fact, I do not like it at all. I have listened to the debate with great interest and I have heard echoes of my own concerns in many of the speeches given. I believe that, if one were to delve a bit deeper into hon. Members' views, one would find that many share a number of my grave doubts.

I have listened to the case made by my hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, North-East (Mr. Congdon). As I would have expected, he handled his brief with skill and charm. He is a close colleague of mine, whom I greatly respect; I admire his current work in his constituency and his past reputation as a councillor in Croydon borough.

He is my next-door neighbour, so the House will not be surprised to hear me say that, but it is my genuine opinion of him.

I share my hon. Friend's views on most local issues, including the quality and quantity of British Rail services and the future of South Norwood country park, which are particularly relevant to the Bill. We have worked closely together to save the park from a proposed development by Bromley borough, which would have devastated it. I therefore find it peculiar that he is now supporting a scheme that involves some destruction of the park.

Mr. Congdon: I have never made a secret of the fact that I would have preferred the scheme not to go through South Norwood country park. There was an option at an earlier stage that the tramlink should go up Elmers End road, but, unfortunately, Bromley council was not prepared to accept such a route. I can understand that, but the decision was unfortunate; hence the need to go across the country park. I would stress to my hon. Friend, however, that the impact on the park has been minimised, and that the route goes nowhere near the environmentally sensitive areas of the lake and the wetlands.

Mr. Merchant: I appreciate that my hon. Friend has concerns about the country park, and I am glad that he has expressed them.

Two immediate options are open to the promoters. One is for the system to end at Elmers End. That would bring the system into the Beckenham area—which my hon. Friend and the promoters seem to feel is an important and significant location. It would probably be possible to build a park-and-ride facility there, because there is a great deal of undeveloped land around Elmers End station.

The tramlink will come in to Elmers End, but only on a tiny shuttle service, which is projected to carry so few passengers that one wonders whether it will be worth running an hourly service on the line. The rest of the route into Beckenham could be left aside.

If the promoters feel that there is an advantage to be gained from taking the link further into Beckenham—which I question—another possibility is for the tramlink to run further alongside the British Rail line up to New Beckenham. There is a British Rail line, running from Elmers End right through Beckenham, which stops at stations such as Clock House, which is as close to the centre of Beckenham as Beckenham Junction station. That line also provides a direct route up to central London. If I have time, I will express some broader criticisms of the route into Beckenham junction and the need for it.

I want to make it clear that, although I am very critical of the Bill and many of the things that the promoters have suggested, I am not critical of my hon. Friend. I appreciate his position; he is, in a sense, a vehicle for the promoters of the scheme. I also appreciate that he recognises the need to ameliorate the traffic problems that exist in central Croydon. But the essence of my case is that, if there are problems there that need tackling, I do not see why it needs to involve the Beckenham area and running a link right up to Beckenham Junction.

I shall now turn to some of the remarks that have been made by other speakers this evening. My hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, North-East, who put the case for the promoters, rather simply and quickly dismissed the possibility of running better services on existing British Rail lines. I should like to ask him, and through him the promoters, what detailed studies were carried out on the alternative routes that could have been built up around the existing British Rail system in that part of London.

I believe that, if such studies were carried out properly, one would see that it was perfectly possible to run a high level of service, if there is a demand for it, on existing British Rail lines, possibly with one or two fairly inexpensive adaptations, rather than building a whole new rail system costing, we are told, some £140 million.

Mr. Bennett: Will the hon. Gentleman accept that many of the problems between tramways in Britain as opposed to tramways in Europe is that Europe has a whole series of regulations that allow joint running between tramways and heavy railways? So far, those regulations do not exist in Britain.

Clearly, one of the problems with many tramway schemes is that they cannot run, even for short distances, on railway tracks on which heavy trains run. I realise that there could be a major problem with possible accidents, but I would have thought that, with modern signalling, it should be possible to have joint running.

Mr. Merchant: I entirely accept that point. It is a genuine one, and relevant to the argument. The Department of Transport recently produced a detailed briefing on light rail systems, but it makes rather arbitrary distinctions between trams, light rail systems, rapid transport systems. Indeed, at the end of the day, what is a railway?

There is no clear divide between any of those different systems, other than the definitions that are imposed on them. There is a slow transformation from the heavy rail system at one end to the miniature light railway at the other. Only where regulations are drafted does there become a legal distinction between the two.

There is scope for investigating the possibility of having lighter vehicles on British Rail lines, perhaps at times mixed with existing heavy British Rail rolling stock. It should be possible to find means of allowing the tracks to run in closer proximity than they do at the moment—perhaps to be interchangeable to an extent.

The point with which I was dealing before the hon. Gentleman intervened was the use of existing British Rail track, not for the rolling stock to run on, but for the tramlink to run alongside. As my right hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, North-East rightly said, over a large section, but not all, of the route in Beckenham, that is exactly what is proposed.

However, my criticism relates to what my hon. Friend said. It particularly relates to the promoters, who say that, because these people have a British Rail line running at the bottom of their gardens, it does not matter that they should also have a light rail system operating there as well. It is a very peculiar argument that, if one is already troubled, it does not matter if one is troubled a great deal more, and troubled continuously.

For people who live close to a railway line, there is a great difference between a line that carries only a couple of services an hour and none after 8 pm, which is the situation over most of the stretch in Beckenham, and the line that runs from Beckenham Junction via Crystal Palace to Victoria. The former is very much a secondary line, although it is important for the people who travel on it.

That line is not heavily used. That will change with the arrival of tramlink into the area, as through trams will run

[Mr. Merchant]

possibly from 6 am until midnight, eight times an hour in each direction. That is a completely different situation. I reject the argument that it is acceptable to intensify use on that line. If anything, I believe that that is the one thing that should not happen. If we must have new transport systems in that area—something I challenge—they should not be in areas where people are already disturbed.

My constituency measures three miles by two miles and contains 14 BR stations serving destinations north, south, east and west. As some of my hon. Friends have explained, although there is a radial rail system in London which emerges from the centre of London, lines in my constituency run at perfect right angles to that. It is possible to travel east and west slightly more easily than it is to travel north and south. In addition to lines serving central London, it is possible to travel to Croydon on the existing BR system. However that service is difficult.

At present, there are two ways of travelling to Croydon. One way is via Addiscombe station, which will disappear under the tramway proposal, as that station will be removed and there will be no service to that area. Addiscombe is half a mile from East Croydon, and it is one and a half minutes by car—I know, because I have driven there.

Although I accept that that route is not as convenient as travelling right into the centre of Croydon, perhaps something could be done at the Croydon end to improve matters. However, there is a service at the moment from Beckenham to Croydon via Addiscombe. The other service runs via Crystal Palace.

With that transport infrastructure, it is questionable whether the people of Beckenham would benefit from the proposed tramlink.

Mr. Congdon: Will my hon. Friend at least concede that the best judgment about whether the people of Beckenham would see great value in tramlink lies with the assessment of the private operators as to whether the scheme would be viable? They judge that it would be viable as an integral part of the network. Will my hon. Friend at least concede that they, and not he or I, are the best people to judge?

Mr. Merchant: I have examined in extreme detail the assessments of the predicted number of passengers who would travel on every section of tramway. I have read the summaries and alternative proposals, which have been studied professionally and with great expertise. I believe that the promoters' figures for the use of the tramlink system are deeply and fatally flawed. I simply do not believe that the custom exists to make the system a viable project.

In addition, the prospect of capital finance emerging to make the project work is very unlikely. I suspect that, when people in the private sector are asked to come forward with large amounts of cash to finance the project, and they study in great detail the likely demand and passenger flow, they will conclude that it is a risk which is not worth taking.

My hon. Friend the Member for Croydon North-East made great play about the private sector providing capital for the scheme. I am not against the private sector doing that if it wishes, but the promoters have made it clear to me —I have pursued the matter in some detail because it is of great importance to me—that they will definitely need the addition of public funds in order to raise sufficient money to build the tramway system.

We now have a curious situation. The promoters say that they would like to build the system but that they will need public money and that they hope to raise private money on the back of the public money that will be pledged.

In addition, my hon. Friend the Minister has said, quite rightly, that he can give no pledge about public money for the system. He said that he would consider any application and that he might be in favour, but rightly added many caveats. He said that he would need to be convinced that the system was viable and that it would have to take its place among other competing systems.

The House has passed other such Bills. Indeed, I was on the Committee on one of them, and I did not oppose it, because I do not oppose light rail on principle. The system will have to take its place among those other demands and, most crucially, it will have to take its place alongside other Government priorities.

Perhaps I am doing an unusual thing, but I am offering my hon. Friend the opportunity not to have to come up with a large sum of public money. I am offering him a way out by suggesting that, if the Bill does not go through and the scheme is not developed, he can save the money that he might otherwise have felt obliged to put into it.

Mr. Ottaway: In such an eventuality, the money could be used for improving the road infrastructure in Croydon.

Mr. Merchant: That is possible, but I am sure that, if the House were offered £40 million and hon. Gentlemen were invited to decide how to spend the money, there would be no shortage of requests for it to be spent on a wide variety of alternative projects, either in transport or elsewhere.

My hon. Friend the Member for Croydon, South (Mr. Ottaway) said something that was echoed by a number of other hon. Gentlemen and caused me considerable concern. He said that this was only an enabling Bill. The implication is that it therefore does not matter much, and that we should give the project the go-ahead and see what emerges after all the details have been worked out. If we reach that stage, to whom should the promoters go for permission to continue? They will have to go to no one because, if they have the money, they can go ahead with the scheme within the wide powers given by the Bill.

My interest is the ordinary people who live in my constituency and, to an extent, those who live elsewhere but will be affected by the project, who have expressed grave concern about the impact that building and operating the tramlink will have on their houses and daily lives. They have a right to be heard, and they are entitled to have their concerns taken into account.

I know that the Committee will consider much of their evidence, and I am glad about that, but it will know that this is only an enabling Bill, so its members may feel that, on balance, the principle of the Bill is acceptable so long as various measures are taken to look after the concerns of the hundreds of people who will be affected by the tramlink.

When the pressure is off—the pressure of the commercial and transport lobby, who are pushing the scheme so hard—will the promoters be prepared to talk to those people who live in the houses affected? I suspect that

they will be far more interested in pushing ahead with the project, if they can get the money. So I am worried about the Bill being dismissed as simply an enabling Bill.

Mr. Michael Colvin (Romsey and Waterside): We have just been through a similar debate in relation to Southampton. The House failed to pass a similar project because no provisions had been made for park and ride. Can my hon. Friend tell the House how much provision has been made in this case for car parks, so that people can park their cars before getting on the tramway system? That is fundamental to the viability of the system.

Mr. Merchant: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for mentioning that, because it is essential. Very few, if any, light rail systems of this nature can operate without feeder passengers and park-and-ride facilities. That is simply because enough passengers cannot be attracted from a wide enough area to make such a system viable, particularly in the deregulated and competitive atmosphere that we are likely to face by the time the project, if it goes ahead, is built.

The only way in which such systems can become viable is by having good park-and-ride provision, There is no such provision in the system. It is not catered for by the Bill, and its promoters have been extremely coy about the possibility of it. In fact, they have effectively said that they have rejected the addition of park-and-ride facilities in most areas of the system.

In Beckenham, about which I am most concerned, the Beckenham Junction link has no park-and-ride facilities at all. That is of grave concern to my constituents, because they feel that the immediate danger they face is that people who use the system will come in——

Mr. Congdon *rose in his place and claimed to move,* That the Question be now put.

Question put, That the Question be now put:—

The House divided: Ayes 199, Noes 8.

Division No. 356] **[8.55 pm**

AYES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Allen, Graham
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Austin-Walker, John
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Bates, Michael
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Benton, Joe
Beresford, Sir Paul
Bermingham, Gerald
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Boateng, Paul
Boswell, Tim
Boyes, Roland
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Cash, William
Chapman, Sydney
Clappison, James
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Cohen, Harry
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Dowd, Jim
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Durant, Sir Anthony
Eggar, Tim
Etherington, Bill
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forth, Eric
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fraser, John
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
Fry, Peter
Gallie, Phil
Gerrard, Neil
Gillan, Cheryl
Godsiff, Roger
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hardy, Peter
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Hendry, Charles
Heppell, John
Hinchliffe, David
Hood, Jimmy
Hoyle, Doug
Hunter, Andrew
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Legg, Barry
Leighton, Ron
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lewis, Terry
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Luff, Peter
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
McFall, John
MacKay, Andrew
Mackinlay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLeish, Henry
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Maitland, Lady Olga
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Maxton, John
Milligan, Stephen
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Morley, Elliot
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mullin, Chris
Nelson, Anthony
Nicholls, Patrick
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pickles, Eric
Pike, Peter L.
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Richards, Rod
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rooney, Terry
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soames, Nicholas
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Sproat, Iain
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Stephen, Michael
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Tracey, Richard
Trend, Michael
Trotter, Neville
Wallace, James
Waller, Gary
Walley, Joan
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Whittingdale, John
Wicks, Malcolm
Willetts, David
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Wood, Timothy
Wray, Jimmy
Yeo, Tim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Vivian Bendall and
Mr. Richard Ottaway.

NOES

Beggs, Roy
Bennett, Andrew F.
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Horam, John
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Piers Merchant and
Mr. Edward Leigh.

Bill read a Second time, and committed.

ESTIMATES AND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1993-94

It being after Ten o'clock, MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER, *pursuant to paragraph (5) of Standing Order No. 52 (Consideration of Estimates), put forthwith the deferred Question on Estimates and Supplementary Estimates, 1993-94 (Class VIII, Vote 1) and the Questions necessary to dispose of proceedings on the other estimates appointed for consideration this day.*

Class VIII, Vote 1

Resolved,

That a further sum, not exceeding £1,807,298,000 be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st March 1994 for expenditure by the Home Office on compensation for criminal injuries, probation, police and superannuation payments for police and fire services.

Class VIII, Vote 3

Resolved,

That a further sum, not exceeding £745,493,000, be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st March 1994 for expenditure by the Home Office on police, the forensic science service, emergency planning, fire, the Fire Service College, court services, other services related to crime, probation and after-care, miscellaneous services, prevention of drug abuse, control of immigration and nationality, issue of passports etc., community services; and on administration (excluding the provision made for prisons administration carried on Class VIII, Vote 2).

Class IX, Vote 1

Resolved,

That a further sum, not exceeding £427,760,000, be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st March 1994 for expenditure by the Lord Chancellor's Department on the court service, magistrates' courts, legal aid administration, tribunals, the court building programme, certain other legal services and a payment to the Land Registry Trading Fund.

Class IX, Vote 5

Resolved,

That a further sum, not exceeding £135,693,000, be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st March 1994 for expenditure by the Crown Prosecution Service on administrative costs including the hire of private prosecuting agents.

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER *then put the Question which she was directed to put pursuant to paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 53 (Questions on voting of estimates, &c.)*

Resolved,

That a further sum, not exceeding £92,536,513,000, be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund to complete or defray the charges for Defence and Civil Services for the year ending on 31st March 1994, as set out in House of Commons Papers Nos. 495, 496, 497 and 711.

Bill ordered to be brought in upon the five foregoing Resolutions and upon the Resolution of 10th June and the eight Resolutions of 8th July, relating to estimates, by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Michael Portillo, Mr. Stephen Dorrell, Sir John Cope and Mr. Anthony Nelson.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (APPROPRIATION) (NO. 2) BILL

Mr. Anthony Nelson accordingly presented a Bill to apply a sums out of the Consolidated Fund to the service of the year ending on 31st March 1994, to appropriate the supplies granted in this Session of Parliament, and to repeal certain Consolidated Fund and Appropriation Acts: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time tomorrow, and to be printed. [Bill 192.]

10.10 pm

Mr. Harry Barnes (Derbyshire, North-East): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. On 7 February 1992, as can be found in column 325 of *Hansard*, the hon. Member for Eltham (Mr. Bottomley) asked a question about the Widgery tribunal, which was answered by the Attorney-General. I tabled a question for 18 October, which came fourth in the list of questions to the Attorney-General on that subject. I have now received a letter saying that it has been transferred to questions on Northern Ireland—which means that, as far as oral questions for 18 October are concerned, it has disappeared. However, it is clearly established by precedent that such matters should be dealt with by the Attorney-General: he deals with tribunal issues.

I seek your advice, Madam Deputy Speaker. How can I ensure that my question is re-established on the list of questions to be answered orally by the Attorney-General?

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): That is not a matter for the Chair; the hon. Gentleman must pursue it with the Ministers concerned.

Suppression of Terrorism (India)

10.12 pm

The Minister of State, Home Office (Mr. David Maclean): I beg to move,

That the draft Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993, which was laid before this House on 9th July, be approved.

Extradition is the cornerstone of the international effort to ensure that criminals cannot escape justice by crossing frontiers. It is increasingly recognised by Governments that this effort needs to be reinforced. The order will enable the United Kingdom to ratify the extradition treaty that we concluded with India in 1992.

Extradition arrangements with India go back for over a century. This new treaty strengthens them, and sends an important message to terrorists that their activities will not be tolerated. To a very large extent, the treaty replicates the existing arrangements—the Commonwealth scheme—under which we and India are already able to extradite suspected or convicted offenders between ourselves, and indeed almost all other Commonwealth countries. Some hon. Members have asked why we need to have a treaty at all. As I will demonstrate, the treaty is an important joint statement of our mutual determination to defeat terrorism, for there are two new features which the order will enable us to introduce for the first time into our arrangements with India.

First, we and the Indian Government have agreed that, for the purposes of extradition between us, a fugitive will no longer be able to resist his extradition on the grounds that any of the offences listed in the treaty was of a "political" character, and therefore outside the scope of extradition. That will bring our arrangements with India into line with those with almost all western European states, and with the United States of America.

The listed offences, which find their equivalent in schedule 1 to the Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978, are serious, and they are those most likely to be terrorist related. Among other things, they relate to the hijacking of aircraft, hostage taking, murder, manslaughter and serious physical assaults, causing explosions, and some firearms offences. I am sure that no Member of the House would wish those accused of such crimes to be able to escape extradition solely on the ground that they are politically motivated. Indeed, I do not believe that our courts would accept that incidents of terrorist violence should be regarded as political. So this element of the treaty is not so much a curtailment to one of the traditional safeguards that all extradition arrangements have contained as a tightening of the law.

Let me assure the House that the treaty does not affect any other safeguard for the fugitive. Every case will continue to be considered on its merits and in strict accordance with our law. Offences under military law will continue to be outside the scope of extradition, unless they are also offences under the general criminal law of both countries.

Mr. Max Madden (Bradford, West): Will the Minister tell the House how many applications for extradition India has made in the past 10 years, and how many complaints it has made about the current provisions of the Commonwealth scheme?

Mr. Maclean: I am not aware of any severe complaints about the Commonwealth scheme, but since the Fugitive Offenders Act 1967 came into force on 1 September 1967 the Indian Government have extradited one person to the United Kingdom in 1978, and that person was later convicted here of perjury and various forgery charges. I understand that three applications are currently outstanding, two from 1985 for conspiracy and deception suspects and one from 1987 for a conspiracy and fraud suspect. I hope that that is a full answer to the hon. Gentleman.

The important point is that the country to which a fugitive is returned will continue to be unable to add on any new charges for offences that were not disclosed by the same set of facts as the extradition offence, unless the returning country has consented. All requests to this country will continue to be scrutinised twice by Ministers, and at least once by the courts.

Mr. Terry Dicks (Hayes and Harlington): My hon. Friend's statement so far assumes that the Indian Government act as a democratic organisation, but they do not. Some of my hon. Friends and I believe that if people are deported, their human rights will not be recognised, as is often the case in India now.

Mr. Maclean: I shall come to India's human rights record in a moment, and to the firm assurances that the Indian Government have given the British Government. I know that there are deeply held views on both sides of the Chamber and on both, or all, sides of the argument. However, I must be concerned not with political matters but with ensuring that any application that comes before the British Government and the British courts is treated fairly and objectively in terms of British law. I assure my hon. Friend and all hon. Members that, whatever their individual opinions may be about the political situation in other countries, including India, that is not a consideration for the British courts.

Mr. Keith Vaz (Leicester, East): Why not?

Mr. Maclean: When such cases come before Ministers and before the British courts, the facts will be studied. A prima facie case, which would satisfy our courts that there is a case to answer, will have to be produced. I do not think that my hon. Friends would want the British courts to start involving themselves in extraneous political considerations.

Mr. Harry Greenway (Ealing, North): My hon. Friend will know about the present problems relating to the availability of legal aid. Will he assure the House that any individual subjected to such pressure will be properly represented in court? Surely we should guarantee that as a basic right of any individual in such a position.

Mr. Maclean: I do not think that my hon. Friend is suggesting that we should make special or additional changes to the legal aid scheme. He knows how it operates and all those who are eligible for it. I would merely stress that any applications coming before the British Government will be scrutinised twice by Ministers and at least once by the British courts. We will be scrutinising them on the basis of the facts and whether there is a prima facie case to answer.

Mr. John Heppell (Nottingham, East): With how many states outside western Europe have the Government separate extradition treaties?

Mr. Maclean: We have an extradition treaty with most countries in western Europe and with the United States of America. We have now concluded an extradition treaty with India. Whether we have further extradition treaties with other countries is a matter for negotiation and consideration. The countries that would want to seek reciprocal arrangements with us are inevitably those that have an interest in terrorist matters. Those countries that have no terrorist problems are unlikely to want to conclude a treaty with us, although we have deep concerns about terrorism.

Extradition will remain the ultimate discretion of my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary and his decisions will continue to be the subject of scrutiny by the courts. He must refuse if there is reason to believe the request is not bona fide or if the person's trial or treatment on return would be prejudiced by his or her race, religion, nationality or political opinions. We take that duty and obligation very seriously.

Sir Dudley Smith (Warwick and Leamington): I appreciate what my hon. Friend is trying to achieve and I am not against the general principle. However, is he aware that a large number of Sikhs who are British citizens are very much opposed to many of the efforts of the Indian Government, particularly on matters of human rights? They must be at least uneasy about some of the provisions.

Mr. Maclean: I note and respect the point that my hon. Friend has made. Of course, I am aware of those concerns, which will be felt in many quarters, and I shall talk about human rights in a moment.

I repeat the sentence that I have just uttered about the duty on my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and myself in considering the cases. We will operate as we are required to do by law. We must refuse if there is reason to believe that the request is not bona fide or if we suspect or have reason to believe that the person's trial or treatment on return would be prejudiced by reason of race, religion or nationality. I can give my hon. Friend that firm assurance.

Mr. Tom Cox (Tooting): The hon. Gentleman rightly talks about the role of the courts here. However, is he equally aware that hon. Members on both sides of the Chamber are concerned about the role of the courts in India? What assurance do we have from the Indian Government that anyone who is extradited from this country to India will soon be brought before the courts, will have adequate legal representation in the courts and will not be subject to pressures—whatever pressures they may be, and there will most certainly be physical pressures —once they are returned to India?

Mr. Maclean: We would not have concluded the treaty or be bringing the order before the House if we had good reason to believe that those suggestions would turn out to be the reality.

Of course, we shall monitor carefully any requests for extradition. If one were received and granted, we would monitor carefully what happened if and when a person was returned.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Maclean: I have given way a great deal already and many hon. Members want to speak. I wish to conclude my remarks and hon. Gentlemen may make their own speeches.

The Secretary of State must also refuse if it would be unjust or oppressive to return the person either because the offence was trivial or committed a long time ago or where there is reason to believe that the accusation was not made in good faith or in the interests of justice.

Genuine political refugees have nothing to fear from the treaty or from the order. Our law will continue to preclude extradition where we believe that the request has been politically motivated, and the treaty contemplates nothing less. *[Interruption.]* I must make progress. My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs also wishes to speak in this debate.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. Hon. Members know that, if the Minister does not give way, they must resume their seats.

Mr. Peter L. Pike (Burnley): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. Many of us know that we will not be called in this debate. If we have reasonable points to put briefly to the Minister, as a courtesy to the House he should at least let us put them to him.

Madam Deputy Speaker: That is not for the Chair to decide.

Mr. Maclean: I deliberately kept my speech short to allow as many hon. Members as possible to intervene. I have already given way a number of times in this short debate—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. Hon. Members must contain themselves.

Mr. Maclean: I am sure——

Mr. Pike: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Maclean: I will not give way.

I am sure that right hon. and hon. Members will agree that suspected terrorists should not be able to exploit a defence that was certainly not intended to shield them from the justice of our democratic partners. We cannot allow the United Kingdom to be seen as a safe haven for such people. The effect of the order is to say to fugitives that they cannot escape justice for serious crimes simply by claiming that they were politically motivated. If we are satisfied that they will receive fair treatment, they can expect to be returned.

It is obvious that some hon. Members will remain concerned at the prospect of returning terrorists or, indeed, anyone else to India because of anxiety about human rights in that country.

Mr. Jeremy Corbyn (Islington, North): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The Minister spoke of "returning terrorists" to India in advance of a trial. Surely, he should not say that. He should say people who are accused, suspected or indicted on charges—he should not say that they are terrorists.

Madam Deputy Speaker: That is a point for debate; it is not a point of order for the Chair.

Mr. Maclean: I am sorry that the debate has come down to such semantics. If it makes hon. Members happy, of course I mean suspected terrorists.

We recognise the genuine concerns of hon. Members about the human rights situation. We have spoken frankly to the Indian Government about the importance that we attach to human rights. We have been encouraged by the decision of the Indian Government to legislate for an independent Indian human rights commission. The Indian Prime Minister has assured us that violations of human rights are and will be fully investigated and wrong-doers punished. He is determined to ensure that his country deserves international respect, of which this treaty is an expression.

I explained earlier that the treaty and the order contain two differences from our previous extradition arrangements with India under the Commonwealth scheme. I have spoken briefly about the first difference and, undoubtedly, many hon. Members will have points to make about that. I am glad that my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary is here to take on board those points and respond to them, if he has an opportunity to do so.

Mr. Vaz: On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I hope that it is a proper point of order.

Mr. Vaz: It is a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. This is the second time in 24 hours that a Home Office Minister has come to the Dispatch Box and read out a speech prepared by the Home Office without giving way to hon. Members on either side of the House. This order is as important as any other business before the House. It concerns the ratification of a treaty that has been signed by a Minister.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It is not a matter of order for the Chair. As I said before, and as the hon. Gentleman knows full well, it is a matter for whoever has the floor of to decide whether to give way. As a matter of fact, the Minister has given way.

Mr. Maclean: For the record, I have given way five times in a one-and-a-half-hour debate.

The second new feature is the extension of United Kingdom jurisdiction over certain of the more serious offences listed in schedule 1 to the 1978 Act when they have been committed or attempted in India.

Extra-territorial jurisdiction can be a valuable tool in our efforts to bring criminals to justice. It is an alternative to extradition, rather than a replacement for it. For example, under the order, a person could be prosecuted in the United Kingdom for causing an explosion in India with intent to endanger life if, for some reason, extradition were not possible and all the evidential requirements of our system could be met. The same would apply in a case of murder, kidnapping, hijacking, and other serious terrorist offences. This new jurisdiction in the case of India will also enable us, in due course, to ensure that our courts are able to enforce the orders of Indian courts confiscating terrorists' funds. That will be the subject of an Order in Council under the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1989.

Because certain serious crimes of violence committed in India will, as I have explained, become offences in the United Kingdom, it will as a consequence become an offence in the United Kingdom to conspire to incite in the United Kingdom people to commit such serious crimes of violence in India. Once again, this will bring our arrangements with India into line with those with most western European countries and the United States of America. Just as it is unacceptable that those who commit in India serious crimes of this nature should abuse the extradition procedures of this country——

Mr. Oliver Heald (Hertfordshire, North): Will my hon. Friend give way?

Mr. Maclean: I shall conclude this section and then give way briefly.

Those who organise crimess from this country cannot be allowed to escape the consequences, simply because their intention was to see a very serious crime committed in another country. Needless to say, any such charge would have to be accompanied by sufficient evidence to persuade our courts that it was substantiated.

Mr. Heald: Many of my constituents who are Sikhs and Kashmiris are concerned that, whereas in Europe we are reasonably satisfied that the judicial arrangements for the people who are extradited are acceptable, in India the judicial system is not as effective and has a political background to it, so there is a risk of not getting a fair trial. Would my hon. Friend wish to comment on that?

Mr. Maclean: We take the view that, if we can conclude an extradition treaty with another democratic Government, it is because we have been satisfied that the judicial system is such that trials will be fair. I repeat: before anyone is extradited, he or she will have to satisfy British legal procedures and British Ministers that there is a prima facie case to answer. The burden of proof will be the same burden as we have in British courts in the present committal proceedings.

Obviously, genuinely held doubts and concerns will remain in some quarters of the House. Let me re-emphasise that, to a very large degree, the treaty represents nothing more than an endorsement of the current state of affairs. But it also shows, importantly, that we intend to fight terrorism in co-operation with the Indian Government.

The Indian Parliament is already part-way through the process of making the necessary legislative arrangements to enable ratification of the treaty. The order will come into force only when the Indian procedures have been completed, and on the day when we exchange instruments of ratification.

The bulk of the treaty requires no legislation in order to give effect to it in this country, but its two special features, which are the subject of the order and which I have endeavoured to explain simply, mark it out. They send a firm message to terrorists that neither we nor the Indians will tolerate their activities within our borders and that we will ensure that they face justice in one or other of our countries if they do not take heed.

I commend the order to the House.

10.32 pm

Mr. Graham Allen (Nottingham, North): Last night the Government introduced a series of petty, grudging and introverted measures to handicap our immigration and asylum appeals system. Only one day later, they bring to the House another measure which may be the subject of widely differing interpretations. The Labour party and, I hope, every hon. Member fully supports initiatives intended to combat terrorism and human rights abuses.

[Mr. Graham Allen]

The danger is that the Government may be seen to be dealing with one of those problems, through this extradition treaty, at the expense of the other.

The treaty was widely criticised for the context in which it was signed. We certainly want to increase trade with a close friend and ally, as India is, but is this order the political price being extracted for a number of trade deals? When the Prime Minister visited India—indeed, when he addressed the British-Indian parliamentary group earlier this week—were human rights as high as trade issues on his agenda? I hope that the Minister will answer that question.

The Labour party welcomes in principle terrorism extradition provisions, wherever they apply. Terrorism is not merely a blight on the democracies of the west but, sadly, must be faced by all democracies. We must be constantly vigilant against it and the Labour party has always supported all reasonable international attempts to bring terrorists to trial.

The Government cannot, however, hide behind our loathing of terrorism. A number of questions about the order must be answered and I hope that the Minister or his colleague will answer our five basic questions—the Minister has already tackled one or two of them in his speech—when he winds up the debate.

First, why do the Indian Government require additional powers? Has a case been made for saying that the Commonwealth extradition agreement is not adequate to tackle the problems of the issue facing India and the United Kingdom?

Secondly, as my hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, West (Mr. Madden) asked, how many complaints have been received about the inadequacy of the Commowealth extradition agreement? At face value, only one request in 10 years from the entire area hardly shows a massive demand for change.

Thirdly, what new powers will be exercised under the new treaty? Is it window dressing or a diplomatic symbol agreed because of the Prime Minister's visit to India?

Fourthly, if India can get a separate treaty, are the Government negotiating a further treaty with any other country with terrorism problems?

Fifthly, on a more technical issue, do the provisions of the extradition treaty apply to people with dual nationality as well as to Indian nationals?

Our welcome for the order is tempered by a grave disquiet about continuing reports of breaches of human rights in India, many of which are alleged to be perpetrated or implicitly condoned by those in positions of power in both the military and the Government there. I will elaborate on that issue shortly.

Mr. Pike: My hon. Friend mentioned violations of human rights. He will therefore recognise the problem of Kashmir. Is it not strange that, although the Government said that the relevant United Nations resolution should be applied to Kashmir, they now seem prepared to waive that? How will they regard a political offence in relation to Kashmir when for many years they have clearly refused to carry out the United Nations resolution?

Mr. Allen: My hon. Friend makes a telling point.

Mr. David Young (Bolton, South-East): Will my hon. Friend take on board the concern felt by many hon. Members who represent Kashmiri communities about the Indian Government's failure to allow Amnesty International, the press and Members of Parliament from this country to visit India to investigate the position there? The way in which the measure is being railroaded through makes the British legal system look like an instrument for Indian oppression. Is there not a deep and abiding concern that the term "terrorist" may be being used instead of the term "freedom fighter"? We are against genuine terrorists, but the United Kingdom cannot act as an instrument of oppression of another state.

Mr. Allen: My hon. Friend will know that Labour Members—not least my hon. and right hon. Friends from the shadow Foreign Office team—have raised those matters continually and will continue to do so. However, I am pleased to welcome the fact that the Indian Government are prepared to allow international human rights organisations to enter areas of concern. I understand that for some years Amnesty International was not allowed to visit parts of Kashmir. I shall seek further reassurances on the subject, but I am pleased to hear what I understand to be an agreement to the effect that Amnesty International will be allowed to go in and investigate matters where it feels it appropriate to do so.

On the issue of human rights abuses, Amnesty International's 1992 report states:

> "25,000 political prisoners, including some prisoners of conscience, were held without charge or trial under special or preventative detention laws. Torture and ill-treatment continued to be widespread and systematic, resulting in scores of deaths in custody. Hundreds of people 'disappeared' or were extra-judicially executed in 'encounters' staged by the police or security forces. The security forces deliberately killed unarmed civilians suspected of supporting insurgents. At least six people were judicially executed."

I think that the House will agree that if that report is correct it is profoundly disturbing for a country which holds a special and honoured place in the fellowship of modern democratic nations.

Mr. John Watts (Slough): The hon. Gentleman said that the fact that the Indian Government were expressing a willingness to open up to Amnesty International and take action on human rights was to be welcomed. Does he agree that it would have been better if the British Government had waited until the measures were in place so that the Indian Government could point to an improved human rights record before the order was brought before the House tonight?

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Allen: The response from both sides of the House to the hon. Gentleman's intervention shows hon. Members' feelings on the subject.

Mr. Corbyn: While an examination by Amnesty International or other human rights organisations of the conditions in which prisoners are held is important and necessary, and should have been available for 20 years, does not a fundamental problem remain? The police in India have taken upon themselves—with Government support—the power to arrest and detain without charge or trial for unlimited periods, in secret prisons and without the opportunity for the due process of law. It is on that basis that torture follows.

Mr. Allen: The Acts passed in India which legitimise many of the practices to which Amnesty International and

I have referred lie at the centre of the problem. The state appears to feel that it is under threat and therefore passes Acts which legitimise actions that would be deplored by all hon. Members. That is one of the reasons why we are less than enthusiastic about supporting the extension of extradition rights, which were previously limited to our European Community partners and the United States.

Such issues have led my hon. Friends the Members for Bradford, West, for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer), for Tooting (Mr. Cox) and for Birmingham, Small Heath (Mr. Godsiff) and many other colleagues from both sides of the House to attend the debate. I pay tribute to them for doing so. It should be placed on record that many hon. Members from all parties are present. To my knowledge, there is no three-line Whip for the debate. The fact that both sides of the House are crowded at this time of night and on such a day shows the seriousness with which hon. Members view the subject.

Mr. Harry Greenway: I appreciate what the hon. Gentleman has been saying, and what he has just said about the presence of hon. Members from both sides of the House who are extremely concerned about the human rights aspects of the matter. Without wishing to embarrass the hon. Gentleman, as the official Labour spokesman on the subject, will he join in the Lobby a number of us who feel that we must vote against the extradition treaty?

Mr. Allen: I hope that it will become clear as I continue my speech that the Opposition feel that the extradition provisions on terrorism are obviously necessary in some parts of the globe. I do not believe that anyone would wish to be associated with any weakening of the fight against terrorism. But equally, I hope that the reservations that I have outlined so far will make it clear to hon. Members on both sides of the House that we have some profound difficulties with the way in which the Government have drawn up the agreement and the way in which they are proceeding tonight.

Mr. Michael Fabricant (Mid-Staffordshire): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Allen: No, I wish to make some progress. I have been relatively generous in giving way. I will give way to the hon. Gentleman later.

It would be unfair and unbalanced exclusively to blame the Indian authorities for abuses of rights in India. There is no question but that militant groups have also been responsible for breaches of human rights. For example, in their report on human rights in Jammu and Kashmir, Asia Watch and Physicians for Human Rights identified executions, rape, torture and indiscriminate attacks by militant groups in Kashmir. Those abuses can never be ignored or condoned, regardless of any personal views about the status of Kashmir.

If the Government had accompanied signing the treaty or publication of the order with a condemnation of rights abuses of all natures by all parties in India, and made positive proposals to help to reduce them, perhaps their stance would be more acceptable. No one underestimates the massive and intractable difficulties facing India and its political society. Once again, however, I hope that the Minister will take this opportunity, either in his reply or in an intervention, to reassure the House that the Government will make every effort to promote the cause of human rights in India.

We unequivocally welcome the apparent change in the Indian Government's policy on allowing Amnesty into areas to which it was previously denied access. If the provisions are not to lead to miscarriages of justice, abuse of rights—as I have said, hon. Members are right to have expressed anxiety at the extent of abuse in India—it is vital that the British Government effectively enforce articles 9 and 16 of the treaty. Article 9 allows refusals of extradition on the grounds of political opinion, and article 16 allows refusals on the grounds that the death penalty may be incurred.

We need reassurances from the Minister not only that adequate safeguards exist but that the political will exists to enforce them. Assurances must be given that the treaty would be suspended if the death sentence would be imposed on anyone extradited from Britain under the treaty. I urge the Minister not to hesitate to refuse extradition if a real risk exists of the accused receiving an unfair trial.

Mr. Fabricant: The hon. Gentleman has rightly identified some reservations that are held by hon. Members on both sides of the Chamber, but four times I have counted the hon. Gentleman saying that his party has supported the general fight against terrorism. Why, then, has his party consistently opposed the Prevention of Terrorism Act?

Mr. Allen: I apologise to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for giving way to the hon. Gentleman. He becomes a bigger joke every time he opens his mouth.

The Minister might also take the chance later to comment on the worries that many hon. Members have about the long delays in bringing cases to trial in India. Commenting on other nations taking a long time to bring cases to trial may wear a little thin when we look at the record of the judiciary and legal system in Britain. None the less, the delays are a serious matter and I hope that the Minister will take them into consideration.

The Government must also be sensitive to the signals that the order may give to the settled communities in the United Kingdom. Fears have rightly been expressed about the implications for legitimate fund-raising activities in the communities in the United Kingdom. That fear is that they might eventually be drawn into the extradition net as well. I understand that further proposals to limit fund raising are possibly in the pipeline. I hope that the Minister will reassure the wider communities who do a great deal of perfectly legitimate fund raising that there is no possibility of those who raise such funds being caught by any provision which might result in their extradition.

Mr. Dicks: Would the hon. Gentleman care to comment on the activities of the Indian security services among the Sikh and Muslim communities in this country?

Mr. Allen: If the hon. Gentleman has any evidence of such activity, we shall all be interested to hear about it. I have none.

This order is a small piece of a larger puzzle. That puzzle is not a matter for us; it is a picture that the Indian Government and people will have to piece together. It will involve establishing a safe and democratic role for India in the international community. India will have to resolve its relationship with its neighbours, especially Pakistan. It will also have to work out solutions to the ethnic and religious troubles from which its communities suffer. These

[Mr. Allen]

problems are the province of the people of India and only they can resolve them. As a long-standing friend of India, the British Government have a crucial role to play. We shall be respected as India's friend only by being—and being seen to be—even-handed.

10.50 pm

Mr. Gary Waller (Keighley): It might be said that nothing could be more reasonable or right than an extradition treaty directed against terrorism. Treaties of this kind, however, should only be concluded between countries whose legal processes and methods of upholding justice and order show a close correspondence. It is to my great regret that that cannot be said of our country and India, despite the fact that it is a great country with which we wish to enjoy the warmest relations.

There must be serious doubts about the wisdom of concluding an extradition treaty with a country whose recent human rights record reads as badly as India's. For many years, I have been a member of Amnesty International. It has a first-class record of investigating allegations of human rights abuse and of recording their outcome without fear or favour. Any country whose record is under scrutiny is unwise to seek to undermine Amnesty's reputation.

Recognising pressure from this and other directions, India has often, and for many years, promised to open up the country to visits from human rights organisations, but invariably applications for such visits have ended up with refusals or obstruction. The hon. Member for Nottingham, North (Mr. Allen) should pay close attention to that fact.

Recently, assurances have been given that such visits would be acceptable in principle, provided that state and central Governments were both in agreement. But only a matter of a few days ago, Amnesty's visit to Bombay—I remind the House that there is no insurgency there—was refused. It is therefore hardly surprising that some scepticism about such announcements has developed.

Interestingly enough, three days ago, on 17 July, the Indian High Commissioner in London, Dr. Singhvi, stated on a BBC World Service broadcast that international human rights organisations would now be allowed to enter Kashmir "under certain conditions". He repeated the offer on Monday in the presence of many of the hon. Members who are present for this debate. Although the commitment is welcome in principle, it would be helpful to know what those conditions are.

Will Amnesty officials be allowed to talk not only to security officers and Government officials but to representatives of opposition groups and non-governmental organisations? Will they be able to travel freely without military or Government escort? We need answers to these key questions. As Her Majesty's Government have in the past urged India to admit human rights organisations, I hope that they will press for this agreement in principle to be put speedily into effect, with none of the restrictions that would throw doubt on the ability of human rights organisations to investigate fully and freely.

Concern has been expressed about how the treaty will relate to the disputed areas of Jammu and Kashmir. Many would argue that, since those areas are still subject to dispute, special provisions should apply to that treaty.

One cannot overlook the reports of apparently deliberate killings of unarmed civilians by members of the security forces. One cannot ignore the widespread claims of torture, rape and the arbitrary arrests of suspected separatists. An increasing number of them are alleged to have disapeared or died while in custody. Since 1985, nearly 500 cases of deaths in custody have been recorded in India. Very few have been investigated properly. Amnesty and other organisations have recorded hundreds of such cases, and I wish there was time in this short debate to refer to them. I shall, however, refer to one.

In December 1990, a doctor in Srinagar made a statement about a patient that he had treated in hospital. It is important to note that, in late 1989, extra powers had been granted to the security forces in response to mounting violence on the part of armed opposition groups in the state. The doctor reported:

"I yesterday discharged a patient aged between 18 and 20, who had been in this hospital for three months. Twenty per cent. or more of his body had suffered deep burns from a hot clothes iron. These burns were . . . so serious that I and other doctors had only just succeeded in saving his life. He had also been shot by a bullet in the armpit. His torturing with the clothes iron had all been done during interrogation by the regular army at Sopore."

It is because of that case, and so many others, that great concern has been expressed, here and in the Indian subcontinent, about the way in which those who are extradited and the many others held in Jannu, Kashmir and other disputed parts of India will be treated in custody.

I remind the House that special laws are in force in Jammu and Kashmir that curb legal safeguards and encourage human rights violations, for example, the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act and the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act. That legislation tends to give the security forces carte blanche for their actions.

Allegations about human rights abuses have also been made in Assam and Punjab. Earlier in the year, numerous allegations were made even in Delhi about human rights abuses and deaths in custody following torture by the police.

The Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Rao, has issued a clear condemnation of such behaviour. On 17 February, he addressed the Indian police and acknowledged the threat to the reputation of India on the world stage. He urged the police to

"ensure that excesses are not committed, especially in custody. Human rights are of paramount importance in a democracy like ours."

Recognition at the highest level of a serious problem of custodial violence, which demands to be addressed, has not been matched by an ability or determination to carry into practice the commitment, given in the name of India, to protect human rights. Last year, the Government said that they would strengthen legal safeguards for detainees in custody, but they have obviously failed to take the necessary action.

Such injustices can be remedied, even in part, only by ensuring that, in all cases of torture and death in custody, a speedy independent inquiry is held, and those

responsible are brought to justice. I believe that the extradition treaty should not have been concluded until such a commitment had been given.

It is true that murders and atrocities have been committed by armed opponents of the Indian Government, many of them separatists. Surely it is worth bearing in mind the fact that nothing feeds militancy more assiduously than oppression and unpunished atrocities committed by those who are supposed to be responsible for upholding law and order. It is hardly surprising that th number of people seeking separation from India has swelled since India moved 500,000 security forces into Jammu and Kashmir and gave them such wide discretion to act. It should be noted that India has as many troops occupied with those people it regards as its own, as it has dedicated to external defence.

India is, of course, under pressure and I believe that that pressure should continue. Last month, the United States Congress passed an amendment to the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill cutting $4·1 million from US overseas aid to India. It is worth remembering that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said shortly after taking office that the British Government's policy in future would be to link foreign aid to a country's human rights record, and that India is this country's leading recipient in terms of foreign aid.

In relation to the need for an extradition treaty, my hon. Friend the Minister said that passing this measure tonight will send a signal. I suggest that, to a considerable extent, it will signal to India that Britain is willing to tolerate abuses of the kind to which I have referred. I am sure that we would not be willing to tolerate that, but that is the signal which, regrettably, many people will understand. In this country, the treaty will be seen as a threat hanging over those who wish to express their views in our free society in the United Kingdom.

We should be concerned, not just about the Government's intentions in bringing the treaty before us tonight, but about the perception in Britain and in the Indian subcontinent. Considering that perception, I must say that there is no way in which I can possibly support the treaty. Indeed, I must oppose it.

11.1 pm

Mr. Roger Godsiff (Birmingham, Small Heath): Like the hon. Member for Keighley (Mr. Waller), I regret that I also cannot support the treaty—not because I am not as committed as any hon. Member to combating international terrorism, but because I do not believe that the order contributes to achieving that. I also believe—this legitimate fear is shared by many hon. Members—that the treaty will be used by the Indian Government to persecute still further Kashmiris who are seeking to do nothing more than to assert their legitimate right to determine their own future.

The treaty will include all Indian citizens. Many people in Jammu and Kashmir do not consider themselves Indian citizens; they consider themselves Kashmiris. However, the treaty presupposes that they are Indian citizens and that the whole of Jammu and Kashmir belong to India, and it includes all the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir in its provisions.

The Minister told us that the order will simply extend the provisions of the Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 to enble international terrorism to be combated in a better way. We have already heard the number of cases where India has asked for extradition and the number of cases where the United Kingdom Government have asked the Indian Government for extradition. That clearly shows that the current arrangements are working perfectly well. There is no need for this measure.

We are told that India's democratic institutions and judicial arrangements mirror our own, and that it is therefore quite appropriate for us to have an extradition treaty with India. That might operate in theory, but it most certainly does not operate in practice in the Kashmir valley.

The Kashmir Bar Association recently provided figures that show that 15,000 bail applications are pending in Indian-held Kashmir. Some 5,000 bail applications were granted, but the authorities refused to implement them, and 500 cases of habeas corpus are outstanding.

Indian-held Kashmir is not run by a judicial authority; it is run by the Indian military. To do that, vast numbers of troops have been deployed throughout Indian-held Kashmir. Indeed, the latest figures suggest that, for every 10 Kashmiris, there is now one Indian troop in Indian-held Kashmir. As the hon. Member for Keighley pointed out, Amnesty International has documented many hundreds of cases of human rights abuse, but, against that background of abuse, the Government are seeking to pursue an extradition treaty which will put relations with India on a par with arrangements with other western countries.

Our own suppression of terrorism legislation grew out of the accord of the European convention on the suppression of terrorism. All signatories to that convention are European countries. They were signatories to the European convention on human rights; India was not. They were all signatories to the Helsinki agreement; India was not. As a matter of interest, they were all signatories to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty; India was not.

We are being asked to give India special provisions that only one non-European country has been accorded, and that is the United States of America. Whatever our feelings about the United States of America, I am not aware of any part of the USA being under martial law or of the human rights abuses that have been catalogued in Jammu and Kashmir occurring in the USA.

How can the Government argue that there are sufficient safeguards to ensure that, under the treaty, the person being extradited

"would not be prejudiced . . . or be punished, detained or restricted on grounds of political opinion"

when the Indian army is daily carrying out a war against the people of Indian-held Kashmir and when, under the Indian constitution, it is an act of treason for any Indian national to advocate secession by part of the union from the state of India?

That means that, if any Kashmiri were to argue the cause of self-determination for the people of Kashmir and secession from the Indian union, in the eyes of the Indian Government, he would be guilty of treason. In that case, would the Indian Government have the right to ask for him to be extradited back to India to stand trial for treason?

I cannot but believe that the British Government have put human rights at the forefront of their consideration of the issue. I cannot help but feel that what is really driving the treaty is our desire to increase commerce with India and, above all, to increase the arms trade to India. One

[Mr. Roger Godsiff]

third of our current exports to India relate to the arms trade. A junior Defence Minister is actively involved in promoting the arms trade with India.

Senior executives of Marconi have a long list of examples of export licences being conveniently rearranged to ensure that words such as "atomic" and "nuclear" are left out of those licences. We are well aware from available evidence that India is acquiring a massive nuclear arsenal, and the British Government are only too happy to assist with that.

The treaty is unnecessary. If the Indian Government were to implement the United Nations resolutions of 1947, 1948 and 1960 and give the people of Jammu and Kashmir the right to determine their own future, and if those people then determined their own future, perhaps the Indian Government would have a just case for bringing such a treaty to the British Government and asking the House to approve it. Until the Indian Government do that, and until they clean up their human rights record, I am not prepared to support the treaty.

11.8 pm

Mr. Terry Dicks (Hayes and Harlington): I endorse everything that the hon. Member for Birmingham, Small Heath (Mr. Godsiff) said about Kashmir and the Punjab. The treaty is not needed, because an acceptable one is already in place, linking this country with the other Commonwealth countries. The Government have been conned by the Indian Government, who see British recognition of the treaty as a way of saying to the rest of the world, "Britain recognises our problems and supports us." My hon. Friend the Minister gave the game away when he referred to terrorists being sent back to India. He slipped, so he then said that he meant potential terrorists. He made the slip and it is on the record. He can wriggle and twist, but it is there for all to see.

India is referred to as the largest democracy in the world. I call it the biggest hypocrisy in the world. It talks about democracy while it practises state terrorism. It is amazing that, when President Clinton recently launched a missile attack against Iraq, our Prime Minister rightly said that Britain was opposed to state terrorism and supported Clinton. Why on earth is my right hon. Friend, through this treaty and by meeting India's representatives, supporting India's state terrorism, which is even worse than that in Iraq?

Because Kate Adie does not go to the Punjab, there are no headlines telling us about India's state terrorism. She goes to Bosnia, so Bosnia becomes a major international issue. Nothing is heard about the Punjab and the suppression of human rights in India, because the media do not want to go there. Like colleagues on both sides of the House, I have tried to get the media to raise the issue, but they do not want to know, because it is not a major issue. Of course it is not a major issue, because the media do not want to make it one and because of the so-called wonderful, friendly relationship between our Government and the Indian Government.

We are supposed to believe that there have been new moves to allow human rights organisations to operate in India. I have tried six times to get a visa to go to India and the Punjab. The Indian high commissioner does not even have the decency to reply. He answers my letters on any other matters, but will he let me go to India? No. I offered him a deal, both on the radio and in writing. I said, "Let me go. If my Sikhs are telling me lies about the suppression, murder and rape of people in the Punjab, I will come back and call them liars. But if they are telling the truth and the Indian Government are lying, I will come back and say that." "Oh no," they said, "we can't do a deal like that." Of course not—the deal was too fair.

The Indian Government know that they are liars and that they are misleading people. They know that my Sikhs and the Sikhs and Kashmiris throughout this country are telling the truth about what has happened to their relatives. The Indian Government do not want to know. I say to them, "If you have nothing to hide, why are you hiding something?" Their abuse of human rights makes the abuse in Iraq pale into insignificance, and it has been going on for a damned sight longer—since 1984.

Other hon. Members have said that Kashmir has a right to self-determination; so does the Punjab. There is nothing wrong with fighting for that cause, provided that it is done in a reasonable way. I accept that a handful of terrorists are making it bad for the genuine people who want self-determination, but we must put that aside and ask whether there is a cause and a justification. The answer is yes, there is a justification—and I am sick and tired of telling my Government that there is. This is my fourth speech on the issue in three or four years. My Government do not want to know because of their damned cosy relationship with the Indian Government.

Some hon. Members, such as my hon. Friend the Member for Twickenham (Mr. Jessel), belong to the curry club. They pop off to India every other week, have a dose of curry and chips and come back saying that India is a wonderful place. I just know that my hon. Friend will say that when he speaks in a minute or two.

The Government should now take three steps. The first is not to sign the treaty until there is clear, practical evidence from the Indian Government that they are beginning to listen to us. My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State is a wonderful friend of the Indian Government. They can do nothing wrong. He said to me, "Terry, those people are all terrorists, you know." He virtually implied that anyone who wears a turban is a terrorist.

That is the view of the Foreign Office, which never does anything in the British interest unless it coincides with the Foreign Office interest. If it does not, the Foreign Office interest comes first. I say to my hon. Friends—if I can call them that tonight—on the Front Bench that the treaty must not be signed until we get guarantees and evidence of good will by the Indian Government.

Secondly, if we do not get those guarantees, we should cut off overseas aid to India—£104 million of taxpayers' money goes to that dreadful regime so that it can suppress decent people going about their business in the Punjab and Kashmir.

Finally, if the Indian Government do not learn from that lesson, we should cut off diplomatic relations and say that state terrorism, like individual terrorism, is not acceptable to the British Government. I say to my hon. Friends on the Front Bench, "Stand up and be counted. Stop bending over backwards for the Indian Government. Stand by decency, by human rights and by the things that the British people and the British Government have always believed in."

11.13 pm

Ms Liz Lynne (Rochdale): I agree wholeheartedly with all hon. Members who have expressed their opposition to the order, for which there is no necessity because extradition provisions are already in place. The Government are introducing this measure only to give a pat on the back to the Indian Government—to give them a seal of approval.

I have no idea how the Government can do that, when human rights abuses—especially in Indian-held Kashmir—are continuing on a daily basis. The Indian forces allegedly moved into one village and raped every woman there—from young girls to old women—and murdered the young men. To give such a regime a pat on the back is absolutely horrendous.

Human rights abuses are being committed thoughout Indian-held Kashmir. The Indian Government are totally opposed to the international covenant on civil and political rights, which they signed and to which they committed themselves—but to which they do not adhere.

Article 3 of the Geneva convention says that the wounded and sick should be collected and cared for, but Asia Watch has already reported a number of cases in which sick people—even those on life support machines—have been arrested and taken into custody.

The Indian Government do not allow the International Red Cross to give aid, and so much for their assurance that Amnesty International will be allowed to enter the area. Unless Amnesty International is able to monitor the situation and to move freely around the entire country, I for one shall not believe the Indian Government's reassurances. According to official estimates alone, 7,000 people have died, but I believe that the true figure is nearer 22,000.

Time and time again, the all-party parliamentary group on Kashmir has been refused permission to enter Indian-held Kashmir. The Indian Government should now bow to pressure from right hon. and hon. Members in all parts of the House, but our Government are giving the Indian Government a pat on the back because they want more trade contracts with India. We should say no to any new extradition treaty.

At a meeting with the former Home Secretary, I asked the right hon. and learned Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke) whether there had ever been an occasion in the past few years when, under the existing treaty, the Indian Government could not have extradited someone from this country. He said that no such case came to mind. If that is so, why is a new extradition treaty needed? The order merely gives a seal of approval to the Indian Government, and we should reject it.

11.17 pm

Mr. Toby Jessel (Twickenham): I declare an interest in that for the past 22 years I have served as an officer of the all-party Indo-British parliamentary group—first as secretary, then as vice-chairman and chairman. I may tell my hon. Friend the Member for Hayes and Harlington (Mr. Dicks) that I have never been served with curry and chips. I do not know whether that is what they eat in Hayes and Harlington.

It is the purpose of the Indo-British parliamentary group to uphold good relations with India—that is, with the whole of India and with all the peoples of every province throughout that republic.

The heading to this business in the Order Paper is:

"Prevention and supression of terrorism".

The House should never sanction or condone terrorism or terrorists from any country or in any part of the world. The terrorist is the most vicious type of criminal. He cares nothing for the sanctity of human life, the victim or the victim's family, however innocent they may be. He tries by bomb or bullet to achieve political objectives that he cannot achieve through the ballot box.

The terrorist is therefore the enemy of free democracy, which is a cherished ideal both in India and Britain. He is the enemy of human rights, because the most important human right is the right to stay alive. There has been little mention so far in this debate of the human rights of the terroist's victims.

We should never give any quarter or safe haven to any terrorist, wherever he may come from.

Mr. Watts: Is my hon. Friend suggesting that people who have committed terrorist crimes could not be extradited under the existing arrangements? How can that be squared with the former Home Secretary's comment that he could not recall any case in which extradition was sought but could not be obtained under the existing arrangements?

Mr. Jessel: That is the whole point. Extradition exists for other types of crime, but does not work in respect of terrorism. If a terrorist says that he has a political motive, he is not extradited. The purpose of this measure is to catch suspected terrorists, bring them to justice and put them out of harm's way. If that is right within any free democracy, it must be right between free democracies—and that means extradition.

I asked the Library which crimes that would apply to, and the Library provided me with a much longer list than that read out by my hon. Friend the Minister. According to that information,

"For the purposes of this Treaty the following offences shall not be regarded as offences of a political character."

It goes on to mention the unlawful seizure of aircraft, acts against the safety of civil aviation, taking of hostages, offences against diplomatic agents, murder, manslaughter, culpable homicide, assault occasioning actual bodily harm, the causing of an explosion likely to endanger life, the making or possession of an explosive substance by a person who intends to endanger life or cause serious damage to property, the possession of a firearm or ammunition by a person who intends either himself or through another person to endanger life, the use of firearms, damaging property with intent to endanger life, kidnapping, abduction, false imprisonment or unlawful detention and incitement to murder.

Anyone who commits any of those acts ought to be brought to justice, whether it is within a country or whether it entails the crossing of a boundary and thus requires extradition. It is absurd that the situation has been allowed to continue for so long without extradition. The order should be approved, and approved quickly.

11.21 pm

Mr. Max Madden (Bradford, West): While the Minister was telling us about his confidence in the Indian judicial system, I was recalling my remarkable visit in 1990 to Amritsar high security prison in the Punjab. I was told before I entered that I would find no one there under 18; in the event, I met 500 prisoners—they were arranged in a

[Mr. Max Madden]

circle under the noonday sun, which was extremely hot even in March—among whom were half a dozen young men under 18. The youngest was 12. I also found a man who had been in the prison for six years. He had been released at the end of each six months, re-arrested at the entrance to the prison and re-imprisoned. In India, it is called the "revolving door" judicial policy.

At present, 50,000 people are in Indian prisons without trial. In 1992, the Government issued an official brief which said:

"The violence in Punjab has had a profound and damaging effect on the lives of Sikhs and others. The Indian Government admit that human rights violations against innocent civilians, including many Sikhs have occurred. The British Government have regularly expressed concern about the situation in Punjab."

On 17 July, in *The Guardian*, John Rettie wrote—referring to Kashmir, which I also visited in 1990—

"But the rule of law does not exist—the Indian security forces simply ignore the courts—and to an outsider the valley feels like an occupied country. Delhi contends that the Kashmiri militant groups enjoy no popular support except what they enforce by 'fear of the gun'. This is inconceivable. No insurgency could last so long or be so effective without widespread popular sympathy. The sense of alienation from India among Kashmiris is overwhelming."

My hon. Friends and many Conservative Members have testified to that point of view.

I believe that the treaty is wholly unnecessary. To be implemented, it will require the approval of both Houses. I have no doubt that the payroll vote will ensure that the order is approved tonight, but the other place will presumably consider whether to approve it in the autumn.

I challenge the Indian Government, between now and the autumn, to give us some confidence in their determination to combat the gross human rights violations taking place, and to allow Amnesty International, the International Red Cross and Asia Watch free access to all parts of India, especially the Punjab, Kashmir and Assam, so that they can freely investigate the catalogue of gross human rights violations reported in all those states. If the Indian Government were prepared to do that immediately, that would go a considerable way towards dispelling the concern about the situation in which the treaty is being agreed.

No doubt the Indian Government desperately desire the treaty as a political weapon. They will be able to say to Indians in India and to the international community, "Look here, we would not have this treaty unless the British Government agreed with us that our terrorist problem is almost unique." They will even be able to go further and say that, by agreeing the extradition treaty, the British Government not only recognise their terrorist problem but endorse their anti-terrorist policy and give a seal of approval to the methods and tactics that they use to combat terrorism.

That is a dangerous signal for this country to send, at a time when our Prime Minister tells us that good government and the observance of human rights are priorities for his Administration. Like other hon. Members, I attended the Indian parliamentary group meeting on Monday, which was addressed by the Prime Minister. He spent all his time emphasising the benefits of investment, and of trade and business with India. He did not utter a single word about the gross abuse of human rights in India. That was a remarkable omission.

Mr. Corbyn: Did my hon. Friend get an inkling from the Prime Minister's talk that there had been any linkage between the order which we are being asked to approve and the enormous volume of arms sales now being made to India? Those arms could, of course, be used in both the Punjab and Kashmir.

Mr. Madden: My hon. Friend will not be surprised to hear that the Prime Minister made no such reference, but clearly it is well known to all of us that a major part of the trade between Britain and India consists of armaments and that the second biggest item in the Indian budget is defence.

Many other hon. Members wish to contribute to the debate, so I shall finish by saying that I believe that the treaty represents a major political blunder. We should not have agreed to it unless there had been a dramatic improvement in the human rights situation in India. I hope that the Government will insist that India take positive action. There are numerous cases, many of which I have referred—

Mr. Heppell: Is my hon. Friend aware that we are in danger of endorsing a treaty even though democracy has effectively broken down in parts of India, such as Kashmir, where there have been no elections since 1990 and there are no plans for any elections on a local, regional or national basis? The judicial system, too, has broken down altogether. Martial law effectively exists in many parts of India.

Mr. Madden: My hon. Friend is right.

I also hope that the Minister will give us some information about the conditions for those against whom an extradition application is made. Will the person be held in custody in the United Kingdom? Will he or she be subject to strict bail and reporting conditions?

The agreement on terrorist funding which has also been made adds to the powers which already exist. There are seven pieces of legislation which give the authorities powers to investigate financial holdings. Will the police be encouraged to undertake inquiries into the financial affairs of Gudwaras and other United Kingdom-based Indian organisations because it creates an environment of intimidation and harassment?

Mr. Jessel: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Madden: The hon. Gentleman has spoken already and I am about to conclude.

It is quite wrong for the treaty to be approved at this time. It is saying to many people in Britain that we are equating all turbans with terrorism. That has been the victory of Indian propaganda.

I have to say, particularly to the hon. Member for Twickenham (Mr. Jessel), whom I respect completely, that the mother and father of terrorism is state terrorism. State terrorism, suppression and repression breed militancy and terrorism. Therefore, it is in the interests of the Indian Government to ensure that human rights abuses are not perpetrated, particularly by Indian security forces.

I hope that that message will be given firmly by the British Government. We have had enough of fine words and expressions of concern. Before we give approval to such treaties, we want positive and immediate action from the Government of India to combat the gross human rights violations which are taking place in many parts of India.

11.31 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Mark Lennox-Boyd): We are debating emotive issues. I am aware, and have been for some time, of hon. Members' concerns about human rights in India. I have reflected them in my dealings as the Minister responsible for our relations with the Indian Republic and explained hon. Members' concerns to Indian Ministers and to the contacts I have. I have added that the Kashmir, Punjab and Sikh problems are legitimate subjects for debate in the United Kingdom because they affect the lives of United Kingdom citizens.

I know that it is wrong to refer by name to individuals in the Gallery, but one may do so collectively and we are all aware that this debate is being watched and listened to and will be read about by a large number of British citizens.

However, we must consider the offences that we are talking about. Members of the Jammu and Kashmir liberation front abducted and later assassinated the assistant Indian high commissioner in Birmingham in February 1984. Six extremists were later convicted and gaoled in the United Kingdom for his murder. The Sikh militant, Paramjit Singh Sidhu, was arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and sentenced to 11 years after conviction on an explosives charge in 1990. Other Sikh militants were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment on conspiracy charges in July 1991. There have been several assassination attempts in Britain against prominent Sikh moderates. That is the British situation, but let us consider some of the international problems.

In 1985, Canadian-based Sikh militants caused a mid-air explosion on an Air India flight from Toronto to London; 329 people were killed. There was a related bomb at Tokyo airport which killed two airport staff. Those are some of the problems that we will be facing. Canada has concluded a similar extradition agreement with the Republic of India.

Mr. Richard Caborn (Sheffield, Central): Have any perpetrators of those acts been brought to justice without this extradition treaty?

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The purpose of this extradition agreement is for the House and the Government to say that, in such cases, it would be an outrage in this day and age for people to say that they acted with political intentions and therefore should avoid extradition and trial for alleged offences of that magnitude. The sort of offences about which we are talking—my hon. Friend the Member for Twickenham (Mr. Jessel) referred to this—must be clarified. We are not talking about trivial offences—far from it. We are talking about offences involving hijacking, taking hostages, serious crimes of violence, murder, manslaughter, serious assaults, kidnapping, explosives, firearms offences and financing of terrorism.

My hon. Friend the Member for Hayes and Harlington (Mr. Dicks) has strong views on this subject. We have often discussed those views privately—we often discuss things privately. Can he say that it is right that the argument that such offences were politically induced should be available in this day and age, when air travel is so easy and so available, which is what we are talking about?

Mr. Watts: Is my hon. Friend arguing that, in such cases, the defence of political purpose has been used successfully in a British court to resist an attempt by the Indian Government to obtain extradition? In his earlier remarks, has he not recited a number of instances of crimes committed in the United Kingdom where people have been properly convicted and punished by the courts? What is his argument for the need for this repulsive treaty?

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Those crimes were committed in the United Kingdom. The treaty is mutual. There will be mutual recognition of rights of extradition—it works both ways.

It is right that the House should be so concerned about the protection of individuals. First, the matter must be considered by a British Home Office Minister. He must make a decision as to whether it is appropriate for the case to go to the Bow Street magistrates court. The decision of that court is appealable. The matter must then be considered by the Home Secretary, whose decision is open to judicial review. Indeed, the first decision of the Minister is open to judicial review if any applicant wishes to appeal. The Home Secretary must be satisfied that all the matters have been appropriately considered.

Mr. Terry Davis (Birmingham, Hodge Hill): How can people of Kashmir origin in the United Kingdom have any confidence in assurances of scrutiny from a Government who deported a Kashmir leader, Mr. Amanullah Khan, after he was twice acquitted of all charges by British courts?

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: If the hon. Gentleman is not satisfied with the conduct of Ministers, he should remember that the Bow Street magistrates court must consider the matter. Any decision is appealable on a writ of habeas corpus. The Minister's first and second decisions are subject to the process of judicial review. Ministerial decisions can be considered up to four times by a British court.

Hon. Members have expressed their concerns dramatically and extensively. It is fortuitous that this debate should be this week, because next Monday, the Indian Parliament is commencing its committee on legislation to set up an independent Indian human rights commission. It is good timing to have the debate today. I have no doubt that the views expressed by hon. Members will be noted by the Indian high commission in London, and that copies of the *Official Report* will be made available to parliamentarians in India. I defy hon. Members to assert that there are not parliamentarians in India who take human rights interests strongly to heart and express concern about them.

I wish to reply to the questions of the hon. Member for Bradford, West (Mr. Madden) and my hon. Friend the Member for Keighley (Mr. Waller) about access to India for human rights organisations and the signs in recent days of the Indian Government modifying and changing their policy in that regard. It has been one of my tasks to urge the Government of India to allow access to international human rights organisations and other groups. Therefore, I am particularly pleased by their recent statement on the issue.

Ms Joan Walley (Stoke-on-Trent, North): Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: If I may, I shall make clear what the Indian Government said and my views on it; then, if there is time, I will give way.

It may be helpful if I read out the precise passage. In a statement, the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs said:

"In furtherance of the earlier initiatives, Government has now decided to allow certain human rights organisations to visit India to see for themselves how human rights safeguards operate in various parts of the country."

Hon Members will dispute some of the phraseology in that statement, but it clearly says "India" and does not exclude any part of India. It simply states that India will be open to human rights organisations. I hope, and I shall certainly press, that it will not be too long before Amnesty International and other human rights organisations may be able to visit Kashmir and all parts of India to carry out investigations that they may legitimately seek to follow.

It being one and a half hours after the commencement of proceedings on the motion, MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *put the Question, pursuant to Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business).*

The House divided: Ayes 123, Noes 38.

Division No. 357] **[11.42 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Bates, Michael
Beresford, Sir Paul
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Boswell, Tim
Bowis, John
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Cash, William
Clappison, James
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcl)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cran, James
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Fabricant, Michael
Fishburn, Dudley
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gillan, Cheryl
Gorst, John
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Hague, William
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Kilfedder, Sir James
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Legg, Barry
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Luff, Peter
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
Maitland, Lady Olga
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Nicholls, Patrick
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pickles, Eric
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robathan, Andrew
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Sims, Roger
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Speed, Sir Keith
Spink, Dr Robert
Sproat, Iain
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Stephen, Michael
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgld)*
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Trend, Michael
Twinn, Dr Ian
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Wells, Bowen
Whittingdale, John
Willetts, David
Wood, Timothy

Tellers for the Ayes:
Sydney Chapman and Timothy Kirkhope.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Barnes, Harry
Cann, Jamie
Cohen, Harry
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Dicks, Terry
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Godsiff, Roger
Graham, Thomas
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Hardy, Peter
Heppell, John
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Leighton, Ron
Lewis, Terry
Loyden, Eddie
Mahon, Alice
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Purchase, Ken
Rendel, David
Rooney, Terry
Skinner, Dennis
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Turner, Dennis
Waller, Gary
Walley, Joan
Watts, John
Wise, Audrey
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Max Madden and Ms Liz Lynne.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Resolved,

That the draft Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993, which was laid before this House on 9th July, be approved.

Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices)

11.53 pm

Mr. Michael Alison (Selby): I beg to move,

That the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) (Amendment) Measure, passed by the General Synod of the Church of England, be presented to Her Majesty for her Royal Assent in the form in which the said Measure was laid before Parliament.

At this comparatively late hour, I need not detain the House too long in advocating the measure. It is both reasonable and desirable and, for the Church of England in its official councils, quite uncontroversial. The measure received final approval in the General Synod last year—it was unanimously approved in all three Houses.

That is to say that no bishop, no clergyman and no layman voted against it. The voting figures are on page 7 of the Ecclesiastical Committee's report now before the House, if anyone wants to look at them.

I have stressed the unusual unanimity because the measure touches on sensitive issues in the life of the Church of England. It deals with cases in which a major problem arises in a parish not because of any grave misconduct on the part of the rector or vicar—the Church of England has separate disciplinary procedures for dealing with that contingency—but because the rector or vicar has a serious health problem or there is a serious breakdown in the relationship between him and the parishioners.

In such cases, where the work of a parish church cannot go forward effectively, some sort of action has to be taken to resolve the problem. The synod attempted to set up a mechanism for doing that in the parent of the present measure as long ago as 1977. The 1977 measure laid down a carefully formulated procedure and provided for a judicial tribunal to investigate the breakdown and recommend what should be done to resolve it. The earlier measure envisaged the possibility, as a last resort, of recommending that the rector or vicar should be required to leave the parish. Hence my reference to the sensitivity of the matter that we are considering tonight.

However, the original 1977 measure, like other attempts to tackle difficult and sensitive problems which have not been dealt with in a formal way before, was found to have some shortcomings. Hence the amendment measure that we are considering tonight, which seeks to remedy the earlier defects. I shall give just a few examples.

The earlier measure proved unsatisfactory on compensation, about which I shall say a few words presently. Above all, the 1977 measure did not lay sufficient emphasis on seeking to secure a preliminary reconciliation between the rector or vicar and the parishioners in cases where the relationship between them had broken down and before invoking more formal judicial procedures. That shortcoming is the first matter which the amending measure before us tonight seeks to remedy.

The amending measure provides that before any formal legal process is set in motion, there should be a carefully structured reconciliation process following a code of practice laid down by the House of Bishops. The bishops have already published a draft of the code, which is set out in the Ecclesiastical Committee's report before the House tonight but which the bishops have expanded a little to take on board some of the suggestions made by our colleagues in the House who are members of the Ecclesiastical Committee.

Among other things; the code provides for a third party who is acceptable to both sides, so to speak, to act as a conciliator, and for the parties to have a trial period of working together, where that seems both feasible and desirable. Only after that conciliation has failed can the more formal tribunal procedure, with various penalties up to enforced resignation, be invoked. Then the procedure can be invoked only if the relevant bishop approves—that is, it is at his discretion. The penalties recommended by the tribunal can in turn be imposed only if the bishop, at his discretion, authorises it.

The measure improves the procedure under the 1977 legislation in several further important ways. One example is that, in ill-health or disability cases, the tribunal will now have power to direct that the rector or vicar involved should have a proper medical examination and to draw the appropriate inferences if he refuses. Another example is that, in cases of the breakdown of the relationship between the rector or vicar and parishioners, it will now be possible to abort or withdraw the formal proceedings, even after they have started, if there is any hope of more informal reconciliation procedures taking effect. Under the 1977 measure, once a procedure had reached a certain stage, the only way to stop it was the resignation of the rector or vicar. To that extent, we have made things very much more flexible and sensitive.

Three points caused some concern or dissent among a minority of our colleagues on the Ecclesiastical Committee. First, some colleagues—including, I think, my hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth (Mr. Evans)—thought that the Church of England should change to a system more like the law on unfair dismissal which applies to secular employment, and that the clergy should have clear performance criteria with dismissal as the penalty if they fail to meet those objective requirements.

I concede that it is important that everything possible be done to help the clergy to work effectively, and to work to objective standards if possible. Only a few days ago, the General Synod passed a motion asking the bishops to implement a system of regular review and work development for all clergy, and a group has been set up to examine the terms and conditions of service which might apply to them. However, most hon. Members will agree that the work that a clergyman does is of a special kind, and depends for its effectiveness on the quality of his relationship with his parishioners.

The parishioners are not employees of the Church; they are partners, with the clergy, in carrying forward the Church's mission. Thus, cases where the relationship breaks down are not on all fours with cases where an employee is dismissed. What is needed is a procedure for putting a disrupted relationship back on its feet, if possible. It is only as a very last resort that it should be deemed irreparable and the clergyman concerned required by the bishop to leave the parish.

One or two colleagues on the Committee were concerned about the compensation provisions in the measure. When a vicar or rector has resigned on grounds of ill health, or has been required to resign on those grounds, he receives the same pension and other benefits as any other member of the clergy who retires owing to ill health. The measure makes no change in that respect.

The 1977 measure also provided for very generous compensation in cases of a serious breakdown of relationships—so generous that many dioceses could not afford it, and clergy who received it had no incentive to

[Mr. Michael Alison]

find other work. That was unsatisfactory, because it was inconceivable that a clergyman would be removed from office under the measure on grounds of a breakdown in the relationship with his parishioners unless there had been some fault or failure on his part.

The amending measure sets out to strike a balance between treating vicars and rectors justly and the wider interests of the Church of England and of the lay people who contribute to its finances. It does so by providing that the rector or vicar and the diocese agree whatever compensation terms they wish. We would certainly encourage dioceses to be generous if the clergyman concerned had special needs—for instance, a need for retraining.

Mr. Quentin Davies (Stamford and Spalding): My right hon. Friend says that it is inconceivable that the relationship would break down unless there had been some fault or failure on the part of the incumbent. Could it not break down because of a dispute over some theological point which could not easily be resolved but which could hardly fairly be described as resulting from fault or failure on the part of the incumbent?

Mr. Alison: I shall come to that later, when I describe how the measure defines such breakdowns in relationships.

The measure lays down that if the parties fail to agree the incumbent should be provided with reasonable compensation in the form of financial support and reasonable help with housing costs. The details are spelt out in schedule 2 to the measure. The word "reasonable" may seem to beg a question, but the clergy in the Synod, who are the category primarily affected, as well as all the other categories in the Synod, accepted that the schedule 2 formula for compensation struck a fair balance between the interests of all concerned. They did not vote against it. The unanimity of the vote, including that of the clergy, is a reflection of the fact that it was felt that the compensation provisions were reasonable.

In common with my hon. Friend the Member for Stamford and Spalding (Mr. Davies), a number of our colleagues on the Ecclesiastical Committee—my hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth may have been among them—felt that the new definition of a serious breakdown in pastoral relationships, which appears in the new measure, was too wide and could leave almost any rector or vicar open to being proceeded against, perhaps by some local crank.

The original 1977 legislation contained no definition at all, which made it difficult to interpret. The Synod has now tightened matters considerably by providing that the provisions on the breakdown of a relationship will apply only where the situation is impeding the whole mission of the Church of England in the parish. The legislation therefore cannot be invoked because of a trivial dispute or a disagreement between the rector or vicar and a small minority of the parishioners.

The actual trigger mechanism is formulated under paragraph 10 of the measure and refers to the impeding "of the whole mission of the Church of England, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical" in the parish in question. Nothing trivial or secondary would be caught by it. Matters relating to theology or doctrine could not have the effect of impeding that whole mission in such a way as to be caught by the definitition. That definition relates to the kind of breakdown which occurs when the clergyman is seriously ill or mentally disturbed. It goes far too wide for a mere theological dispute to trigger the judicial procedures involved.

The new definition also highlights the real purpose of the measure, which is to further, positively and constructively, the mission of the Church of England in the parishes. The Synod wholeheartedly accepted it as something which would help to achieve that aim. I hope that the House will add its support to the Synod by supporting the measure.

12.7 am

Mr. Peter Hardy (Wentworth): I do not need to speak for long, because the right hon. Member for Selby (Mr. Alison) has spelt out to the House the flexible nature of the measure and its infinitely superior quality in comparison with that of 1977. The right hon. Gentleman has reminded the House that the 1977 measure did not command the same support and unanimity in the Synod as that shown for the new measure.

Hon. Members may believe that matters concerning the Church should not be considered in the Chamber. While the Church is established, however, Parliament has the obligation to consider such matters.

We should respect the measure because it provides for fair dealings for members of the clergy. Conservative Members may not share my opinion and that of my hon. Friends that the role of the good priest in many parishes is far more stressful than it has ever been. When society is dominated by greed, and when it is entirely materialistic in its political evaluation, the stress facing the good priest is enormous.

The majority of people may never give much thought to the priest or to the Church, but at times of crisis, both individual and community, the Church is seen as relevant and the priest must be there. Many of our priests are readily available. They share grief and anxiety. They share the very real economic and social burdens that affect the people in their pastoral charge.

The strain on many of the clergy can be enormous. It is perfectly appropriate for the House to ensure that clergy who suffer a breakdown of health as a result of being at the interface of stress within their parishes should be treated decently. I hope that the House will approve the measure for that reason.

As you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, may recall, I was brought up in nonconformity. I recall that, on occasions, my parents were very angry when they returned home from chapel business meetings. It sometimes seemed that the qualities of Christian charity were not always readily exhibited. In the operation of the management of the established Church, I suppose that sometimes personal animosities and irritations are taken to such an excessive point that an outside influence seeking to pour oil on troubled waters would be desirable.

I think that the hon. Member for Monmouth (Mr. Evans) is a member of the legal profession. He may be much more well disposed to bureaucracy than I am. He may well wish to see a tightly bureaucratic, structured arrangement that may well be very profitable or more interesting to members of the legal profession than to the rest of the laity serving the Church.

Mr. Roger Evans (Monmouth): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Hardy: I will give way in a moment.

When we deal with human relationships in our surgeries, many of us would not dream of advising constituents to go off and consult their legal advisers. We would not do that for many reasons, not least because of the cost. I would prefer a more flexible arrangement. The quality of this measure is one of flexibility and reasonable generosity.

I hope that the hon. Member for Monmouth shares my view that there is a place for flexibility rather than for the more bureaucratic approach which, I suspect, he may favour rather more than I do.

Mr. Evans: Surely the hon. Gentleman has, at his surgery, advised people who have been unfairly dismissed that the way to get justice and fairness is to go to an industrial tribunal? Why should we treat the clergy of the Church of England to a much lower standard and give them much less protection than ordinary employees and trade unionists who have been unfairly dismissed? That is the injustice of this proposal.

Mr. Hardy: One would hope that no one employed by the Church, as clergy or in any other capacity, would be treated in the way that many of my constituents have been treated when they have claimed unfair dismissal.

One is entitled to expect the Church to conduct itself in a way that would avoid that degree of confrontation, which would not serve the Church or the person who appeals to the tribunal well. I do not believe that there is a need for such confrontation. If that arrangement were made, it would be a confession that the Church was incapable of applying Christian practice and approaches. For that reason, I would not like to see the Church in that position. That is why I could not possibly support the approach that the hon. Member for Monmouth appears to advocate.

We must make it clear in the House that we recognise the stress and demands placed on the conscientious clergyman. Such a clergyman would not wish to expose the Church to the attention that would follow a case for unfair dismissal. The hon. Member for Monmouth may have acted for clients in those tribunals. He will be aware that pretty sordid tales often appear in the media after such cases. I do not think that the human relationships involved are best dealt with in such a tribunal.

The structures that the right hon. Member for Selby has presented are admirable. They are far better than the 1976 measure, for the reasons that the right hon. Gentleman gave. We have a duty to ensure that the clergy serving the Church, while it is an established organisation, should be treated as decently as the measure proposes. I certainly trust that the measure will be approved.

12.14 am

Mr. Roger Evans (Monmouth): The speech of the hon. Member for Wentworth (Mr. Hardy) was powerful, persuasive, humane and trusting of the Church of England. I regret to say, from my professional experience as a member of the Bar advising clergymen in difficulties, that I have seen grossly unchristian behaviour. I have seen the behaviour of Mr Gradgrind—exactly the kind of conduct from which our system of industrial tribunals protects workmen and employees. If a Conservative Member proposed to abolish protection from unfair dismissal, Opposition Members would be outraged. This proposal weakens the position of an incumbent clergyman and puts him in a worse position than an employee. That is startling and wrong. It is unjust and unworkable.

Mr. Hardy: The hon. Gentleman should consider that the House of Clergy did not provide a single vote against the measure. When considering the same arrangements in the early 1970s, the House of Clergy managed to secure a majority of six. That suggests that, in the intervening years, the Church has produced a much more acceptable arrangement. If the clergy who might be the hon. Gentleman's clients are prepared to vote for the measure, it appears that the hon. Gentleman is taking his representations too zealously.

Mr. Evans: I am afraid that that is not a fair observation. The point at stake is that there might be a touch of unworldliness in debates in the Synod. The English Clergy Association is certainly concerned about these matters now that it has had a chance to examine them.

The first difficulty with the proposals is simply that the 1977 measure upon which they are based and are meant to reform has not worked. The Legislative Committee described it in quite brutal terms in its remarks to the Ecclesiastical Committee: the 1977 measure has

"major defects in practice. . . . It was found to be complicated, difficult, and very expensive to operate and to result in serious adverse publicity for the Church."

Upon questioning, we discovered that it has been used only twice since 1977. Synod debated it in 1981, because there was extreme disquiet about it. In fact, the arrangements of the measure which we are seeking to amend have not been used, because the system is fatally and completely flawed.

I shall go back to basic principals. Vicars and rectors, who are still the great majority of Anglican clergymen, hold a freehold office until retirement. They can ordinarily be removed only for a proven criminal ecclesiastical case proved in court. That very rarely happens. The late Mr. Michael Bland, hon. Members might recall, succeeded as a result of the effects of Lord Howe of Aberavon. Apart from that case and one or two unhappy incidents of adultery, proven cases of clerical misconduct have been noted for their absence.

There are situations—this is what the 1977 measure was directed at—in which a parson's church congregation dwindles, the quota is not paid, the parochial church council is at war with itself, and the parishioners are not talking. Something must be done as a practical matter to deal with that, as a matter of sense and justice. If we were running a voluntary organisation or a political party and things went backward to that extent, we would want to see what could be done.

The Church of England's solution in 1977 was to set up a fudge. We are talking about the reform of a fudge. There are two vital features of the 1977 measure. The first was irretrievable pastoral breakdown. What on earth does that garbage mean? It is taken from the no-fault divorce phraseology of the statute—irretrievable breakdown of marriage—and it means what anybody wants it to mean. This was a basic, fundamental problem of definition.

The second fault was that, if one was dispossessed and deprived under the 1977 measure, one was compensated for one's whole loss. That was a job for life until death. It was large and generous compensation, much better than a workman would get.

[Mr. Evans]

What happened? The Church of England discovered that, in the two cases where proceedings were brought under the 1977 measure, they were either wholly embarrassing and the pastoral inquiry a matter of scandal for the popular press, or, if the parson was actually deprived, the cost was appalling and prodigious. So be it, the thing failed.

What are we to do now? One might have thought that the Church of England would see fit to reconsider the basic premise of the 1977 measure and produce some new scheme. It might have come to Parliament saying that the whole system was wrong, which might have been rather controversial. It might have come to us and said that parsons should hold their office only for a limited number of years. It might have said that there should be performance criteria or standards that they should observe —*[Interruption.]* We can assess, to some extent, whether a church is emptying, the quota not being paid and the funds not being raised. There must be fairness.

If there is a problem, there must be a system by which the people concerned can be removed and compensation should be adjusted according to the degree of fault. A blameless parson, or one who is only partly to blame, should get much more than one who is wholly at fault. That is what an industrial tribunal decides—it adjusts the compensation according to the contributory fault. That is the approach that the Church of England could have adopted.

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): There should be a minimum wage.

Mr. Evans: I can tell the hon. Gentleman that the national minimum stipend is not very attractive. I suspect that it is rather less than the national average wage.

Instead of dealing with the problems, we are being asked to build on the 1977 measure. There are two striking and fundamental faults. I do not mind the extra ACAS-type provisions such as reconciliation and dealing with the sick, but the fundamentals of the proposals are as follows.

First, there is a new definition of "irretrievable pastoral breakdown", which my right hon. Friend the Member for Selby (Mr. Alison) read out and which refers to

"the whole mission of the Church of England, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical."

What on earth does that mean? Let us put it in the party political context. Would we want constituency associations of hon. Members to get rid of those who failed the whole mission of the Conservative party or the Labour party? We can see immediately how that sort of wild language could be twisted to the detriment of the person there at the moment. It is pliable language; it is not precise, fair and good legislation.

Is anyone saying that if there is a pastoral mission it is not always possible to find a cause—doctrinal disputes have already been mentioned—for gossip against the vicar if someone disapproves of the sermon, for whatever reason? Are we really intending to create a position in which troublemakers can cause difficulty in the parish and have the parson removed simply by citing a breakdown of pastoral relationships? That cannot be just or fair.

If I were to be very rude to those who drafted the measure before us, I would say that the new section 19A is almost the equivalent of charging somebody with un-Anglican activities. It is as bad as the activities of the late Senator McCarthy, and it is unworthy of legislation.

The second fundamental failure is that if a parson is deprived under these proposals, regardless of his fault or contribution to his deprivation, he gets very much reduced compensation. He gets a buy-out that is not conspicuously generous. Instead of the whole loss for the rest of his life, it is a basic award of one year at the minimum stipend and the next year at three quarters, if he is aged 49 and started at 25. There are resettlement and housing allowances.

Those are modest sums to give an almost blameless parson, who is turfed out of his home and loses his living and his professional respect.

There is a fundamental moral difficulty about which the code of conduct is remarkably coy. If the parson suffers because no one gets on with him, is he to blame or is he not?

The draft code says that it is not necessarily blameworthy, even if one is deprived of one's living. It is wholly unjust to give the same modest compensation to the man who has fallen out with the gossips in the parochial church council and the women's institute as to the mad, bad vicar who justly deserves to be removed.

In a different context, an industrial tribunal can apportion blame, decide contributory fault and reduce the compensation accordingly, fairly and in balance. We have known that system for years. My right hon. Friend asked whether it was wrong to apply the model of unfair dismissal, but I thought that that model would be particularly attractive to the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner), who might have regarded it as an achievement in the history of the working man.

In another place, the Lord Bishop of St. Albans took the same point as my right hon. Friend. He said:

"the work of a clergyman in a parish is a special kind of calling which takes special qualities and needs the active co-operation and support of parishioners. The parishioners themselves are not employees of the Church but partners with the clergy in carrying forward the Church's mission."—[*Official Report, House of Lords*, 16 July 1993; Vol. 584, c. 509.]

He went on to say that cases where the relationship breaks down are not on all fours with unfair dismissal.

Imagine yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the full-time paid secretary of a charity and you have volunteer workers with whom it is difficult to deal. Charities fall out like parishes. Party political agents in our constituencies are full-time workers, and they are known to fall out with the volunteer side. But I say to the hon. Member for Wentworth (Mr. Hardy) that many full-time charity workers do the same sort of job as an ordained clergymen, pursuing God's mission—but such people in secular employment are protected by the law of unfair dismissal. Why should parsons be treated any less well?

One cannot, as a private body or as a disestablished church, tear up arrangements such as the parson's freehold without an Act of Parliament. The Church of England enjoys a special, convenient legislative privilege of delegated legislation and the procedure that we are observing now.

Mr. Skinner: And it is wrong.

Mr. Evans: The hon. Gentleman is right to say that it is wrong if provisions slip through in this fashion without the full examination that would occur at all stages if they were the subject of a proper Bill.

Mr. Skinner: I have often remained to hear measures affecting the Church of England debated, but the truth is that we should not debate the actions of the General Synod. There are many faiths in Britain, but for some reason or another Church of England measures come before the House late at night. Frankly, I do not think that we have any business discussing them. If the General Synod makes a decision, that is its business.

Mr. Evans: I am greateful for that wholly unsympathetic and unfair intervention. The hon. Gentleman does not care beyond a certain point about parsons' civil liberties and rights. He is interested only in his own constituents —some of whom may be parsons.

Wherever the Methodists, Baptists or Congregationalists want to unify, alter their trusts or terms of contracts, or change the law, it is not a case of ignoring Parliament. They must come to Parliament and face the full difficulty of getting a Bill passed. The Church of England has a convenient system that benefits and assists the Church. But if matters are to be dealt with in that way, the highest standards of legal drafting for legislation must be observed, using systems that are fair, just and workable. At the same time, the Church of England in particular has a moral obligation to observe the highest standards towards those who serve it. It is wholly wrong for parsons to be treated in an unfair and unworkable way.

I do not usually use the language of civil liberties, which is not my cast of mind or the temper of my political prejudice. However, on whichever side of the House one may sit, this measure is either a back-door attack, in Tory terms, on the parson's freehold or, viewed through left-wing glasses, an attack on the civil liberties of parsons. These proposals are fatally flawed, and I invite the House to reject them.

12.29 am

Mr. Alison: With the leave of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

My hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth (Mr. Evans) could not have presented more vividly, convincingly and perfectly the reason for which we want to try to exclude this kind of litigious, legalistic, confrontational, adversarial advocacy from the breakdown of relationships in a parish. Let us imagine, for instance, the parish of Bolsover, presided over by the rector, the Rev. Dennis Skinner. Believe it or not, the rector has fallen out with his parishioners. What does he do? He gets hold of my hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth to defend him before a tribunal.

Can hon. Members think of anything more calculated to bring the Church of England into disrepute than a public row when a rector has fallen out with his parishioners in very sensitive and difficult circumstances, perhaps because he has lost his mental balance—*[Interruption.]*—or perhaps, as the hon. Member for Wentworth (Mr. Hardy) suggested, because he has had a nervous breakdown? There may be any number of reasons.

The rector then persuades my hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth to defend him, in the style and with the legalistic approach that we observed earlier. That is precisely why we have introduced a Measure to exclude —I am trying to be kind to my hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth—the legalistic ranting that we have heard from him tonight, in the context of the provocation that the Rev. Dennis Skinner might have exercised on his unfortunate parishioners.

The Measure contains provision for flexibility, conciliation, compensation and moderate attempts at definition. We want to retain a fair, reasonable arrangement, unexposed to lawyers' jargon and a militant drive for the rights of the individual that is entirely inappropriate in this context. No wonder the House of Clergy did not raise a dissenting vote against the Measure. One might have thought that, with such advocacy, all its members would vote in favour of my hon. Friend's proposals, if there had been any merit in what he said; but there is not. He has demonstrated by his style tonight exactly what we are trying to avoid.

I urge my hon. Friend to accept that, following this good-humoured and important debate, he need not divide the House, which could cause a good many people a good deal of trouble. Will he accept that, although this has been a reasonable debate, the case for rejecting the Measure has not been made? I urge my hon. Friends to support it if we are forced into a Division.

Mr. Roger Evans: Section 7(5) of the report states:

"At an enquiry under this Measure the parties may be represented by a barrister or solicitor."

Mr. Alison: My hon. Friend ignores the fact that the inquiry is at the discretion of the bishop. It may not happen at all if the bishop decides that it is not suitable —precisely to keep advocates, solicitors or barristers like my hon. Friend out of the court in such circumstances. My hon. Friend's point is not well taken.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved,

That the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) (Amendment) Measure, passed by the General Synod of the Church of England, be presented to Her Majesty for her Royal Assent in the form in which the said Measure was laid before Parliament.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Ordered,

That, at the sitting on Thursday 22nd July, notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order No. 14 (Exempted business), the Speaker shall not later than Ten o'clock put the Questions necessary to dispose of proceedings on the Motion in the name of the Prime Minister relating to the European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993, Section 7.—*[Mr. Conway.]*

Ordered,

That, at the sitting on Monday 26th July, Standing Order No. 54 (Consolidated Fund Bills) shall have effect as if for the words 'nine o'clock in the morning', in line 15, there were substituted the words 'eight o'clock in the morning'.—*[Mr. Conway.]*

Leather Industry

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Conway.]*

12.36 am

Mr. Peter Fry (Wellingborough): At the commencement of the debate, I declare an interest in that, for some years, I have been the parliamentary adviser to the British Leather Confederation. The industry has been facing several problems—environmental problems and problems involving trade and raw materials. Tonight I shall concentrate on the last category—the deteriorating raw stock quality and the decline in animal welfare.

The United Kingdom tanning industry has an annual turnover of about £400 million, and has consistently exported a higher value of leather than it has imported. Last year, the industry had a balance of trade surplus of about £50 million, with total exports worth about £200 million. However, in order to survive and to enjoy that success the industry, like those in the rest of the European Community, has specialised in quality, performance, fashion and service to customers. To service that top sector of the market it needs a supply of good quality raw material, in the form of cattle hides and sheepskins.

Unfortunately, the quality of raw hides and skins from United Kingdom animals is deteriorating to an alarming extent. That is not unique to the United Kingdom, but I shall mention later a number of specific examples that demonstrate the ways in which hide and skin quality in this country is deteriorating.

The European Tanners Association, COTANCE, has produced a document on the subject, which has been submitted to the European Commission. It makes a number of important points, including the following. First, the leather industry is based on the processing of raw cattle hides and sheepskins, which are by-products of the meat and dairy industries. Secondly, because those are by-products, their quality is too often neglected by those involved in the production process. Thirdly, the quality of raw material for the leather industry is increasingly important. Finally, unnecessary damage to hides and skins causes an estimated loss to the EC economy of more than £500 million annually, of which about £50 million is lost in the United Kingdom.

Although that money is lost in the chain from farmer to tanner, and is therefore eventually reflected in prices paid, the financial impact on the farmer is indirect. That is because the market mechanism is imperfect. There is a market price for the live animal, and a separate market price for the hide or skin at the abattoir gate. Those markets are separately driven, and are linked only indirectly. Furthermore, the economic value of a hide or skin, reflecting the end use for which it is suitable, can be fully assessed only after several stages of the tanning process.

Damage to hides and skins takes place either while the animal is alive, on the farm or in transport, or in the abattoir. The main types of damage occur while the animal is still alive. In general terms, what is good for hide and skin quality is good for animal health and welfare. The major factors which affect the hide and skin quality are husbandry methods on the farm and regulations on animal welfare, animal health and meat hygiene.

There is concern in the trade that national regulations are being relaxed and that hide and skin quality is deteriorating and that affects the decline in animal health and welfare.

An important current example is the threefold increase in ectoparasite damage to sheep since the progressive relaxation and finally the abolition last year of compulsory sheep dipping. Not only is the deterioration of sheepskin quality a serious matter for the United Kingdom sheepskin tanning industry; it also provides objective evidence of what many in the industry suspected but could not measure: that there has been a substantial and worrying increase in the infestation of sheep. That in turn has serious animal welfare implications.

It is not overstating the case to stress that this could reach crisis proportions in the near future not only in terms of lost revenue, but also in the unacceptable suffering caused to the sheep population. Investigation by the British Leather Confederation is producing evidence to support that view. It is no wonder that its contentions are supported by organisations such as the Meat and Livestock Commission, the National Farmers Union, the National Sheep Association, the National Office of Animal Health, the Federation of Fresh Meat Wholesalers and the British Wool Marketing Board. The concern of those and other organisations must be taken into account.

The current situation raises the following main issues. The increased number of outbreaks of sheep scab and the higher levels of infestation by other parasites is raising serious animal welfare implications in the national flock. It is a problem not only for the animals but also for the general public, for whom animal welfare is a major issue in their attitude to farming and meat consumption.

The growing animal welfare problem of increased infestation needs to be addressed by effective policing of flocks to ensure consistent implementation of existing regulations for improving animal welfare.

Apart from reducing animal growth rates, infestation also reduces the value of sheepskins causing a major financial loss to the United Kingdom. Throughout the chain from farmer to leather manufacturer, this is estimated to reach up to £20 million a year.

The nature of the markets for sheep and sheepskins is such that there can be no direct incentive to farmers to improve skin quality. The imperfect market mechanism cannot be used as an effective means of persuading farmers to dip sheep as in other countries such as New Zealand, where direct payments are made to farmers for skin quality.

The shortage of good-quality material is putting at serious risk the whole sheepskin tanning industry, which must sell to the quality fashion market if it is to survive. Even at today's relatively depressed prices, that section of the leather industry, with a turnover of £80 million per annum, exports of £70 million and directly employs about 1,000 people. It is the view of all sectors of the trade that the only effective means of addressing the situation is a return to some form of compulsory dipping along with notification of sheep scab outbreaks to give an objective measures.

I am pleased to note that the interested sectors of the sheepskin and leather trade are in discussion with officials of the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food about practical ways in which this might be achieved and leather industry is in discussions with the Department of Trade and Industry with regard to the threat to their sector.

I am only too well aware of the current controversy over organophosphorus dips, and so is the industry. There is no intention on my or the industry's part that farmers and workers should be exposed to undue danger that will affect their health. I understand the feelings of those who feel such dipping should be banned. I understand, and I feel that the whole picture should be made clear.

Effective control of ectoparasites relies upon the availability of suitable products. The OP dips at present have an important role in that. They are widely produced and used and have the benefit of being effective against the widest range of ectoparasites. No comparable alternatives exist. Any move to end the use of such products without the availability of an alternative with equivalent efficiency would further exacerbate the already worrying animal welfare problems.

Dips contain insecticides and need to be treated with respect. It is important that farmers involved in the dipping process follow the correct procedures and wear appropriate protective clothing. Safety trials have been conducted on the effect of dipping in accordance with correct procedures. It is important that any decisions must be taken on a scientific basis, taking account of the full implications.

That is why the industry has made two suggestions. The first is that compulsory dipping should be reintroduced. Reinstatement of statutory control is considered most appropriate because it will ensure that most producers dipped at least once. However, it is recognised that policing of the dipping programme is a critical feature and neither the Government nor local authorities can provide the necessary resources at present.

Therefore, as a second option, it is suggested that if the Ministry cannot respond to the first suggestion, legislative controls should be introduced based on the phased-in introduction of more acceptable dipping treatments and the mounting of a national campaign to publicise and encourage voluntary control, possibly supported by a code of practice.

I turn briefly to the question of cattle hides. The quality of cattle hides is deteriorating. It is a Europewide problem but it has been particularly noted in the United Kingdom. It should be recorded that, while we have an overall surplus of raw hides, material for the top quality end uses must be imported from, for example, Scandinavia. United Kingdom tanners who sell to the top quality section of the market report that a decreasing proportion of their purchases of hides from United Kingdom sources can be used for the high-value outlets to which they sell. In 1991, only 50 per cent. could be used. A year later, it was reduced to 40 per cent., compared with an average of 65 per cent. of imported hides.

The main types of damage are, first, scratched hides from barbed wire and horn clipping. Scratches are aggravated by ectoparasite infestations. For both animal welfare and economic reasons, there is a case for a ban on barbed wire as the only means of fencing farm animals, plus the compulsory dehorning of all calves.

Secondly, ectoparasites in cattle are a significant problem for hide quality. The ending of widespread treatment of cattle for such parasites has led to an increase in other parasites, especially lice. That is an animal husbandry and animal welfare issue at the farm level.

Thirdly, ringworm affects about five per cent. of cattle in the United Kingdom. It is a significant skin disease because it is transferable to man, so there is a case for making the vaccination of all cattle obligatory.

Fourthly, there is the problem of dung contamination. Dirty hides and skins raise not only quality problems for tanners but health, safety and environmental problems for other trades and industries. This is a problem in both the United Kingdom and the rest of the European Community. It is viewed primarily as an issue of hygiene in abattoirs and proper implementation of the rules for preventing dirty animals from entering the abattoir. There would seem to be a need for a payment method to farmers to be devised, which would ensure that cleaner animals arrive for slaughter.

The final matter to which I shall refer is the export of live animals. This is a further animal welfare issue because it is felt that there is a significant economic impact on the leather industry. At the same time, it affects the way in which animals are sent overseas and the number of them. There has been a rapidly increasing level of exports, especially of live sheep.

There is a feeling that, as we have moved to the single European market, there has also been a move to the lowest common denominator in terms of animal welfare controls as national regulations are relaxed or removed and EC controls are more relaxed or non-existent. This has an effect not only on animal welfare but on other sectors, including the hide, skin and leather trade. The relaxation of rules on transport times for animals has coincided with a rapid increase in the export of live sheep from the United Kingdom, mainly to France. During 1992, the total almost doubled to over 1·4 million. There are reports of further increases during 1993.

Exports on this scale need to be carefully monitored, to ensure that the animals are not subject to unnecessary suffering. I question whether that is taking place. It should be acknowledged that, although there may be some short-term commercial benefits to live sheep exports on this scale, it leads to a loss of added value within the United Kingdom and creates economic problems for downstream industries, including the hide, skin and leather trade.

To conclude, tonight I have attempted to highlight some problems being faced in just one sphere: raw material supply by the British leather industry. I know that discussions and negotiations are taking place with Ministry officials. All I am asking is that there should be a true recognition of the contribution of the industry to the British economy, that the Ministry will look in favour at least at some of its suggestions, and take positive steps to assist it to continue its high level of quality and exports.

12.50 am

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Mr. Nicholas Soames): I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Wellingborough (Mr. Fry) on identifying a subject on which he is an expert, as the House knows. It is of considerable importance to this country, and therefore to many hon. Members.

As my hon. Friend and the House will know, for centuries the leather and associated industries have made a substantial contribution to the economic well-being of this country. The leather industry now has a turnover of

[Mr. Nicholas Soames]

some £400 million. The industry exports more than half of that to buyers throughout the world, and regularly makes a positive contribution to our balance of payments. Its products are of the highest quality and rightly attract premium prices in sophisticated and discerning markets such as the United States of America, France and Italy as well as the United Kingdom.

Today, tanning is no longer a parochial, craft-oriented business serving the local community, but a capital-intensive, technologically-driven industry trading its products across the world. British tanners face intense competition both at home and overseas. Inevitably, the United Kingdom industry has had to adapt and change to the new environment in which it must operate. The United Kingdom has not been alone in this. Throughout Europe, we have seen in recent years a substantial shrinkage in the tanning industry, both in employment in the sector and in the number of firms. I think that my hon. Friend will agree that probably two main worldwide factors are responsible for this.

The first is the shift of footwear and other leather manufacturing industries from the north to the south and from the west to the east. The transfer of activity has been driven largely by the relative cost of labour, in this as in so many other industries.

The second factor which has speeded the transfer of activity is the building up of considerable tanning capacity in countries which have traditionally been the suppliers of raw material—India, Pakistan, Brazil, the Argentine and others. I regret to say that in many cases—my hon. Friend is right to suggest this—the development of these new industries has been and continues to be supported by export bans on raw material and Government subsidies on investments and exports.

The comparative international disadvantages of high labour costs, and the increasing environmental requirements which European society now insists upon, have forced the leather industry to introduce a high degree of mechanisation into the production process. Another important feature to improve competitiveness has been the training of the work-force and the introduction of increased flexibility in production. However, my hon. Friend has correctly pointed out that the most important strategy has been the shift from the production of standard quality items to products with higher value added—in other words, concentrating on the top quality end of the market.

Clearly, an important element in this drive towards top quality production must be access to top quality raw material—that is the skins and hides. This is where the farming industry plays its part. I am extremely grateful to my honourable Friend for giving us such a clear analysis of the reasons why farmers should treat their sheep in order to control sheep scab and other parasitic conditions.

I should perhaps make it clear that I fully agree with my hon. Friend on the benefits of dipping sheep for scab. They are clear for all to see, and I would encourage all sheep farmers to dip their animals regularly, as well as to apply other appropriate anti-parasitic treatments.

I am equally grateful to the Meat and Livestock Commission, which has recently sent my Department a report that details its concerns about the effect of the removal of sheep scab controls on the quality of skins supplied to the leather industry. The report has been prepared in conjunction with a number of interested bodies, including the British Leather Confederation. It makes many of the same points that have been made tonight, and we shall study it with great care and interest.

However, I have no doubts that simply encouraging farmers to dip and otherwise treat their sheep will not satisfy my hon. Friend, or the authors of the report. they would like the Government to go much further and regulate again for the compulsory dipping of sheep. That is a different matter altogether and one on which I am afraid I cannot agree with my hon. Friend.

The purpose of compulsory national dipping was to control and eradicate sheep scab, particularly on premises where the existence of infestation had not been recognised. Compulsory national dipping, once or twice a year was an important part of the sheep scab controls since 1976.

However, 15 years later, in 1991, scab was still confirmed in 116 flocks, and 28 per cent. of farmers failed to co-operate by returning their dipping forms. This was no golden egg. The policy was not going to eradicate sheep scab. After widespread consultation, it was decided last year to remove the requirement compulsorily to dip.

I have heard nothing tonight that makes me think it was wrong to deregulated the sheep scab controls. As my hon. Friend knows, scab can be cured by the farmer simply and effectively by using a licensed medicinal product in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, combined with care in the purchase of replacement animals and management of his flock to prevent reinfestation. To reintroduce controls now would fly in the face of the Governmnent's deregulation policy.

Legislation is now used only as a last resort. I hope that my hon. Friend will agree that there is no reason why diseases of sheep should be treated any differently from other policies, when there is a perfectly acceptable means at hand to control them.

Although I fully understand the concerns of the leather industry about the quality of its raw materials, it is for the marketplace, not Parliament to determine the quality of supply. I am sure that the leather industry would not want the Government to regulate its operations so that it was prevented from making what it saw as the right commercial decisions in the marketplace.

Farming is no different. We are firmly committed to trying to move away from unnecessary controls throughout British industry, and that applies as much to farming as to any other industry, in the land.

We have heard tonight about deterioration in the quality of skins supplied to the leather industry and the need for legislation because of failures in the market. I appreciate that the current structure of the industry makes it difficult for price signals to move back through the chain from the leather industry to the farmer, but that is something that the industry can and must sort out for itself.

The Government should not interfere to force the livestock industry to incur extra costs to improve the quality of skins if the livestock industry itself concludes, on commercial grounds, that the extra costs are not justified by the extra reward for the quality achieved. The remedy must lie in the leather industry improving the price signals that it sends to farmers, combined, if the industry chooses, with the sort of promotional campaign which the MLC told my officials in June that it was considering.

I would certainly be happy to consider with the British Leather Confederation, the Meat and Livestock Commission and other interested parties what practical action might be taken to encourage farmers to improve the quality of the raw material reaching the tanning industry. As my hon. Friend mentioned, I am pleased to say that discussions have already been initiated at official level.

My hon. Friend has also raised animal welfare as an area of concern, both because of the increased incidence of sheep scab, and the export of live animals. Although I cannot confirm or deny the number of new outbreaks of sheep scab since the disease is not longer notifiable, I can confirm that the Government take this, and all issues of animal welfare, extremely seriously.

We already have legislation which makes it an offence to cause unnecessary pain or distress to farm livestock. We know that the sheep scab mite causes irritation and distress to affected animals. Prosecution action will be taken by the local authority, or the state veterinary service against any producers who create animal welfare problems by failing to treat infested sheep. But that is no different from the action that we would take for any other welfare problem caused by poor husbandry.

There is, as my hon. Friend rightly says, a strong market demand on the continent for British animals. Live exports alone were worth about £160 million in 1992. The choice between sending live animals or carcase meat is a matter for market forces, subject to the necessary welfare safeguards when live animals are transported. I note the points raised by my hon. Friend about animal transport, which we will, of course, bear in mind.

I am also fully aware of the concerns in some quarters about the possible effects of those dips which contain organophosphorous compounds, on the farmers using them. The House may be aware that, in March, following a request from the previous Minister, the independent Veterinary Products Committee gave careful consideration to whether a moratorium on the use of organophosphorous sheep dips should be introduced. At its meeting, the VPC took into account reports of increased outbreaks of sheep scab in formulating its advice to Ministers. The committee concluded that those dips should continue on the market during the summer period.

It made specific mention of the fact that, if sheep scab and blowfly strike were left untreated, serious welfare problems would follow. The VPC will be returning to the subject of organophosphorous dips again in October, when it wishes to complete the review of products which is currently under way. Comments from the British Leather Confederation have been received, and those are being put to the VPC, along with all the other information that it will consider.

We are doing all we can to try to establish the facts —we want to be able to make an informed decision based on as much scientific evidence as possible. In the meantime, sheep can continue to benefit from proven effective treatment to safeguard against distressing diseases. Sheep are, of course, not the only source of skins to the leather industry. My hon. Friend mentioned cattle, which are also important—their skins can suffer from warble fly infection. In Great Britain, great progress has been made in eliminating warble fly in recent years—it has been eliminated. Unfortunately, recent imports of cattle have shown evidence of warble infestation. We acted swiftly to deal with those outbreaks; and national rules for combating the spread of the fly were speedily and fully implemented.

My hon. Friend will no doubt be pleased to hear that we are seeking additional trade safeguards from the Community to help protect our hard-won disease-free status, and that we shall do all that we can to preserve it. My hon. Friend also mentioned ringworm. I am sure that he is aware that drugs are available to treat ringworm, and it is up to the farmer to ensure that the condition is treated.

In conclusion, I once again congratulate my hon. Friend on the succinct and imaginative way in which he voiced his concerns about the leather industry. In these technologically advanced days, it is all too easy to forget the value and significance of traditional industries such as that one. I hope that I have reassured my hon. Friend that the Government are seized of the need to do all they can to maintain the quality of the raw materials used in the leather industry, without burdening the industry with unnecessary regulations. We shall pay great attention to the issues raised by my hon. Friend, but he will be aware that farmers themselves also have an important and integral part to play in the process. I can assure my hon. Friend that we shall continue to watch the position extremely carefully.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at three minutes past One o'clock.

House of Commons

Thursday 22 July 1993

The House met at half-past Two o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PRIVATE BUSINESS

LONDON LOCAL AUTHORITIES BILL *[Lords]*
(By Order)
Order for Second Reading read.
Read a Second time, and committed.

EAST COAST MAIN LINE (SAFETY) BILL *(By Order)*

WOODGRANGE PARK CEMETERY BILL *[Lords]*
(By Order)
Orders for Second Reading read.
To be read a Second time on Thursday 21 October.

Oral Answers to Questions

HOME DEPARTMENT

Secure Accommodation (Juveniles)

1. **Dr. Lynne Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is his estimate of the current shortfall in the number of places available in local authority secure accommodation for juveniles whom the courts wish to send to such accommodation.

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Michael Howard): Under the present law, the courts have no powers to require that any juvenile should be detained in local authority secure accommodation either before or after conviction.

Dr. Jones: Is not it accepted that there is a shortfall of places available in secure units? Why do not the Government give local authorities the funding that they need to provide the places that have been identified as necessary? In Birmingham, it costs over £2,200 a week for each of the eight places that are provided and currently occupied and it is estimated that at least another 16 places are needed in the west midlands. Why do not the Government give that support? I have a letter from the local police who say that, as well as more secure units, they want to see more supervision of young people on bail and more support for offenders' families. If the Government are really committed to tackling crime, why— *[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. The hon. Lady has put her question.

Mr. Howard: Local authorities have the powers that they need to provide secure accommodation. If Opposition Members think, as they should, that local authorities should give greater priority to the provision of secure accommodation, they should make those representations to the local authorities concerned, many of which are now controlled by the Labour party.

Dame Jill Knight: What plans does my right hon. and learned Friend have to ensure that staff in children's homes—even those in non-secure children's homes—keep a reasonable measure of control over the children in their care? Is he aware that some of the children cause absolute misery and mayhem to nearby residents?

Mr. Howard: My hon. Friend has identified a particular problem which needs to be addressed. It is a problem which will be addressed to some extent when we legislate, as I hope to do at the earliest opportunity, to give the courts the power to make orders so that young, persistent offenders can be detained in secure accommodation.

Mr. Blair: Will the Home Secretary confirm that it is now two years since the Home Office promised additional secure places for juvenile offenders and not one of those places has been built? Will he also confirm that the revenue funding for such places has not even been agreed? Does he understand that local authorities, the police and local communities do not want to wait another two or three years before those places in secure accommodation and elsewhere are available? They want action now, as it is now that crime is being committed.

Mr. Howard: The particular places to which the hon. Gentleman has referred are in the course of being provided. Why does not he address the question that I raised in answer to his hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Selly Oak (Dr. Jones) a few moments ago? Local authorities have the power to provide secure accommodation and there are many examples, such as Leicestershire, where the Labour party has refused to open secure accommodation that was originally provided when those counties were under Conservative control.

Rapists

2. **Mr. Nicholls:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures his Department is taking to deal with rapists.

The Minister of State, Home Office (Mr. David Maclean): Courts have been empowered to impose longer sentences on persons convicted of violent or sexual offences and to require that they should be supervised for longer periods when released. The Prison Service runs programmes for sex offenders aimed at tackling the roots of their behaviour and preventing reoffending.

Mr. Nicholls: While thanking my hon. Friend for that reply, may I ask him whether he recalls that when a provision was introduced to enable the prosecution to appeal against over-lenient sentences, it was opposed by both the Liberal Democrats and the Labour party? What does my hon. Friend think that the public should conclude about those who talk tough on law and order, but who shy away when they have the opportunity to turn the rhetoric into reality?

Mr. Maclean: Time and again, the Opposition have voted against measures that we have introduced which have proved absolutely essential. Since we introduced those powers, the Attorney-General has referred 16 cases

in which people have been sentenced for rape and 12 of those sentences were increased by the Court of Appeal. Other cases are pending.

Mr. Ashton: Is the Minister aware that there is serious concern about the bail conditions given to rapists? Is he aware that in parts of Nottinghamshire cases are taking about nine or 10 months to come to court either because of the incompetence of the Crown Prosecution Service or because of a lack of funding? In that time, because of weak bail conditions, too many of those accused visit the areas in which the attack has taken place and they often abuse and harass those whom they are alleged to have raped. That is not good enough. The bail conditions must be tightened in such cases. It is the Minister's neglect in controlling the Crown Prosecution Service that is allowing such problems to occur.

Mr. Maclean: I disagree with the hon. Gentleman that it is the fault of the Crown Prosecution Service. I am, of course, aware of the concern about people who commit other crimes on bail, but I remind the hon. Gentleman of the provisions of the Bail Act 1976 under which bail can be refused in all cases if the court is satisfied that the person might abscond, reoffend, threaten witnesses or pervert the course of justice. That is what the law says. Judges and courts have the powers to deal effectively with anyone who appears before them and who might reoffend on bail.

Mr. James Hill: Is my hon. Friend aware of the case this week in a court in my area in which Judge Starforth Hill released on bail a person who was being tried for three rapes? He gave the man bail against the advice of the police and the man now resides in southern Ireland. There is no way in which we can get him back. Is that not a travesty of justice?

Mr. Maclean: My hon. Friend will understand that I cannot comment on that particular case at present. I merely repeat that the Bail Act, if it is enforced properly by the courts—we have circulars designed to draw the law to the attention of magistrates and judges—provides that if the court is satisfied that someone might abscond or reoffend, it does not need to grant bail. In each case, the decision is at the discretion of the courts and judges.

Obscene Publications Acts

4. **Mr. Nicholas Winterton:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has any plans to review the provisions of the Obscene Publications Acts.

6. **Mrs. Ann Winterton:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received concerning the working of the Obscene Publications Acts.

The Minister of State, Home Office (Mr. Peter Lloyd): We are not reviewing the central provisions of the present law on obscenity, but we are examining ways in which to make existing legislation work effectively. We continue to receive representations on the general subject from hon. Members and others.

Mr. Winterton: A unique twinning, Madam Speaker. Does my hon. Friend agree with me and with the Prime Minister that the book "Juliette" by the Marquis de Sade, which glorifies child abuse and murder, is "truly horrific"? As the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Attorney-General have said that no prosecution is possible because no conviction could be guaranteed, will my hon. Friend and my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary come to the House as soon as possible to announce an amendment to the Obscene Publications Act 1964, something which is long overdue?

Mr. Peter Lloyd: It is a very nasty book, but it is for the Director of Public Prosecutions to decide whether to bring forward a prosecution. The law that my hon. Friend complains of explicitly states that it is the harm that the material can do that is the nature of the offence. I do not believe that there is any form of words that could improve the law to deal with the case.

Mrs. Ann Winterton: Will my hon. Friend take time next Tuesday to watch "The Cook Report", which exposes the evil, secretive and lucrative trade in computer pornography? Will he tell the House what actions he intends to take to review the obsolete test of obscenity and also the Obscene Publications Act 1964, which forces the police to operate against the vile trade with one hand tied behind their backs?

Mr. Lloyd: We are looking carefully and urgently at the subject of computer pornography. The systems that are on sale and that can be exchanged come under the present law. We are also examining whether self-constructed systems come under the law.

Ms Lynne: Does the Minister support the introduction of custodial sentences for the possession of child pornography, because at the moment some people who possess child pornography are given minimal fines?

Mr. Lloyd: The effect of the law in that area is one of the things that we are looking at and is at the top of our list.

Mr. Lewis: Does the Minister agree that the most pernicious form of pornography in recent years has been that which has been communicated through the telephone service following the Telecommunications Act 1984? Does he welcome the measures that have been proposed by the independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services and Oftel?

Will the Minister also note that the pornographers are putting together a fighting fund which they reckon will total about £1 million to fight the proposals? Will the Government take note of that and, when the matter subsequently reaches a public debate, will they do something about it?

Mr. Lloyd: The hon. Gentleman has taken an interest in the matter for a long time. The law is being examined with great care and the hon. Gentleman knows that the codes of practice are currently being revised also.

Mr. Alison: Does my hon. Friend recognise that the test for obscenity—that the material has a tendency to deprave and corrupt—shows that, objectively, there is a fearful latent detriment in pornography? Since the test clearly is not stopping the damage of pornography, will my hon. Friend reconsider the proposition that there is no need to supplement the test with a further and more effective one?

Mr. Lloyd: We have examined the law and there have been a number of private Member's Bills on the matter. My right hon. Friend clearly stated that the test is whether the material will deprave and corrupt, or do actual harm.

That is what the test is all about. It is essentially the same test as we have had since 1868. It was regarded by many people as over-effective for 100 years, but people now say that it is under-effective. What my right hon. Friend and other hon. Members must realise is that jury attitudes have changed. I do not believe that we can compensate for that by changing the wording of the law. We are willing to consider any suggestions for improvement.

Rev. Martin Smyth: Does the Minister accept that tinkering with the edges of law will not deal with the problem? While we recognise that the matter relates to the moral climate, is not it true that the Government and their advisers are not prepared to tackle the problem?

Mr. Lloyd: The Government are anxious to tackle the problem. The hon. Gentleman should suggest a better test. The problem, as I have stated twice from the Dispatch Box, is that material that the hon. Gentleman and I and other hon. Members may think of as obviously harmful is often not thought harmful by juries.

Offending on Bail

5. **Mr. Thomason:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received regarding offending on bail; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: We receive representations from time to time; we share the concern about offending on bail. We have supported the Bail (Amendment) Act introduced by my hon. Friend the Member for Shoreham (Mr. Stephen) and we have introduced an amendment to the Criminal Justice Act 1991 to give courts powers to increase sentences for those who offend on bail.

Mr. Thomason: Will my hon. Friend confirm that by supporting that Bill, the Government have declared that they intend to deal with bail bandits, a subject which worries many hon. Members? Is not it the case that Conservative Members are convinced that my hon. Friend is endeavouring to deal with the problem, unlike Opposition Members, who have difficulty expressing a united opinion?

Mr. Maclean: My hon. Friend comes straight to the point. We are determined to tackle those who offend while on bail. Bail is a right, but it is also a privilege. We cannot tolerate for much longer those who offend on bail, when there may be no good reason for them to do so. We have already taken measures. We keep the law under constant review. If my hon. Friend has any suggestions of sensible further improvements, I shall look forward to hearing them.

Mr. Madden: What action is the Minister taking on a case that I have twice referred to the Minister of State of a Bradford man who had a disgraceful history of breaching bail conditions, was sentenced to two and a half years in prison, was granted home leave and has since absconded? The prison authorities tell me that he would not have been granted home leave if they had been told of the breaches of his bail conditions. What action is being taken to ensure that such a disgraceful incident does not happen again?

Mr. Maclean: We have revised the rules on home leave, but I shall be happy to receive the detailed information of that case from the hon. Gentleman and look into it personally.

Young Offenders

7. **Mr. Anthony Coombs:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers he has to review custodial penalties for offenders under the age of 18 years.

Mr. Maclean: The Government keep all penalties under constant review and propose changes when we judge that it is necessary. We have decided to introduce as soon as possible a new secure training order to deal with the hard core of persistent juvenile offenders for whom other court-imposed sanctions have failed.

Mr. Coombs: In welcoming the secure training order, may I ask my hon. Friend whether he agrees that the peak age for offending in Britain is 16 for boys and for girls? Is he aware that the lives of our constituents are made miserable and inconvenient by the activities of a small minority of people who deserve custodial sentences because of the scale of their activities? Does he agree that the cautioning system in Britain, use of which has increased significantly in the past few years, certainly needs review so that adequate deterrence is provided in cases of burglary and other offences?

Mr. Maclean: It is clear from my discussions with magistrates, judges and the police that there is a need for a secure training order for those 12 to 15-year-olds who have already been through all the community sentencing procedures and are still determined to continue in a life of crime. There is overwhelming evidence of the need for a secure training order, but there is deafening silence from the Opposition on accepting that need.

Mr. Gunnell: Does the Minister agree that if we are to have secure training orders and people in security, we must deal with the need for secure accommodation? The Minister says that there is no evidence that the Opposition are concerned about the problem. Will he acknowledge that in Leeds, where there are 27 secure places, discussions were held two years ago between the authority and his Department about the addition of 10 places? It was agreed that the extra places should be pursued. Yet no money has been produced by the Home Office, as it promised since that date. How can we have more people in secure accommodation when we do not have the places?

Mr. Maclean: It is clear that the Opposition are dodging the point. Secure training orders are specifically designed for 12 to 15-year-olds who will be sent to units directly by the courts. The Opposition know—if they do not, they should—that the courts have no power at present to send to a secure unit directly anyone under the age of 15. Will the Opposition support the demands of magistrates throughout Britain to give them that power? Yes or no?

Mr. Sykes: Is my hon. Friend aware that today in Yorkshire a 17-year-old youth has been convicted for his third joyriding offence in 18 months? Unfortunately, I cannot name him because of the absurd Criminal Justice Act 1991. Suffice it to say that when the arresting officer caught hold of him, the youth said that he was prepared to kill to make good his escape. That was no idle threat

because the young man has killed before. In 1991 he ran into a 57-year-old nurse in my constituency. When will my hon. Friend change the law so that eventually the punishment fits the crime, not the criminal?

Mr. Maclean: Of course, while we are looking at the law on the sentencing of 12 to 15-year-old persistent juvenile offenders, we shall at the same time look at the law for other age groups, to ensure that sentences are proportionate to those in the younger age group. I hope that my hon. Friend will not be disappointed when we have concluded our discussions.

Ms Ruddock: Is not the Minister failing to learn from past mistakes? Is he aware of his Department's own evidence that under the old approved school system the vast majority of young offenders had reoffended within five years and that children leaving approved schools had a reoffending rate that was 49 per cent. above that which would otherwise have been expected from their records and characteristics? He should take note of the consensus and demands of my hon. Friends that the present system needs to be better operated. Secure places should be provided by local authorities, where people can be detained close to their families and given support to try to reduce the reoffending rate.

Mr. Maclean: It is clear from what we have said so far that the new secure training orders will be nothing like approved schools or borstals. The Opposition cannot hide much longer behind the myth that we are re-establishing old borstals; we are clearly not. Sooner or later, the Opposition will have to come clean. Will they vote for secure training units or not?

The hon. Lady had better explain that to magistrates and to the police who have arrested 14-year-olds, some of whom have 30 previous convictions. Such youngsters have been through the whole range of community sentences and now the only other sentence for them is a secure training unit. The Opposition cannot ignore the fact that for a small number of young people community sentences are not appropriate.

Police Officers (Injuries)

8. **Mr. Nigel Evans:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have been injured in the course of their duty for the last 12 months that figures are available.

Mr. Howard: Information on the number of injuries is not held centrally. In 1992, 14,946 police officers were assaulted on duty in England and Wales.

Mr. Evans: In the light of that response, I thank the Home Secretary for allowing the trials of the extended baton and telescopic baton throughout the country. Unfortunately Lancashire, where I live, is not an area where the trials are taking place. I have figures that show that in 1991 the number of police assaulted on duty was 439; last year, it was 466. That is an appalling figure. Once the trials have been completed, if they are as successful as I believe they will be, will the Home Secretary widely extend the issue of extended batons and telescopic batons and ensure that the police have the tools to do their duty of protecting the public against the criminal?

Mr. Howard: I have made it clear that I am determined to ensure that the police have the equipment they need to protect themselves from the attacks and assaults to which they are increasingly subjected. I saw on Monday, in Poole in Dorset, a demonstration of the Arnold baton. I share my hon. Friend's hope that the evaluation that I have authorised will soon be successfully concluded, so that the batons that are currently being tested can be used more widely across the country and give the police the protection that they need.

Mr. Alton: Does the Home Secretary recall that six months ago in my constituency, WPC Lesley Harrison was viciously attacked? Does he agree that the bravery shown by policewomen and policemen deserves our admiration and practical support? Given that more than 20,000 police officers came to Wembley this week and that in areas of difficult policing there is grave disquiet about the effects of the Sheehy report, will the Home Secretary take seriously their concern that the number of police officers will be reduced as a result of the report, leaving many communities under-policed?

Mr. Howard: Of course, I understand and am aware of the concern that has been expressed. I have made it clear that I intend to consult the police and not confront them on the question of change; but change is necessary. I hope that the hon. Gentleman will look again at the report. He will see that, far from reducing the number of police officers available for policing duties, the object of the report is to increase the number of police constables on our streets.

Mr. Shersby: In the light of my right hon. and learned Friend's information about the number of police officers injured, will he assure the House that in the coming weeks he will work closely with the police staff associations to reach agreement on proposals for reform, which both they and he desire?

Mr. Howard: I can indeed give my hon. Friend that assurance. I have every intention of engaging in a constructive dialogue with the police over the next few weeks. The consultation period will not expire until the end of September; I have made it clear that I will listen very carefully to the views of the police and others, and take them into account before reaching any final decisions.

Mr. Stevenson: Are not the police under tremendous pressure as a result of the appalling statistics revealed by the Home Secretary? The Sheehy report has led to a complete disintegration of morale, and the proposition that there must be a link between performance and reward has not helped. Will the Home Secretary now repudiate that statement and give the police a clear assurance that the basis of market testing in the Sheehy report is not acceptable to the Government?

Mr. Howard: No. I will not prejudge the outcome of the consultation in any way. The Sheehy report was designed to strengthen the links between responsibilities and rewards; that strikes me as a thoroughly worthy objective. The report sets out one way of achieving it, but I will take into account any other suggestions. I intend the consultation period, which is currently under way, to result in fruitful and constructive dialogue with the police and all others with an interest in these matters.

Asylum (Fraudulent Applications)

9. **Mr. David Shaw:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress his Department has made in preventing fraudulent applications for asylum.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Wardle): New procedures designed to deter bogus asylum applications were introduced in November 1991. Since then, the number of new asylum applications has nearly halved. The new Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act will also help significantly.

Mr. Shaw: Conservative Members welcome the new asylum legislation. Will my hon. Friend join me in praising Dover immigration service for yesterday's highly successful raid on illegal visitors to this country? Will he confirm that one way of reducing the incidence of social security fraud would be to reduce the number of bogus asylum seekers?

Mr. Wardle: My hon. Friend is absolutely right in saying that a number of bogus asylum seekers have been involved in social security fraud. There have already been 26 successful prosecutions, and a number of other cases are being investigated. One case involved a family of four from Zaire who had submitted more than 50 applications for income support and had been given 50 allocations of council housing. I join my hon. Friend in congratulating the immigration service on yesterday's successful operations near Ashford.

Mr. Allen: Does the Minister agree that reducing the time allowed for certain appeals against refusal of asylum to 48 hours is not only unfair and unjust, but a contravention of natural justice, resulting in judicial reviews, which in turn lead to yet more delay? When do the Government expect to meet their own pathetic target—set last November—of providing a safe haven for no more than 1,000 Bosnians? Or does the Minister consider such people, whom we see nightly on our television screens, to be nothing more than fraudulent claimants?

Mr. Wardle: As the hon. Gentleman knows, and as he has been told time and again, the selection of ex-detainees and other vulnerable people in Bosnia is a matter for the experts on the ground—the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross. After the weeks and months that he has spent debating asylum during the current Session of Parliament, the hon. Gentleman really should have learnt that the 48-hour rule applies to those who have made manifestly unfounded applications and have been detained at ports. The hon. Gentleman does not seem to realise that by allowing such people to prolong their stay he would be delaying the consideration of genuine refugee cases in which people suffer genuine traumas.

Citizenship

10. **Mrs. Roe:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were granted British citizenship in *(a)* 1974, *(b)* 1979 and *(c)* 1992; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: In 1974 and 1979 respectively, 69,657 and 29,500 people were granted citizenship of the United Kingdom. In 1992, 42,241 people were granted British citizenship, excluding the number granted that status under the British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1990.

Mrs. Roe: Does my hon. Friend agree that those figures show that Conservative Governments operate firm and fair controls on immigration? Is it not the case that Opposition parties would abolish some of those controls, which at present reduce the flow of people coming into this country and ensure better race relations?

Mr. Wardle: My hon. Friend is absolutely right. Opposition Members have consistently opposed our legislative proposals and the Asylum Bill, which is now the Asylum Act. The Government will maintain their firm but fair immigration controls on non-EC nationals, and in so doing underpin good race relations in this country.

Young Offenders

11. **Mr. Jim Marshall:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what further proposals he has to deal with persistent young offenders; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Howard: I intend to bring legislative proposals before the House as soon as possible.

Mr. Marshall: I thank the Home Secretary for that reply. May I also—this may surprise him—welcome the initiatives that he has taken so far, particularly on behalf of the residents of the Saffron Lane estate in my constituency, who have been subjected to a great deal of criminal behaviour and hooliganism in the past few months? Does it cross his mind that a contributory factor to that criminal behaviour may well be the political thrust of the Government's policies over the past 14 years, which have emphasised selfishness and greed as opposed to collective action and responsibility?

Mr. Howard: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for the first words that he uttered, but I must tell him that the rest of his contribution was absolute nonsense from beginning to end. What we must never do is obscure the difference between right and wrong. That difference is well understood by the vast majority of people in this country. Making such absurd accusations is an affront to ordinary, decent, law-abiding people in all walks of life throughout the country.

Mr. Rowe: I remind my right hon. Friend that it is about 25 years since Lord Kilbrandon in Scotland made a constructive distinction between the principles governing the way in which the commission of a crime is regarded and the punishment or treatment that is required after that has been done. Will he therefore look again at the whole concept in England of the age of criminal responsibility, because many of my constituents find it quite intolerable that there should be an automatic assumption that some hooligans and young children are too young to be scooped up by the law?

Mr. Howard: As my hon. Friend is well aware, we propose to take measures as soon as parliamentary time permits to enable persistent young offenders to be detained in secure accommodation and to receive the education and training which I hope will lead to a permanent change in their habits of behaviour.

Mr. Purchase: I, too, welcome the measures being taken, because many people in Wolverhampton are tormented by the level of youth crime, but it is nonsense for the Home Secretary to believe that Opposition Members do not wish to see the difference between right and wrong. The atomisation of society by him, his party and his leader, and the belief that there is no such thing as society, has caused the uprising in young crime. It is a disgrace. Measures need to be——

Madam Speaker: Order. I have not yet heard a question from the hon. Gentleman. Does the Secretary of State wish to reply?

Mr. Howard: It is utterly disgraceful that week after week Opposition Members get up and protest against crime when they voted against the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, the Public Order Act 1986, the Criminal Justice Act 1988, and the Criminal Justice Act 1991, and they continue to vote against the prevention of terrorism Act every time it comes before the House.

Special Constables

12. **Mr. Garnier:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work of special constables.

Mr. Howard: Special constables play a valuable role in supplementing regular officers and strengthening the partnership between the police and the public. I have recently announced a new target of 30,000 special constables.

Mr. Garnier: I thank my right hon. and learned Friend for that answer. The chief constable of Leicestershire is making intelligent use of special constables and, as a result of the additional target that my right hon. and learned Friend has announced, will make even better use of them. May I commend to him proposals for parish constables, which will increase the partnership between the public and the police so that villages in rural areas can feel safer? May I also commend the proposals of the high sheriff of Leicestershire, Mr. Robin Murray-Philipson, for a Leicestershire crime beat scheme bringing young people together with the police——

Madam Speaker: Order. Question Time is becoming a debating period. Members are asked to put questions to Ministers, not constituency cases. Has the hon. Member finished his question?

Mr. Garnier: I was asking the Home Secretary to commend the high sheriff's Leicestershire crime beat scheme, which brings young people together with the police.

Mr. Howard: I will certainly look at the high sheriff's proposal with much interest. I am grateful for the support that my hon. Friend expressed, in particular for the possible introduction of parish constables throughout rural areas. We have payed all too little attention to rural crime, which requires determined and effective action. I hope that parish constables will be able to play a part in dealing with it.

Mr. Cryer: Is it not likely that the target set by the Home Secretary will not be reached due to low morale among the regular police force following the Sheehy proposals? Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman not think it outrageous that he is proposing payment by results, short-term contracts and sacking policemen when they represent the thin blue line resisting the rising tide of Tory crime?

Mr. Howard: It is hardly surprising that the hon. Gentleman was unable keep a straight face as he asked that question.

Mr. Stephen: I welcome my right hon. and learned Friend's statement on special constables, but does he accept that the majority of crime in this country is committed by the same small group of people in each police division, who are doing it again and again? Does he accept that we have to focus on those people and keep them locked away for a long time so that they physically cannot burgle our constituents' houses, steal their cars and rape their daughters.

Mr. Howard: I have a great deal of sympathy with what my hon. Friend says. I congratulate him on the measures that he has taken to give the prosecution powers to appeal against bail orders when they are inappropriate. I will always listen to the point of view that he represents.

Sheehy Report

13. **Mr. Clapham:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions will take place with the police before any of the Sheehy recommendations are implemented.

Mr. Howard: I announced on 30 June that full consultation would take place on Sir Patrick Sheehy's report. As part of the process, written comments on the report have been invited by the end of September. Before reaching my decisions, I intend to take full account of the views of the police and of others with an interest in these matters.

Mr. Clapham: I hear what the Secretary of State has to say, but he must be aware of the massive opposition to the Sheehy report among all ranks of the police force, based on experience that payment by results and short-term contracts are a recipe for disaster in the force. Does he therefore agree that the way forward is to shelve the Sheehy report and to concentrate on developing a community police force based on a partnership between local authorities and the police?

Mr. Howard: I am aware—it is a point of view that I have heard expressed by police officers up and down the country—that there is a widely recognised need for change. During the consultation period on Sir Patrick Sheehy's report, I propose to explore ways in which we can achieve lasting and beneficial change in the police service for the benefit of the police and of everyone who lives in this country.

Sir Ivan Lawrence: Is my right hon. and learned Friend aware that for every 100 recorded crimes only four alleged offenders are brought to court? Since it is the job of the police to bring offenders to court, surely it would be a dereliction of duty if the Government were not considering ways to make the police force more effective and efficient.

Mr. Howard: I entirely agree with my hon. and learned Friend, who has identified the reason behind the various

proposals that we are considering. The police have been operating within an out-of-date framework and we must bring it up to date in a sensible way, after consulting and entering into constructive dialogue with them. That is exactly what I propose to do.

PRIME MINISTER

Engagements

Q1. **Mr. Hinchliffe:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 22 July.

The Prime Minister (Mr. John Major): This morning, I presided at a meeting of the Cabinet and had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in the House, I shall be having further meetings later today.

Mr. Hinchliffe: Is it not a fact that the Government's position on the social chapter is totally at odds with the views and real interests of the British people? If the Prime Minister loses the vote tonight, will he do the honourable thing: resign, go to the country and let the people decide?

The Prime Minister: That was a brave stab in the dark at the beginning of Question Time. I think that the hon. Gentleman is entirely wrong about the social chapter. Perhaps I may quote to him what the president of the Council of British Chambers of Commerce in Europe has said of the social chapter that, if it were enacted, it

"would result in the closure of many small and medium-sized businesses, creating even higher unemployment".

I am sure that the hon. Gentleman would not wish to see that in his constituency or any other.

Q2. **Mr. David Atkinson:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 22 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Atkinson: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the figures released yesterday, which show that retail sales are now at a record high level, are good news for British high streets and further evidence that our economy is recovering and that prosperity and confidence are being restored?

The Prime Minister: I believe that it is good news for everyone, not just retailers. Retail sales were up 1¼ per cent. in June, up yet again to another record level, and have been on an upward trend for more than a year. They follow a run of good economic figures and are further compelling evidence of the fact that we are coming out of recession into recovery, with sharply brighter prospects than many imagined some weeks ago.

Mr. John Smith: Following the collapse of Astra Training Services less than three years after the privatisation of the skill centre network, what do the Government intend to do to clear up the shambles that privatisation has caused to skill training?

The Prime Minister: I think that the right hon. and learned Gentleman is wholly wrong about the position of skill training in this country and about privatisation. One of the matters that the President of the French Republic will wish to discuss with me next Monday is the success of our privatisation programme, as there are plans to introduce a similar programme in France.

Mr. Smith: Bearing in mind that Group 4 recently delivered a prisoner to a museum instead of a court, does the Prime Minister think that it might be time to review the mania for privatisation?

The Prime Minister: I know that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would like the Government to own everything, control everything and determine everything, but we believe in private enterprise, private ownership and privatisation, which has served this country well. Although the British Labour party does not like it, countries all around the world are following the privatisation trail blazed by the Conservative party in the 1980s.

Mr. John Townend: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the Government today face two problems—first, the budget deficit and, secondly, over-regulation, much of which comes from Europe and which is destroying many of our small businesses? Will he make an announcement that will help both those problems and announce a reduction of 10 per cent. in the number of inspectors, which would not only save money, but would show that the Government are serious in reducing the burden of regulation on business?

The Prime Minister: I do not have an announcement to make of precisely the sort urged on me by my hon. Friend, but we are looking at regulation—domestic regulation, European regulation and the enforcement of regulation in this country—in order to reduce the burdens on businesses, both large and small. Regulation has got out of any reasonable context, there is a need for action, and we propose to take it.

Mr. Ashdown: Are Her Majesty's Government prepared to allow the city of Sarajevo to fall to the Serbs?

The Prime Minister: The right hon. Gentleman is well aware of what I have said to the House on a number of occasions. He may be an enthusiast for putting British troops in the middle of Bosnia; I am not.

Mr. Devlin: Has my right hon. Friend seen today's survey by the Association of British Chambers of Commerce and the Lloyd's bank commercial service review, which show that in 180,000 firms throughout the country confidence and orders are improving, output is up and investment is being generated? Is that not a massive vote of confidence in Her Majesty's Government's economic policies?

The Prime Minister: Yes, I have seen that survey and I agree that its message is very encouraging. I am delighted that the good news seems to be shared by both service and manufacturing industries. They have gone to great efforts to shake off the problems of recession. It is now clear that economic recovery is under way—there has been no help from the Labour party, but recovery is nevertheless under way.

Q3. **Mr. Byers:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 22 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Byers: Can the Prime Minister tell the House of any occasion on which a Government have ratified an international treaty against the wishes of the House of Commons? Does he agree that a Government adopting such a course of action would deservedly lose the confidence not just of the House but of the whole country, and would not such a Government rightly stand condemned for acting as an elected dictatorship?

The Prime Minister: On the understanding that the hon. Gentleman is talking about a contemporary treaty, may I say that the Act carrying that treaty into law has been passed with massive majorities on Second and Third Readings, both here and in the House of Lords.

Mr. Spring: When my right hon. Friend meets the French Prime Minister on Monday, will he congratulate him on the launch of the French privatisation programme? Will he assure him that privatised companies are better companies once the dead hand of state control has been removed?

The Prime Minister: I entirely share my hon. Friend's view, which is increasingly shared by companies, countries and Governments in every part of the world.

Q4. **Ms Short:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 22 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Ms Short: Is the Prime Minister aware that an all-party group of which I was a member went to visit the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation headquarters recently and were told that preparations are being made for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolution on safe areas, which only requires 8,000 troops and changes in the rules of engagement? That has not been done and Sarajevo will fall. Has not the Prime Minister allowed that to happen?

The Prime Minister: As the hon. Lady knows, we have had a substantial troop presence in Bosnia for some time. A large number of other countries said in the past that they may be prepared also to put troops into Bosnia. We have made our contribution. A large number of other countries were signatories to that particular Security Council resolution. I think that it is right for them also to make their contribution to the collective carrying out of that resolution.

Q6. **Mrs. Gorman:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 22 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mrs. Gorman: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the social chapter issue is a red herring and that if we sign up to Maastricht the European Court will have the power to impose the conditions on us, whether we vote in this House for them or not, and that therefore those people who do not want the social chapter conditions should vote tonight to try to defeat the ratification of the Maastricht treaty?

The Prime Minister: This is one of those rare occasions when I am unable to share a view with my hon. Friend. I believe that she is entirely wrong and I hope that she will reconsider her position before 10 o'clock. *[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Save that for later.

Mr. Patchett: Given that the Prime Minister has informed us of his official engagements for today, can he inform the House of his plans for tomorrow?

The Prime Minister: I am looking forward to tomorrow immensely.

Q7. **Mr. Simon Coombs:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 22 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Coombs: My right hon. Friend will have seen yesterday's trade figures, which show that our exports to non EC countries have improved once again and are hitting record levels, and that our trade gap has narrowed for the fourth consecutive month. Are not those figures the clearest possible evidence of the underlying strength of British industry and of the rapidly improving strength of the British economy?

The Prime Minister: I think that my hon. Friend is right, both on the specifics of exports and on the general point. *[Interruption.]* Exports to non-Community countries were up 15 per cent. last year. *[Interruption.]* That is a real credit to British industry. *[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. The House must settle down now.

The Prime Minister: That is a real credit to British industry. *[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. The House is using up valuable time. Members are waiting to put important questions to the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister: I am delighted to see the support for British exporters. British industry is becoming more competitive and I think that British industry can take great credit for it.

Mr. Barron: Can the Prime Minister tell us whether he believes what he says about the social chapter? What do he and his Government believe will happen to this country if we endorse the social chapter? Does he believe that the Governments of the 11 other member states are mad?

The Prime Minister: I do not think that I would put it in precisely that way myself. What I can do is to repeat what the Council of British Chambers of Commerce in Europe has said about the impact of the social chapter. In case the hon. Gentleman did not hear, it said that it would "result in the closure of many small and medium-sized businesses, creating even higher unemployment." That is the view of every CBI employer group across Europe.

Q8. **Dame Jill Knight:** To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 22 July.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave some moments ago.

Dame Jill Knight: Is my right hon. Friend aware that the largest chamber of commerce and industry in the country is in my constituency, which is the centre of a vital industrial area, and that the opinion of the entire west

midlands industrial community is that we must stick to the principles that he negotiated at Maastricht and assure the industrial sector that we will not have the social chapter?

The Prime Minister: I think that the business men in my hon. Friend's constituency share the views of business men right across the country about the social chapter. They know that it would be a serious mistake, that it would add to costs, that it would cost jobs and wreck our competitiveness. It is not a chapter that is of any use to the British at present or in the future and it should not be part of British law.

Business of the House

3.30 pm

Mrs. Margaret Beckett (Derby, South): Will the Leader of the House state the business for the first week after the recess?

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): Yes, Madam. The business for the first week after the summer Adjournment will be as follows:

MONDAY 18 OCTOBER AND TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER—There will be a debate on a Government motion to approve the Defence Estimates 1993 (CM 2270).

WEDNESDAY 20 OCTOBER—Opposition Day (19th allotted day). There will be a debate on an Opposition motion; subject to be announced.

THURSDAY 21 OCTOBER—Proceedings on the European Economic Area Bill *[Lords]*.

FRIDAY 22 OCTOBER—There will be a debate on Northern Ireland issues on a motion for the Adjournment of the House.

It may be for the convenience of the House to know that my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be delivering his Budget statement—the first unified Budget statement, setting out the Government's tax and spending proposals together—on Tuesday 30 November.

Mrs. Beckett: I thank the Leader of the House for his answer, and in particular for giving notice of the date of the Budget.

I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman will recall that he was pressed last week, I think by members of all parties, for a statement to be made on assisted area status before the House rises for the summer recess. I am sure that he has not forgotten, and I hope that he has ensured that his colleagues have not forgotten, either.

I am not sure whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware of the very strong rumours that it has already been decided that the Local Government Commission may not proceed with a structural review of further tranches of local authorities once it has completed the first tranche on which it is presently engaged. Does he recognise that it would be extremely serious if Ministers encouraged the commission to take such a step, or if Ministers decided that the commission should take such a step, especially because, as I understand it, the timetable for the review of local authority ward boundaries, which are the basic building blocks of our democracy throughout local government and parliamentary and Euro-constituencies, would be reviewed only following the tranches which are already being dealt with on a structural basis?

It could mean that only Labour areas would have their structure reviewed, that only Labour areas in the first tranche would have their basic ward boundaries reviewed. Having had experience of the way in which the Government have blatantly gerrymandered local government boundaries in Wales and Scotland, none of my hon. Friends can be filled with confidence that it would be a sound way of dealing with the issue.

I therefore hope that the Leader of the House recognises that it is absolutely essential that we have a statement before the House rises if the Government have made such a decision, and that it would be an outrage if such a decision waited until the parliamentary recess.

We are pleased that the Leader of the House has given us the date of the unified Budget, but I remind him of the strong concern that we have repeatedly expressed about the failure to schedule a proper public expenditure debate this year. Members of all parties will want to ensure that, whatever procedures are adopted for debating the unified Budget and consequent economic measures, no time is lost to the House for a debate on economic issues as a whole.

Mr. Newton: In answer to the first of the right hon. Lady's three questions, I am sure that my right hon. Friend the Minister of State, Department of Trade and Industry is well aware of the need to make a statement on the assisted area map. I believe that he assured the House yesterday that he expects to make a statement before the recess.

Secondly, I assure the right hon. Lady that there is no question of abandoning the local government review process. My right hon. Friend is considering ways of improving the review procedure in the light of the work of the Local Government Commission so far. The objective remains the same, to secure an effective local government structure responsive to local needs, and I am sure that my right hon. Friend neither intends nor expects to do what the right hon. Lady, with uncharacteristic acerbity, described as gerrymandering, of which I have seen no suggestion. I shall bring to my right hon. Friend's attention the request for a statement.

Thirdly, I am grateful to the right hon. Lady for welcoming my announcement about the unified Budget, which, although it was no more than a confirmation of what my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer told the Treasury and Civil Service Select Committee yesterday, was evidently helpful to the House. I note what the right hon. Lady said about timings. She will know that the Procedure Committee expects to make recommendations, and obviously we shall consider those with great care.

Mr. Patrick Cormack (Staffordshire, South): In view of the fact that a great European city and a recognised independent nation are on the verge of extinction, will my right hon. Friend arrange for the Foreign Secretary to make a statement to the Hosue tomorrow on what Her Majesty's Government intend to do to ensure that United Nations resolutions are properly imposed?

Mr. Newton: Once again, I pay tribute to my hon. Friend's persistent interest in such matters, which does him great credit, but I cannot immediately promise him the statement that he seeks. However, I can point out to him that you, Madam Speaker, have said that no less than three hours will be available to debate the situation in the former Yugoslavia during the Consolidated Fund debates next Monday.

Mr. Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey): Will the Leader of the House tell us what changes would be made to the business of the House in the first week after the recess if the Government lost the second vote, or indeed both votes, at the end of the debate on the motion tonight? As, despite the request yesterday by my right hon. Friend the leader of the Liberal Democrat party, the Prime Minister has refused to reveal what legal advice has been given to the Government, and has also refused to tell the House what the Government believe the legal requirements on them are, will the Leader of the House, at least,

practise open government and tell us what the parliamentary options are, both before we go on holiday and when we come back?

Mr. Newton: The hon. Gentleman seems to be anticipating the debate that we are about to have. I could do no more than repeat what my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said both last Tuesday and last Thursday, which I thought was absolutely clear.

Sir Peter Emery (Honiton): May I remind my right hon. Friend, in the kindliest terms that I can summon, that it is now over a year since the Jopling Committee reported? It is perhaps understandable that while we were debating Maastricht that subject could not be considered, but if it is still impossible for the Government to make recommendations, would it not be possible for the Committee's recommendations to be put to the House so that, for the benefit both of the Government and of the Opposition hon. Members could express their views on how much of the report should be acted upon, and in what way?

Mr. Newton: In my experience, there is no one more capable of being kindly than my right hon. Friend, and I am grateful for the way in which he put his question. He will know that I have been having further discussions with the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett). I cannot now pre-empt the outcome of that further consideration, but I note what my right hon. Friend has said, which is in effect a request for a debate soon after we return from the recess.

Mr. Chris Mullin (Sunderland, South): I endorse the request by the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) for a statement on the situation in Bosnia.

If the Leader of the House cannot give us a date on which the House will be permitted to debate the report of the royal commission on criminal justice, can he at least give us an undertaking that we shall be permitted to debate that report, as the rest of the nation has already done?

Mr. Newton: I cannot add to what I said to my hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, South about the position in former Yugoslavia, except to draw the attention of the hon. Member for Sunderland, South, too, to the debate due to take place on Monday.

With regard to the royal commission, as I have said before on such occasions, the right course is for the Government to consider the report and to decide how to proceed. Obviously, that must include consideration of a possible debate.

Sir Fergus Montgomery (Altrincham and Sale): Will my right hon. Friend give us an idea of when we will debate the Sheehy report? May I have an assurance that it will be fully debated before any action is taken? It is essential to put that message across to the police forces of this country because some of them have the idea that we are going to implement the report lock, stock and barrel, and nothing could be further from the truth.

Mr. Newton: The answer to that is very much the same as it was to the hon. Member for Sunderland, South (Mr. Mullin). The royal commission report and the Sheehy report are not reports by the Government or conclusions of the Government. They are reports to the Government which the Government can, should and will carefully consider.

Mr. Andrew Faulds (Warley, East): May we have an assurance that the House will be recalled if the situation in the former Yugoslavia deteriorates to the extent that an internationally recognised country is finally erased with the immense suffering that that will entail for the Muslims, particularly in view of the fact that the Government have consistently misrepresented the view of the military both in Britain and at NATO about the feasibility of effective action in that country?

Mr. Newton: I hope that the hon. Gentleman will understand when I say that I would not accept his suggestion that my right hon. Friends have made persistent misrepresentations of the kind he suggests——

Mr. Faulds: It happens to be true.

Mr. Newton: The hon. Gentleman makes that judgment; I do not accept it. It seems to me that that is the kind of point that the hon. Gentleman might seek to develop in the debate to which I have already referred twice.

Sir James Kilfedder (North Down): I know that the Government are sympathetic to the idea put forward by Unionist Northern Ireland Members of Parliament about the creation of a Select Committee on Northern Ireland. Can the Leader of the House find time for a debate on that important matter in the near future?

Mr. Newton: Not in the first two days of next week.

Mr. Tam Dalyell (Linlithgow): Has the Leader of the House had a moment to reflect on the worrying and delicate issues encapsulated in early-day motion 2352?

[That this House, noting recent publicity about Stella Rimington, Director General of the Security Service, recalls her central role in operations against the miners during and after the coal strike of 1984-85, in particular, her deployment of agents provacateurs within the National Union of Mineworkers, including Roger Windsor, Chief Executive Officer of the NUM 1983 to 1989, an agent of MI5 under Mrs. Rimington, sent in to the NUM to destabilise and sabotage the Union at its most critical juncture; notes that in 1984 he made contact with Libyan Officials through Altaf Abasi and staged a televised meeting with Colonel Gaddafi, causing immense damage to the striking miners; that Windsor's actions led to serious and expensive internal disputes, notably a £100,000 libel damages settlement as a result of a letter Windsor forged in the name of David Prendergast of the U.D.M.; further notes that in March 1990, under Stella Rimington's guidance, Windsor was the sole witness, paid £80,000 for his testimony by Robert Maxwell, behind allegations of corruption against the NUM leadership, published in the Daily Mirror, later proved to be entirely untrue; and considers that notwithstanding recent cosmetic changes to its image, the Security Service, including Mrs. Rimington, has been responsible for the subversion of democratic liberties in Britain and should be brought to account.]

Since the Government have insisted on making Mrs. Rimington so high-profile, may we have an independent inquiry into what the lady's role was during the miners' strike?

Mr. Newton: I sometimes think that that kind of question is quite a good illustration of the no-win position in which my right hon. Friends find themselves. As there is greater openness about those services, we are now

[Mr. Newton]

accused of having a high profile on the matter. The hon. Gentleman will be aware that the director-general of the Security Service is responsible to my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary. I will bring the hon. Gentleman's question to his attention.

Sir Michael Grylls (Surrey, North-West): As the Secretary of State for Transport will announce this afternoon that the Government intend to go ahead with the effective doubling of the M25 in parts of Surrey through my constituency and the constituencies of my right hon. Friend the Member for Chertsey and Walton (Sir G. Pattie) and my hon. Friend the Member for Spelthorne (Mr. Wilshire) which will have catastrophic and devastating effects on hundreds of thousands of homes, will my right hon. Friend arrange for a debate on the matter as soon as we return from the summer recess so that the House can consider the plan in detail because we believe that it has been considered only superficially?

Mr. Newton: I will certainly bear my hon. Friend's request in mind, but I can equally clearly make no promise at this stage.

Mr. Alex Salmond (Banff and Buchan): Does the Leader of the House recall that the Government's "taking stock" proposals promised many more meetings of the Scottish Grand Committee? However, over the past two weeks, when we would usually have half a dozen or so such meetings, we have had none. Does that not make a laughing stock of taking stock, or is the Secretary of State for Scotland in a huff because he was caught out attempting to gerrymander Scottish local government?

Mr. Newton: We have already had this rather silly point about gerrymandering made once today. With regard to the hon. Gentleman's point about the Scottish Grand Committee, he—perhaps above all the hon. Gentleman—will know very well that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland is at this very moment seeking to advance the detailed consideration of the follow-up to his stocktaking proposals.

Mr. Geoffrey Dickens (Littleborough and Saddleworth): As my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House is aware, many representatives of the arts and sport are anxious to have the National Lottery etc. Bill on the statute book. The Third Reading debate in the other place will take place tomorrow. Will my right hon. Friend assure the House that, if amendments are made in the other place, there will be time to consider them as messages from the House of Lords on Monday and Tuesday of next week so that we can have the Bill on the statute book?

Mr. Newton: My hon. Friend correctly decribes what will take place tomorrow in the House of Lords in respect of that Bill. I cannot give him precisely the assurance that he seeks, but I have no reason to suppose that the Bill that he is anxious to have in effect will be seriously delayed.

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): Is the Leader of the House aware that the British people do not want a continuation of the fiddling around with local boundaries and reviews of that nature? The whole thing should be scrapped, and the Government should concentrate on providing jobs for people in the shire counties and elsewhere, including Scotland. What is needed in Derbyshire, where not one deep mine remains, is assisted area status in order to provide jobs in the area. Why does not the right hon. Gentleman announce that a statement about assisted areas will be made, drop the local government reviews, and stop fiddling the boundaries and gerrymandering on behalf of the Tory party?

Mr. Newton: There seems to be some slight tension between the hon. Gentleman's request in relation to the reviews and that of the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett). Leaving that matter aside, I see no conflict between the two points. We shall seek to advance the local government review and make the statement that I have already said will be made on assisted area status.

Mr. Graham Riddick (Colne Valley): Will my right hon. Friend join me in urging the Opposition to debate employment opportunities on the first Tuesday after the recess so that I can point out what a tragedy it is that hundreds of jobs are to be lost in Dundee as a result of closure of the Timex factory? Following the Ford fiasco of a few years ago, does my right hon. Friend agree that the responsible trade unionists and Labour Members involved should be thoroughly ashamed of their job-destroying tactics?

Mr. Newton: My hon. Friend makes a point on which I am sure that the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) will wish to reflect. In that connection, I draw the right hon. Lady's attention to the fact that the subject for the Supply day debate on Wednesday 20 October has still to be announced. My hon. Friend's suggestion might be considered.

Mr. Tony Banks (Newham, North-West): Does the Leader of the House recall that, last week, he announced that we would debate London affairs on Friday 23 July and that, virtually as soon as it was announced, the debate was cancelled? Why was that decision taken? When can we have the London debate that he has been promising us for so long? Among other things, we could discuss bus deregulation, which was proclaimed by the Transport Select Committee as a leap in the dark, and the very interesting proposition that was put forward by the Secretary of State for the Environment about having an elected mayor for London. I would like to debate that issue because I have an ideal candidate in mind.

Mr. Newton: I see that the list of debates on the Consolidated Fund includes at least one debate in which points about transport in London might be in order. It might be reached at a rather inconvenient hour, but I am sure that the hon. Gentleman's energy and assiduous attention to duty will keep him in the Chamber.

Mr. David Howell (Guildford): Will my right hon. Friend find time soon after the recess or even sooner to debate the recent Foreign Affairs Select Committee report on the greatly expanded role of the United Nations in peacekeeping and the major implications for this country's policy on that matter?

Mr. Newton: There is no doubt that that is a serious and important subject. The Government will carefully study the report that my right hon. Friend has mentioned. I will of course keep in mind his request for a debate, but I do not think that I can make a promise at the moment.

Mr. Peter Hardy (Wentworth): It is expected that, during the next few weeks, the Government will publish their proposals on changes in mine safety regulations. In view of the assurance that was given to the House by the President of the Board of Trade and echoed by other Ministers that the Government would take no action which would threaten the splendid safety record of our mining industry, will the Leader of the House ensure that we have an adequate opportunity very soon after the recess to consider those proposals?

Mr. Newton: I will bear that in mind, and will also immediately draw the question to the attention of my hon. Friends in the Department of Trade and Industry.

Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend, East): As, following the unilateral decision of the European Commissioner Mr. Van Miert to reduce the percentage eligible for assisted area status, Her Majesty's Government have been obliged to submit a second list excluding five areas of Britain, including Southend-on-Sea, do the Government not think that it would be wise to have a debate when we return on the dangers of ceding more authoritarian power to Brussels bureaucrats, who are not answerable to anybody?

Mr. Newton: I think we have here an extremely ingenious attempt to pre-empt both the statement on assisted area status and the debate this afternoon. I will leave my hon. Friend to pursue those points on one or other of those occasions.

Mr. Ronnie Campbell (Blyth Valley): Will the Leader of the House reflect on early-day motion 2364, in which it is stated that the chairman of the Northumbrian water authority has increased his salary by 18 per cent. over two years and been given a perk that will net him £160,000?

[That this House notes with concern the pay rises and perks given to the company bosses of Northumbrian Water Group; notes that the Chairman received salary and pension benefits of £102,000, an increase of 18 per cent. over the previous year, the Director and Chairman-designate received £120,000 in salary, bonus, pension and other benefits and that he exercised his option to buy 58,475 ordinary shares in Northumbrian Water Group at a discount of £2·72p on the market value of each share, netting him a profit of £159,052 in addition to his salary and perks at a time when customers are struggling to pay a 9 per cent. increase on top of a 10·3 per cent. increase in water and sewerage charges last year; and calls upon Her Majesty's Government to ensure that such blatant profiteering and exploitation of Northumbrian Water Group customers ceases forthwith.]

Is this not a disgrace, when the Government are asking the working people of the country to accept a 1·5 per cent. increase in wages? Where is the fairness in that in this society?

Mr. Newton: It is, of course, the case that pay in the private sector is a matter for companies and their shareholders. But it is very much the Government's view that they should follow the lead that the Government have set for the public sector and exercise restraint in agreeing salaries for directors and senior management.

Mr. David Shaw (Dover): Can my right hon. Friend confirm that the statement on assisted area status will fully reflect the seven discussions that I have had in recent months with Ministers at the Department of Trade and Industry, and that Dover and Deal will receive favourable treatment despite the attempts by the Labour party to sabotage it?

Mr. Newton: I am sure that my hon. Friend's representations, which will have been delivered with vigour on behalf of his constituents, will have left their mark on my right hon. and hon. Friends.

Mr. Greville Janner (Leicester, West): As the school holidays have begun, will the Minister be kind enough to assure the House that there will be an early debate on the safety of children in playgrounds? As so many playgrounds in so many parts of the country, including the city of Leicester, are dangerous and disgraceful, will he at least draw this matter to the attention of the Secretary of State for whatever Department takes responsibility and ask for, at the very least, a statement in the House on this matter?

Mr. Newton: I will certainly do what the hon. and learned Gentleman suggests, but I presume that he has also brought this matter to the attention of the various local authorities in Leicester, which would seem to have the immediate responsibility.

Mr. Michael Colvin (Romsey and Waterside): Has my right hon. Friend seen from the Order Paper that statutory instrument 1626, which is designed to introduce regulations for sheep and suckler cow premium quotas, has been prayed against by a number of hon. Members? Is he aware that this regulation may provide for the transfer of quota from one farm to another with no compensation payable to the landlord? This is causing great concern among landowners, who see the value of their property depleted, and among tenants, who see landowners very reluctant to bring forward farms to let.

I appreciate that we cannot have a debate before the House rises, but may we have an undertaking from my right hon. Friend that, as soon as the House comes back, there will be a debate, either in Standing Committee or on the Floor of the House, to remove the anxiety?

Mr. Newton: I cannot give my hon. Friend any undertaking beyond saying that further consideration will be given to the point that he has raised. I must tell him, however, that, as I suspect he probably knows, the Government have used fully the discretion available within the regulations to include measures to safeguard the position of landlords. They do not have the power to introduce a scheme whereby tenants would compensate landlords for losses on land values resulting from the introduction and allocation of quotas.

Mr. Ken Livingstone (Brent, East): Is the Leader of the House prepared to arrange a debate on two early-day motions, Nos. 2369 and 2370?

[That this House notes the grave allegations in Yorkshire Television's exhaustively researched investigation into the Dublin and Monaghan bombings, in which 33 people lost their lives in 1974, and notes in particular that the Garda Siochana rapidly discovered the names of eight suspects (based on eyewitness identification) all of whom were members of the paramilitary loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force Mid-Ulster Brigade based in Portadown, that 12 further suspects were identified based on intelligence reports (four of whom were former or serving members of the Ulster Defence Regiment), that all this information was passed to

[Mr. Ken Livingstone]

the Royal Ulster Constabulary where two Special Branch officers investigated and confirmed the Garda list of suspects but were never allowed to interview or arrest the suspects, that Garda Commissioner Eamonn Doherty, believes that the bombers 'must have been helped' as no 'loyalist group could have done this on their own', that two of the suspects were paid informants of the British Army, that the British Army and MI5 also know the names of all the suspects, that the bombers were being 'run' by the Special Duties team, a group of SAS-trained undercover soldiers operating from Castledillon (under the cover of 4 Field Survey Troop), controlled by MI5 and led by Captain Tony Ball and Captain Robrt Nairac, that 4 Field Survey Troop were involved in cross border raids without political authorisation and that Nairac supplied the Portadown UVF brigade with arms and explosives and assisted in planning their illegal activities.]

They relate to the horrifying revelations in Yorkshire Television's investigation of the Dublin and Monaghan bombings, which left 33 dead, and to the view of the head of the British Army's bomb disposal unit, Lt. Col. George Styles, who was awarded the George Cross for his work, that members of the British Army were using captured IRA explosives and detonating them south of the Border?

Mr. Newton: As I understand it, these are clearly matters for the authorities in the Republic of Ireland. Any investigation in the light of the allegations made in the programme to which the early-day motions refer is a matter for the Irish authorities and the Garda in the first instance.

Mr. John Greenway (Ryedale): As the House is preoccupied again today with the country's position in the European Community, does my right hon. Friend agree that we should bear in mind our special relationship with the United States? Will he ensure that, before the House rises for the recess, a special message of goodwill is sent to the tens of thousands of families in the mid-west of the United States who have been seriously devastated by the worst flooding in America in modern times?

Mr. Newton: I am sure that all hon. Members will want to express their sympathy for the difficulties—to put it mildly—being experienced by so many people in such a wide area of the midwest. I am glad to note that my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary is here: he can certainly ensure that the feeling in the House is conveyed to the American authorities.

Mr. Peter Hain (Neath): The Welsh Office is due to make a statement on the future of Neath and Port Talbot hospital before the recess. Can the Leader of the House find time for a statement to be made to the House on that matter? The previous Secretary of State gave a commitment that it would be a full district general hospital, but there are disquieting reports that it will be only an outpatient day hospital with all of the major surgical facilities transferred elsewhere. A statement should be made to the House so that the Minister can be questioned and challenged on that announcement, if it proves to be accurate.

Mr. Newton: I will draw that point to the attention of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales. If such a matter, important though it undoubtedly is to the hon. Gentleman's constituency, were the subject of a statement, we might well have nothing but statements in the House.

Mr. Phil Gallie (Ayr): Will my right hon. Friend consider scheduling a debate on the payment of large sums of money, in many cases, to criminals by the press, bearing in mind the return to this country of drug runners from Thailand?

Mr. Newton: My hon. Friend well knows that the Government deplore situations in which people make money effectively from the exploitation of criminal activities for gain. He also knows that there are great difficulties in framing legislative restraints. I am sure that he will wish to draw his feelings on this matter to the attention of the Press Complaints Commission.

Mr. Paul Flynn (Newport, West): When can we have a debate on the reasons for the delay in the announcement of the closure of Trawsfynydd nuclear power station? Trawsfynydd has not produced a single watt of electricity for two and a half years at a cost of £80 million to the country and a delay in the plans for reskilling the work force. Why is there such harsh treatment for the coal mines and such gentle treatment for the set-aside nuclear power industry?

Mr. Newton: The issues raised by the hon. Gentleman are a matter for Nuclear Electric. I understand that the company is carefully considering the implications of the decision for the staff of the station.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton (Macclesfield): My right hon. Friend is aware that my hon. Friend the Member for Altrincham and Sale (Sir F. Montgomery) has already raised in business questions the matter of the White Paper on the police and the Sheehy report. Will my right hon. Friend encourage my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary to come to the House at an early date to accept the total opposition of the police service to the Sheehy report and announce that he is prepared to set up a royal commission into the police, their remuneration and their status in society?

Mr. Newton: Happily, my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary is by my side and will have heard the message communicated direct. He may also have had reports of the large meeting at Wembley stadium during the week.

Ms Liz Lynne (Rochdale): In view of the fact that my constituents in Rochdale are uncertain about the question of assisted area status, will the Leader of the House confirm or deny that the press have been informed that there will be a statement in the House tomorrow on assisted area status? If the press have been told, why were we not told first?

Mr. Newton: I have already made it clear on a number of occasions that a statement will be made before the recess.

Mr. Harry Greenway (Ealing, North): Will my right hon. Friend arrange for an early debate on the proposal to deregulate the Weeds Act 1959? That Act outlawed the cultivation of five species of weed, including ragwort, the spread of which is already seriously out of control. That is

causing great concern to country men and horse owners because ragwort is increasingly responsible for poisoning horses, and action needs to be taken.

Mr. Newton: It is fortunate that so many of my right hon. Friends are present today, and I note that my right hon. Friend the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, who is sitting a little further down the Front Bench, nodded her head vigorously to me to communicate that she will reflect on what my hon. Friend has said.

Mr. Harry Barnes (Derbyshire, North-East): Has the Leader of the House seen this month's issue of "Euro Briefing" from the Conservatives of the European Parliament, which calls for greater openness in the affairs of the European Community, especially the Council of Ministers? It recommends that what is decided in the Council of Ministers should be made available and that the votes should be detailed. Several answers to written questions have revealed that the policy of openness has started in our Parliament. Does the right hon. Gentleman accept that that policy should be extended so that the openness called for in that document is extended to everything that takes place in the House?

Mr. Newton: I have a lot of sympathy for the general request for openness in the Community. That was one of the main objectives of the British Government, during our presidency, at the Birmingham and Edinburgh Council summits. I do not wish to add to the points that were then made, except to say that I have been told that it is the hon. Gentleman's birthday and I would like to wish him many happy returns.

Mr. Ian Bruce (South Dorset): I thank my right hon. Friend for the planned early debate on the defence estimate. I wonder whether we could have before we rise for the summer recess an emergency debate on the new 2,300 jobs that will be created by the Ministry of Defence in Dorset, not least because all those jobs are within easy travelling distance of Christchurch?

Mr. Newton: That certainly sounds a very helpful suggestion. I am glad to hear what my hon. Friend says. He may find some opportunity during the Consolidated Fund debate, for example, or during the debate on the summer Adjournment to make further reference to that matter.

Mr. Thomas Graham (Renfrew, West and Inverclyde): Will the Leader of the House ensure that the Secretary of State for Scotland makes a statement to the House to guarantee that the report from the Argyll and Clyde health board on the blunders that were made concerning the smear tests on 20,000 women in the Inverclyde area will be released to the public and those women and that they will not have to wait for it to be sent to the inquiry? My hon. Friend the Member for Port Glasgow and Greenock (Dr. Godman) and I are desperate to ensure that our folk get peace of mind by seeing that report as soon as it is printed and available.

Mr. Newton: It is, of course, everyone's desire to ensure that clarity and greater peace of mind are established on those matters as soon as possible. I will draw to the attention of my right hon. Friend the point that the hon. Gentleman has made.

Mr. Barry Jones (Alyn and Deeside): Will the Leader of the House read again my excellent Bill, the Civil Rights (Disabled Persons) (Wales) Bill? Does he accept that it has been carefully drafted and that it has the overwhelming support of the majority of hon. Members who represent Wales? Is he aware that tens of thousands of people in Wales suffer from serious disability? I should like to know when my Bill might be debated in the House.

Mr. Newton: I believe that the hon. Gentleman might have to do his own research on how the Bill might be discussed again in the spill-over period. He will, of course, have further opportunities in the new Session to debate the Bill, if he wishes to take them up. He will know that, as a former Minister for disabled people, I share his aims, but we are not convinced that the Bill is the best means of achieving them.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): May we have a debate after the recess on the standards of conduct in public life so that we can discuss questions of procedure for Ministers? At least four Ministers are directors of companies in contradistinction to the requirements of the list of rules. Does the right hon. Gentleman accept that security firms, secretarial firms and similar activities are not connected with family estates? There is no excuse for a Government who impose laws and tight rules on the poorest of the poor governing income support and all other aspects of life to be sloppy about their Ministers.

Mr. Newton: I commented on that last week. I see no reason why the hon. Gentleman raises it again, unless he wants to engage in muck-raking. I shall not add to what I said last week.

Mr. Nigel Griffiths: Will the Leader of the House arrange an early debate in Government time on the thousands of victims of holiday companies that collapse every week because of the Government's legislative incompetence? Will he ensure that there is an investigation into the collapse of Global Link and SFV Villa Holidays, which happened because of ministerial negligence?

Mr. Newton: I do not for a moment accept the hon. Gentleman's allegations, but I will, of course, draw his somewhat overheated statement to the attention of my right hon. and hon. Friends.

Points of Order

4.7 pm

Mrs. Margaret Ewing (Moray): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

I have given you prior notice of this matter which is in connection with the ruling which you gave yesterday and which is reported in columns 353 and 354 of the *Official Report*.

As you know, Madam Speaker, article 9 of the Bill of Rights 1689 does not apply to Scotland. Yet the ruling given yesterday seemed to imply that that Act was binding on the whole House. It is important that, before we embark on today's debate on the social chapter and the future of the Maastricht treaty, you give a clear ruling of the implications for the constitution of Scotland and for the constitutional legal position of Scotland in the context of that ruling.

The Bill of Rights defined clearly that parliamentary sovereignty in England existed in Parliament. The Claim of Right, the equivalent document in Scotland, which was passed one year prior, defined clearly that sovereignty lay with the Scottish people. The Act of Union of 1707 incorporated neither the Bill of Rights nor the Claim of Right—*[Interruption.]* Despite the noise from Conservative Members, there is an important constitutional point to which they should listen.

Those documents were not incorporated in the Act of Union. Therefore, in the context of Scottish constitutional law, we cannot be bound to a ruling that is based on the Bill of Rights of 1689 in the context of parliamentary sovereignty. I refer to a ruling made in the Court of Session in Scotland in 1953 when the matter was clearly spelt out in a case between John MacCormick and the Lord Advocate. The Court of Session papers of 1953 said:

"The principle of the unlimited sovereignty of Parliament is a distinctively English principle which has no counterpart in Scottish constitutional law . . . I have difficulty in seeing why it should have been supposed that the new Parliament of Great Britain must inherit all the peculiar characteristics of the English Parliament but none of the Scottish Parliament, as if all that happened in 1707 was that Scottish representatives were admitted to the Parliament of England. That is not what was done."

Your statement yesterday, Madam Speaker, indicated that English legislation was binding because it related to English courts of justice. Does that mean—this where I seek your clear ruling—that Scottish legislative rights, the Scottish legal system and the jurisdiction of Scottish courts can be ignored by this place? Surely, if it were so desired, the Scottish courts could seek separate and distinctive representations on issues pertaining to the Maastricht treaty and the social chapter.

I realise that it is not an easy issue for you, Madam Speaker, or for the House, but I seek the clear ruling that the statement did not apply to Scotland, that the ruling did not either implicity or explicitly suggest that Westminster is the English Parliament in continuation, and that the democratically elected members of Scottish constituencies should not be tied to an English system.

Mr. Menzies Campbell (Fife, North-East): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. Before you gave your ruling yesterday, did you have regard to the terms of the case of MacCormick against the Lord Advocate and especially to the fact that the judgment was delivered by Lord President Cooper, who is renowned as an expert in Scottish constitutional law? If your ruling applies only to the English courts, does it follow that those who wish to challenge, as they have already sought to do in England, may opt to do so at the Court of Session in Edinburgh rather than in the High Court in the Strand?

Mr. Paul Flynn (Newport, West): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is this further to the point of order?

Mr. Flynn: Yes.

Madam Speaker: In that case, let us hear it.

Mr. Flynn: During business questions, Madam Speaker, we——

Madam Speaker: Does it relate to this matter?

Mr. Flynn: No.

Madam Speaker: In that case, let me clear up the matter. My statement yesterday stands complete. I have nothing further to add.

Mr. Flynn: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I appeal to you as the defender of the rights of Back Benchers. As a Member of Parliament who represents a constituency outside London, you will be familiar with the fact that many of us have full constituency engagements on a Friday. We have just heard a suggestion in business questions that a matter of supreme importance to my constituency and to other constituencies will take place tomorrow: there is to be a statement on assisted area status. It has also been claimed that that information has been given to the press. Even this afternoon, that information has not been given to us. Why on earth can we not be given that important information at least at the same time as it is given to members of the press?

Madam Speaker: I remind the hon. Gentleman that, whether Fridays, Tuesdays or Thursdays, all sitting days are precious to me.

Treaty of Maastricht (Social Protocol)

Madam Speaker: Before we move to today's motion, I must tell the House that I have been made aware of an interest in the possible application of the House's sub judice rules to today's debate. The rule operates subject to the discretion of the Chair. It is by no means clear that any current case is directly relevant to today's proceedings, but to avoid any uncertainty, I wish to announce at the outset that I have decided not to apply the sub judice rule today.

A number of hon. Members want to take part in the debate, so there is a time limit on speeches between 6 pm and 8 pm of 10 minutes. I have selected the amendment standing in the name of the Leader of the Opposition.

4.11 pm

The Prime Minister (Mr. John Major): I beg to move,

That this House, in compliance with the requirements of section 7 of the European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993, notes the policy of Her Majesty's Government on the adoption of the Protocol on Social Policy.

The debate we have in the House this afternoon is without precedent. After months of discussion, Parliament has passed the European Communities (Amendment) Act with huge majorities. In this House, there was a majority of over 240 on Second Reading and of 180 on Third Reading. In the other place, there was a majority of well over 100 on Third Reading and of 269 in the showpiece vote over a referendum. Rarely in recent history has Parliament shown its will so effectively. Today's debate is an attempt to frustrate that will.

I believe that ratification of the Maastricht treaty is in the interests of this country. I negotiated the treaty because I believed that it was in the interests of this country, and that is why I signed it. That is why I refused to ditch it or to change it, even though there was plenty of opportunity to do so over the past year. Let me set out to the House the reasons why I regard it as vital for this country, for the reasons do not just relate to what is within the treaty itself, but go wider than the treaty and relate to the general position in the European Community.

We took the decision to join the Community—the right decision, I believe—over 20 years ago. From the day we took the decision, across both sides of the House, it has often been a matter of controversy. Sometimes it has been bitter, sometimes it has flared up, and at other times, for a while, it has been quiescent. Always that schism between the parties has rested there, and it has damaged the influence that this country has been able to exercise within the European Community.

Too often, as a result of those divisions within this House and sometimes beyond it, this country under successive Governments—I make no party point—has allowed itself and its interests to be sidelined. If it had not been for those disputes, and if we had been able to play the full part in the Community that I believe we should have done, it might not have developed in the way it has, and many of the concerns that some hon. Members have might well have been dealt with

In that period, we have had many successes in the Community. The British rebate was a great negotiating success. The single market was one of the greatest changes in the EC since its conception. The reform of the common agricultural policy, the enlargement of the EC—each and every one, in its own way, is a big issue that has affected every aspect of the EC. All of them were British successes. It shows that we can win the arguments at the European table. Despite that, we have still not exercised the influence that we should have, or shaped the EC in the fashion that was possible.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): Will the Prime Minister give way?

The Prime Minister: If the hon. Gentleman will forgive me, I wish to deal with serious matters rather than frivolous interruptions at the moment.

Too often over the years, the dominant political attitude has been to object to the ways others have wanted to develop the EC, rather than to set out our plans, our prospects and our hopes and then fight for them to deliver the type of community that is right for this country.

Many hon. Members are right in their opposition to the way in which the EC operates. Some of the ways that it operates need to be changed—I strongly support that. I want to see the EC reformed, as do my hon. Friends and many Opposition Members, but if we are to reform the EC, Britain must have influence in the EC. We will not have influence if we do not ratify the treaty that we have agreed after consultations in the House.

I did not initiate the negotiations. I have made it clear that I thought that they were premature, and I said so to our partners during our negotiations. I did seek to negotiate what I believed to be the best outcome for Britain. I did so within a remit I had obtained from the House, and after seeking the views of Parliament and negotiating within them.

I believe that, as a result of that discussion and debate within the House, it was right for me to decline to accept the social chapter—and the single currency without the express will of the House.

I believe that the events which have followed the conclusion of the negotiations have proved that judgment to be correct. As I have told the House before, in my judgment Europe is not yet remotely ready for a single currency, and the present economic circumstances across Europe mean that it cannot afford the ambitions of the social chapter.

The House and the Government must accept the obligations we entered into and that Parliament approved in the European Communities (Amendment) Act. There is a straightforward self-interested reason for this country why we must do that. If we fail to do that, no British Government will have influence in Europe for many years.

Europe is a market of vital interest to our companies, and to this country's future prosperity and future employment. If we wilfully throw away our capacity to defend our interests and promote our policies in that market, I believe that this country will pay a dear price for that folly in the years to come. I would ask every hon. Member—including some of my hon. Friends—to reflect deeply on that point before they vote this evening.

Sir Russell Johnston (Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber): I am grateful to the Prime Minister for giving way. He has forcefully and clearly made the argument for our remaining within the EC in order to argue our case and develop our position. Surely the same argument exactly applies to the development of social policy. How can this country influence the development of European social policy by opting out?

The Prime Minister: The hon. Gentleman knows that the Government accept that there is a social dimension to the EC. We have the best implementation of the social dimension of any European country. Perhaps if Opposition Members were better informed, they would not talk such rubbish so much of the time.

I know the hon. Gentleman's affection for Europe, but I say to him that a good European does not accept every piece of nonsense from Brussels just because it has a European label. If we believe that the social chapter is bad for employment—and I do believe that—then it is right for us to argue against it, and to try to persuade our partners to argue against it also.

I believe that that is what we are doing, and increasingly in Europe, businesses and employers are saying what we have said in this country and what I have said from the outset—the charter will destroy jobs across the EC.

Mr. Tony Benn (Chesterfield): Will the Prime Minister give way?

The Prime Minister: I should like to make a little progress. I shall give way to the right hon. Gentleman later.

For the first time in 20 years, we are beginning to see a material move in the European Community agenda in the direction that Britain has long sought. It would be absurd for us to throw away our influence in the Community at this moment. We are seeing enlargement. We are seeing increasing moves towards the repatriation of responsibilities in this country—I hope for concrete progress on that in December. We are seeing proper budget control both within the Commission and right the way across the Community.

The European Community will continue to develop, whatever else may happen. But we need to influence the way of that development and to see that it moves in a way that is congenial to the British interest.

I want a wider European Community. I regard the present Community as but a fragment of Europe. That is why I wish to see the European Free Trade Association countries join, and a little later, our old friends in central and eastern Europe. The wider that we can spread the European Community, with a free market concept not only in economic terms but in military and security terms, the more we shall be able to hand a glorious bonus to the next generation that we should not throw away.

So I want that wider Community—a free-market Community, a Europe with the minimum necessary centralisation, a Europe that exercises more powers through the elected Governments of its member states and fewer powers through unelected commissioners, a Europe in which national Governments exercise undiluted control over genuine domestic policy matters from national elections to our education system, from health care to religion. That is the sort of Community that has been our agenda for a long time, and we are beginning to make progess in encouraging others to support the development of that sort of Community.

We seek a Community that emphasises co-operation between Governments, not imposition from the centre. We seek a Community where member states freely decide the agenda and the outcome. We seek a Community which limits common rules and the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice to matters such as free trade and free competition, where they are genuinely necessary for any level playing field to be established. That is the Community that we seek to develop and shape.

However, we can do that only from the inside. If we are inside the Community fighting for that with allies elsewhere in the Community, we can build properly in the interests of our future. It is a process that we can take much further as a fully committed member of real influence.

Mr. Benn: I have listened intently to the Prime Minister. Has it occurred to him that he can do the things of which he speaks only if he carries the full-hearted consent of the British people? He has the power through the House of Lords and the House of Commons, with a majority, to force the treaty through and ratify by the prerogative, but he has absolutely failed to tell the British people that they have any role in the matter, any interest in the matter or any right to determine the matter. As a result, he is carrying into the Community the establishment of Britain but not the British people. He will pay a heavy price for that, and so will the Community.

The Prime Minister: The right hon. Gentleman has been a passionate opponent of much of the Community for many years. He has not changed his views, and I respect him for that. He spoke in the House the other day of the rights of Parliament in this House. We are a parliamentary democracy. Decisions such as that to which the right hon. Gentleman refers should properly be taken in the House, and are taken in the House.

I do not want to see either a centralist or a federalist Europe. I mean federalist in the sense in which we refer to it, not in the sense in which other countries refer to it. They mean something different by it. Yet when I say that to some hon. Members, including some of my hon. Friends, they are apt to say to me, "What about this country or that? There are federalist countries in the Community." That is true. There are. That is why we need influence and allies in Europe to build the sort of European Community we want.

What is the alternative to that approach? To leave the Community? Very few right hon. or hon. Members would go into the Lobby for that proposition, today or any other day. What is the other alternative? To stand aside and let other people run the Community in a way of which we would not approve? That is hardly the right way to exercise influence in the Community.

I have never understood why so many people who claim to be the most pro-British—whichever party is in government—have the least faith in our arguments and our capacity to prevail in the European argument.

Mr. Cryer: This is not a frivolous point. One of the threads of the Prime Minister's argument is that, unless we become enmeshed more deeply in Europe through the Maastricht treaty, we will not have any influence, and that the differences between political parties are inhibiting that influence.

On one matter there has been consent between all the political parties—the common agricultural policy. It is wasteful, costly and out of control. That has not changed. The reforms that the Government have instituted are costing more. The food mountains are growing; they are imposed on world food markets and are damaging developing nations. We have not done a thing to change it, and we cannot.

The Prime Minister: The hon. Gentleman may say that we have not yet gone far enough, and I share that view; I think that there are further reforms to be made to the common agricultural policy. Which way are we most likely to get them? By standing on the sidelines and throwing stones at the Community, or by being inside, seeking allies in other countries?

There is only one way in which we could find ourselves with the centralist, federalist Europe that we do not want, and that would be to sideline ourselves, through our own efforts, and let other nations determine the future development of the Community. That would be a folly of historic proportions for the country and the House. That is why we need to seek allies in the Community, and why we need to honour our obligations and to ratify the treaty that Parliament has approved.

The right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) and I do not differ on the importance of the treaty, if he stands by what he said some time ago. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said:

"I do not think we should oppose the Maastricht Treaty."

We have seen what the right hon. Gentleman has done over recent months, and what he will seek to do this evening. But it is a matter of huge importance to this country that we honour the obligation that we entered into after consulting the House, and then continue to build the Community that we wish to see.

Mr. Dafydd Wigley (Caernarfon): The Prime Minister emphasised a moment ago that we are a parliamentary democracy. Notwithstanding his own feelings and those of his Cabinet on the social chapter, if the House decides to support the Opposition amendment in favour of the social chapter, will the Prime Minister, as a democrat, accept that resolution and implement it?

The Prime Minister: I expect that the will of the House will be to support the Government. If by some mischance that were not to be the case, we would make our position clear at the conclusion of today's business.

Mr. Michael Lord (Suffolk, Central): My right hon. Friend knows that, for many years, I have opposed the social chapter because of the effect that it would have on companies such as ICI in Stowmarket, which is in my constituency. I urge the Prime Minister to continue to oppose the social chapter as strongly as he can. I will be voting against the social chapter and in support of the Government in the Lobby tonight. *[Interruption.]*

The Prime Minister: I hope that the gesture of the hon. Member for Durham, North (Mr. Radice) is intended to indicate that we have one hon. Member on our side, and nothing else.

My hon. Friend the Member for Suffolk, Central (Mr. Lord) referred to ICI. ICI is one of the biggest employers in the country—*[Interruption.]*—and provides jobs in the constituencies of many of the hon. Members who are shouting at me. Its chairman, Sir Denys Henderson, has said:

"The Prime Minister is right to seek ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and, equally, it is vital that he continues to insist on the Social opt-out provision which he successfully negotiated last year."

That is the view of a business man whose company will employ many thousands of people in the constituencies of many hon. Members who are contemplating voting for the amendment.

Mr. Derek Enright (Hemsworth) *rose*——

The Prime Minister: I should like to make a little progress, if the hon. Gentleman will forgive me.

The Opposition amendment seeks to impose the social chapter on us. I believe that it would be profoundly damaging to jobs and growth in this country, as do business men—although, having quoted Sir Denys Henderson, I will not detain the House with a large number of other quotes that I could offer to that effect.

There is no true majority for the social chapter in the House. It is wholly opposed by those who understand the economic damage that it would cause. There is an alliance of Members, for differing reasons, who may seek to come together and vote for the amendment, but it is not an alliance based on any conviction whatever.

My hon. Friends are aware of the deficiencies of the social chapter, yet I know that some of them are tempted to vote for the Labour amendment or against the substantive motion. They do not believe in it, but they have convinced themselves that it will prevent ratification of the Act.

Other hon. Members may have considered voting in a similar way. They, too, know and understand in many cases the damage of the amendment. They do not want more unemployment and they do not want a more centralist Community. I hope that those Members will reflect again on the cynicism of such a vote, and on the damage that it will do to this country.

Parliament is no longer debating the merits of the Maastricht Bill. The Bill is now an Act and, in due course, the treaty will be ratified. What Parliament is debating is whether we should negotiate a new treaty to add Britain to the social agreement. The treaty in the Maastricht Bill—the European Communities (Amendment) Bill—is now law, as the House well understands. Royal Assent has been given to the Act, so the treaty will be ratified. Seventy-one separate votes in favour of the Bill should not be frustrated by one parliamentary motion expressing an opinion to the contrary.

The House knows that to vote for the Labour amendment today is a cynical and unscrupulous vote which does not represent the true will of the House. It is an alliance of different parties with different interests, voting for the same amendment for different purposes. In any genuine free-standing vote in the House, the social chapter would be defeated, as any Member of the House knows. As the right hon. Gentleman the leader of the Liberal Democrat party has said:

"The social chapter opens the way to European-wide collective bargaining arrangements. They are wrong for this country's future and contrary to the Liberal party's belief in decentralising wage bargaining. It is an approach that failed in the 1970s and one that could not work in the 1990s. It is too costly, too inflexible and too rigid"—

and the right hon. Gentleman proposes to vote for it tonight.

Mr. John Carlisle (Luton, North): I am grateful to my right hon. Friend for giving way. Perhaps he would like to know the facts that made me change my mind and support the Government tonight. A manufacturing company in my constituency has interests in Europe but is now considering closing down those interests because the costs imposed by the social chapter, and will be bringing those jobs back into this country and into my constituency. On that basis, my right hon. Friend will appreciate that there was no way that I could support the treaty chapter.

The Prime Minister *rose*——

Sir Peter Tapsell (East Lindsey): May I congratulate the Prime Minister on his latest convert?

The Prime Minister: I am always delighted to accept a sinner returning home. I am delighted to see my hon. Friend the Member for Luton, North (Mr. Carlisle) back supporting the Government.

The Opposition amendment is a stratagem by an Opposition who have lost their principled concern for the Community. They are seeking solely to embarrass the Government, and a small number of Back Benchers want to obstruct the treaty. Anyone who is concerned with the interests of this country would regard the attitude of the official Opposition as incomprehensible, and that of the Liberal party, given its previous statements, as, frankly, contemptible.

Mr. Paddy Ashdown (Yeovil): Since the Prime Minister has for, if I recall, the third or fourth time quoted my words—incidentally, quoted words that were uttered before the treaty was signed—may I say to him that his speech so far has been a most passionate and, if I may say so, effective statement about why it is important to be inside European institutions helping to shape them, not outside suffering from them.

I do not understand how the speech that he has given so far, which is about being included in European institutions, can be used to justify an opt-out from European institutions. It is entirely true that my party and I have reservations about the social chapter, just as the Prime Minister has reservations about the Maastricht treaty, but he has argued that it is in our country's interests to be inside the treaty changing them, not outside complaining about them.

What applies to the Maastricht treaty also applies to the social chapter. If the Prime Minister genuinely believes that Britain's interests are served by being within Europe shaping its institutions, why is he recommending to the House that we should be outside complaining and suffering from them?

The Prime Minister: I recall going fishing many years ago when somebody caught an eel. "My," they said, "look how it wriggles." Wriggle though the right hon. Gentleman may, the quotes that I have used support my case and not his—as, since the right hon. Gentleman tempts me, does this one:

"The action Labour is taking will prolong Britain's uncertainties about Europe, delay inward investment, delay sterling recovery . . . and lose jobs. I am not going to vote for Labour for one night of fun at the Government's expense and ask the British people to pay in more lost jobs."

Does the right hon. Gentleman still believe that or not?

Mr. Ashdown: Yes, the right hon. Gentleman, and his party, believe that. I remind the Prime Minister that, were it not for the votes of our party, there would be no Maastricht treaty before the House. I remind him that our position was then, as it is today, that, if it is a question of ratification of the treaty, there is no doubt where our votes stand, but this is a question of whether Britain shall be inside the social chapter of the treaty or outside. Our view consistently has been that we should be inside, and we shall express that view tonight.

The Prime Minister: The right hon. Gentleman has just made a statement of immense significance, for he and his party were asking earlier about the will of the House. If the Labour amendment is defeated and the main motion is now laid before the House, the only conclusion from what the right hon. Gentleman has just said is that he will be in the Government Lobby on the main motion. That is what the right hon. Gentleman has just said, and I invite him to intervene again if he wants to corrrect me.

Mr. Ashdown: Let me make it clear to the Prime Minister that, if the circumstances he describes arrive tonight, we shall continue to vote to express our wish that the social chapter should provide benefits to Britain and to Britain's work force, which has nothing to do with ratification of the Maastricht treaty, as the Prime Minister knows full well.

The Prime Minister: The right hon. Gentleman becomes more ludicrous by the intervention. By that time, the amendment will have been lost. The party that talks about the will of the House, within seconds of having seen that amendment lost, would seek not to vote with the logic of its argument. How like a Liberal. Usually it takes a day for them to change their minds; this time it is rather quicker.

Mr. Simon Burns (Chelmsford): I am grateful to my right hon. Friend. If he thinks back to the story of the young boy fishing, does he recall that not only is an eel "one that wriggles", but that eels are excessively slippery? *[Laughter.]*

The Prime Minister: This is becoming more fun than I had imagined.

Mrs. Teresa Gorman (Billericay): Does my hon. Friend agree that, notwithstanding what might happen if we were to adopt the social chapter, this country's experience with the European Community has taught us that it has many ways of destroying jobs? That is shown by the fishing industry, which is practically on its knees, and by the meat processing industry—the latest to be decimated by European regulations.

During all the years that I have run a small business and other firms have come to me with their problems, European regulations have consistently destroyed jobs in this country. The idea that we will be able to control the European Community's imposition of those regulations on employers in this country is pie in the sky, and the triumph of hope over experience.

The Prime Minister: In that case, my hon. Friend should be in the Lobby against the social chapter this evening. As a small business woman, my hon. Friend will know that 60 per cent. of our exports go to the European Community, and that a massive amount of inward investment comes to every part of this country partly because of our membership of the European Community.

Let me turn directly to the social chapter. Through qualified majority voting—not unanimity—the Community would have the power to determine social and working conditions. The social chapter would allow the Community to restrict part-time work, whether or not we agreed in this House. It could set a rigid framework for rules and conditions of employment, which would replace the rules developed in this country, and few areas, if any, would be exempt. Trade unions across Europe could forge

deals and translate them into Community law, over the heads of individual workers and without the involvement of the British Parliament.

Mr. Ashdown *rose*——

The Prime Minister: I will spare the House another quotation from the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown).

Above all, the social chapter would mean that many who are now employed would be likely to become unemployed. Many without jobs would stay without jobs. The main right that workers would get would be the right to become unemployed.

I strongly support our membership of the Community, but I support a Community which does not intrude into areas that are properly the domain of the member states. That, I believe, is what the social chapter does. There is already concern across the House, not just on the Conservative Benches, at the Commission's attempts to use health and safety powers for social legislation. We will oppose any abuse of those powers. We shall, if necessary, challenge the Commission's legal base—as we are doing over the working time directive.

In the social protocol, through the opt-out that I negotiated with the consent of the House and a massive majority to do so, I have preserved the right of the House to decide. Yet, in the amendment to the Government's motion, the Opposition seek to remove that right. They are supported by the Liberal Democrats. On the social chapter, as on defence, value added tax and much else, the Liberal Democrats say one thing and do another. They change their principles from doorstep to doorstep, week to week and issue to issue.

This week, the hon. Members for Holborn and St. Pancras (Mr. Dobson) and for Truro (Mr. Taylor) were both parroting the facile proposition that, without the social chapter, Britain would have a sweatshop economy. Good slogan; rotten argument. The Labour party says it. So does the Liberal party, naturally. That is nothing surprising—they are usually indistinguishable, and usually both wrong.

The truth is that Britain has the best health and safety record in Europe, the best occupational pension scheme in Europe and the best system for caring for vulnerable people in Europe. Rather than talking such nonsense, the hon. Member for Holborn and St. Pancras should talk to business and learn what he is talking about.

Business knows that the Community must compete or contract. If we add to social costs, we will not compete and we shall contract. We shall lose jobs in the short term and the long term. The one certain impact of the social chapter is that jobs will be lost and unemployment will be worse. That is what is at stake.

Is it worth it? Go and ask our industrialists. Will it help them to grow? Will it pay high wages? Will it guarantee jobs? Ask good investors whether the social chapter will attract them to Britain. Listen to the Confederation of British Industry, the Engineering Employers Federation, the British chambers of commerce and the Institute of Directors—every single British organisation. They know that playing games on the social chapter is a dangerous game with the British economy. Everyone knows, except Opposition Members who would impose those burdens on British industry and the British work force.

Uncertainty about Britain's commitment to the Community is damaging to the country. It would undermine our standing, our influence and our national interests. That uncertainty undoubtedly will arise if Parliament does not now implement the Act that we have approved in Parliament. It must clear the way for the treaty that I signed at Maastricht. I believe that the treaty embodies the genuine will of a parliamentary majority, not the will of a coalition of disparate minorities simply to obstruct.

As the right hon. Member for Copeland (Dr. Cunningham) said:

"we should not consort with"

people

"who ... are just completely, fundamentally anti the European Community."

I hope that he stands by that.

During the past few years, Britain has had an increasingly strong voice in the Community. As never before, we have influenced its future direction. So long as we remain a fully committed member, we can have an even stronger voice in the future.

That does not mean accepting everything wanted by our partners. It means being in there in the Community; arguing, debating, shaping the future of our Community and carrying alliances with us. Europe is beginning to move in our direction. In France, in Germany and in Britain, a large majority looks not to a super-state, not to a united states of Europe, but to a Europe of nation states. Those states co-operate closely and enjoy a single market embracing 340 million people, but they retain their identity and sovereignty.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton (Macclesfield): My right hon. Friend will know of my strong opposition to and reservations about the Maastricht treaty. I have been greatly encouraged by what he has said about how he envisages Europe's future and the influence that he can bring to bear on Europe from within Europe. In his speech this afternoon, will my right hon. Friend help me by assuring the House and me that this country will not move towards a single currency and return to the exchange rate mechanism as long as he is in power? Will he assure us that we in this country, who are proud of our sovereignty, integrity and place in the world, will be able to continue to have control over our foreign and security policies?

The Prime Minister: I have repeatedly said to the House on a number of occasions that I do not envisage that we shall be able to move towards a single currency—a matter on which the House makes the decisions—in anything remotely like the time scale previously set out. That is increasingly becoming the view of other people. As my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor has said on several occasions, there is no prospect of our returning to the exchange rate mechanism in the near future, as the conditions are simply not right. I do not envisage that they will be right for some considerable period of time.

Britain's interests demand that we play a leading part in the Community. Common sense demands that we retain the freedom of action which I secured in signing the social protocol. That is why the Government are determined to ratify the treaty I signed and to oppose last-ditch efforts to delay or distort it. It is a matter of national interest that we proceed in that fashion, and it is upon that basis that I ask the House to put aside and reject the Opposition amendment, and to adopt the motion.

4.54 pm

Mr. John Smith (Monklands, East): I beg to move, to leave out from 'That' to the end of the Question, and to add instead thereof:

"in the opinion of this House, Her Majesty's Government should not deposit the Articles of Ratification of the Treaty of European Union with the Government of the Italian Republic until such time as it has given notification to the European Community that it intends to adopt the Agreement attached to the Protocol on Social Policy.'.

The Prime Minister made a curious start to the debate when he complained about the fact that we were debating the resolution and the amendment at all today. We are having the debate because of section 7 of the very Act to which he drew attention. He claims that the Act has been passed by both Houses of Parliament, which is certainly true—it has received Royal Assent. Section 7 makes it clear that the Act cannot come into force until the House of Commons comes to a resolution.

The Prime Minister described the debate as if it were an irritation to the Government—a devious ploy by the Opposition. However, the debate is a requirement of the Act of Parliament which he used to justify most of what he said. In addition, when discussing the Bill in Committee, the Foreign Secretary said that the Government had no difficulty in accepting new clause 74—which became section 7 of the Act. The Foreign Secretary said that the Government accepted the challenge presented by the proposals contained in the new clause. On 22 April he said:

"It is reasonable that the House should want the opportunity to vote on the principle of the social protocol." —[*Official Report*, 22 April 1993; Vol. 223, c. 548.]

I have discovered why the Foreign Secretary is not winding up today's debate. It would be too inconvenient to have a Government apologist who had agreed to the procedure which we are now adopting speaking alongside a Prime Minister who is seeking to condemn it. It is nothing other than a requirement of the Act which both Houses of Parliament have passed, but it gives the House the opportunity which the Government sought to avoid in Committee—a vote on whether we should have the social chapter and the social protocol as part of the British version of the treaty.

It took the Prime Minister a little while to get round to it, but once again he today advanced the startling proposition that measures of social protection which are thought to be desirable by all 11 of our partner nations in the European Community are in some curious way a threat to British prosperity. As the argument has continued throughout the Bill's consideration, the Government have persistently sought to misrepresent the content and effect of the social chapter provisions. A deliberate campaign of misrepresentation by the Government has reached new peaks of exaggeration as each day passes.

Therefore, it is vital for the House to consider what the social protocol is and what it is not. The other 11 states have agreed that there should be a modest extension of the Community's competence in social affairs—matters such as the protection of the health, safety and working conditions of people at work, workers' rights to information and consultation, and equality for men and women in relation to work opportunities and treatment at the workplace. The argument is all about those sectors where qualified majority voting applies.

There are other extensions of competence to social security and social protection where unanimity would still be required. There are sectors—which the Government have consistently failed to acknowledge—which are specifically excluded from the agreement. They include pay, the right of association and the right to strike.

Sir Cranley Onslow (Woking): I know that the right hon. and learned Gentleman is a man who is concerned about unemployment—he has often told the House that. Will he tell us straight that he is convinced that the social chapter will not cost a single British job? If so, can he give the calculations on which his belief is based?

Mr. Smith: I am wholly convinced that adopting the social chapter in this country will improve, rather than undermine, employment opportunities. What is more, I shall develop the argument as I proceed with my speech.

I shall remind the House just what the social protocol is about. I do not make any enormous claims for its proposals, which are fairly modest. But the Government say that the proposals are a sinister threat to our economic future, a deadly plot by the Brussels bureaucrats to destroy jobs and economic growth from which, in the nick of time, our heroic Prime Minister has rescued us all.

The irony of the Prime Minister posing as a job protector will not be lost on the millions of people who have been victims of the economic policies for which he has been responsible as Chancellor and Prime Minister. That self-styled saviour of jobs and growth has the worst record on jobs and growth of any British Prime Minister since the war.

It is when one examines the provisions of the social protocol that the absurdity of the Government's claims is revealed. In what sense and in what way does the improvement of the working environment to protect workers' health and safety or the improvement of working conditions impede economic growth? How on earth can equality between men and women in labour market opportunities and treatment at work be considered economically harmful in a civilised, modern state?

Mr. Phil Gallie (Ayr) *rose*——

Mr. Smith: I shall not give way.

It becomes even more absurd when one appreciates that the purpose of the agreement is to have similar rights and opportunities in every Community country to create a level playing field of social opportunity. We hear much about level playing fields from Conservative Members who mention them nearly every day in the Chamber. It is odd that they will not adopt that concept in relation to the rights of working people, and men and women.

That concept is fully understood by the rest of the Community, which is why all the other 11 member states readily agreed to the social charter of 1989 and the social action programme that flowed from it. It is why they have consistently resisted British Conservatives' attempts to prevent further progress in the social sphere. They agreed to the protocol because they all understand what the British Conservative party is incapable of appreciating—that economic success and social progress go hand in hand.

Mr. Phillip Oppenheim (Amber Valley) *rose*——

Mr. Gallie *rose*——

Mr. Smith: I think that the hon. Member for Ayr (Mr. Gallie) is going to become a nuisance, so I shall give way to him now.

Mr. Gallie: I realise that it is a long time, if ever, since the right hon. and learned Gentleman participated in the industrial scene. Will he therefore take it from me, as one who has recently come from industry, that the health and safety issue is a preoccupation of British industrialists these days and is already considered to be of prime importance?

Mr. Smith: I had not, I must confess, envisaged the hon. Gentleman as a British industrialist. [HON. MEMBERS: "Cheap."] Nor do I think that he was. Can the hon. Gentleman tell us why industrialists in every other Community country do not understand it in precisely the same way? I should like to know——

The Secretary of State for Employment (Mr. David Hunt): Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman give way?

Mr. Smith: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to finish this point.

I should like to know why the hon. Member for Ayr only ever talks about employers. Why does he never talk about emloyees?

Mr. David Hunt: Earlier this month the director general of the Confederation of British Industry said—I hope that the right hon. and learned Gentleman will concede this —that

"Every single employer group, like the CBI, in Europe, in Germany and in France are against the social chapter and only our Government has actually had the courage to say that we don't want any part of it."

Mr. Smith: It will come as a matter of total astonishment to this House to hear that a bunch of Tory business men say that they are on the side of the employers. *[Interruption.]* What is more, if the Secretary of State for Employment wants us to have the evidence from Europe, why does he not quote what was said by the general secretary of UNICE, the employers' organisation in Europe, which wants the social chapter to be incorporated?

Mr. Tristan Garel-Jones (Watford): Perhaps I can help the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The chairman of the European Employers Federation, Mr. Ferrer, who comes from a socialist country that believes in the social chapter, like the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but that has an unemployment rate of 23 per cent., turned up at the last European Social Affairs Council and begged Ministers not to go on introducing legislation of this kind which destroys jobs.

Mr. Smith: I shall quote to the right hon. Gentleman the precise remarks of the general secretary of UNICE, the employers' organisation, on precisely this subject. *[Interruption.]* I hope that we are not going to disregard the general secretary, who was appointed by UNICE. The right hon. Gentleman wants to pick the remarks that he agrees with and ignore all the others.

Mr. David Hunt *indicated dissent. [Interruption.]*

Mr. Smith: We should make more progress if Conservative Members were to calm down a little. They get very excited when remarks of the employers are quoted, but they never think of consulting the employees about any of their rights. The general secretary said:

"If we look at the costs of employment only or social costs only, we're looking at one very small part of the picture . . . So it's . . . really . . . a gross over simplification to reduce the whole thing to the costs of labour."

He is right. That is the view of UNICE, just as it is the view of the European TUC.

If the Conservative party is so right on this subject, why is it that the only political party in the rest of the Community that supports it is Mr. Le Pen's National Front? *[Interruption.]* Why is it that even right-wing Governments do not perceive the menaces and the threats which the Prime Minister and his colleagues see on all sides? Can it really be true——

Mr. David Hunt: The right hon. and learned Gentleman —*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. It is about time that hon. Members settled down—*[Interruption.]*—in all parts of the House. *[Interruption.]* Order. If hon. Members do not want to hear what is being said, I do.

Mr. Frank Cook (Stockton, North): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Am I correct in believing that when a Member seeks to address the Chamber for a second time during a sitting, he or she is able to do so only with the permission of the House?

Madam Speaker: That is not the case.

Mr. Hunt: Opposition Members are not going to stop us putting the record straight. Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman accept that I quote from the opening statement of Mr. Carlos Ferrer, speaking on behalf of UNICE——

Mr. Bruce Grocott (The Wrekin): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. The Secretary of State for Employment is misleading the House. He has—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Let us have a little calmness. No one is misleading the House. If, however, the hon. Gentleman has a point of order, I shall be pleased to hear it.

Mr. Grocott: The point of order is this: as we try to listen to the debate, the intervention by the Secretary of State for Employment is not an intervention by him but the result of information acquired from civil servants sitting in the Box—from panic-stricken people, who are running up and down. Why do not Ministers come to the House with their own arguments?

Madam Speaker: As far as I am concerned, there is a Minister at the Dispatch Box who is speaking on behalf of the Government and responding to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Hunt: The Leader of the Opposition purported to voice the views of UNICE. I quote from the opening statement of Mr. Carlos Ferrer, at an informal meeting of employment and social affairs Ministers, speaking on behalf of UNICE. I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman to consider this:

"I want to finish my statement with an urgent call for negative action. This is an appeal from the heart on behalf of the millions of companies which UNICE represents. Governments and the Community expect those companies to produce wealth to invest and to create jobs."

He concluded with these words—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. If the House will come to order, it will hear what is being said—*[Interruption.]*—and what is said will be over with quickly.

Mr. Hunt: I am quoting from a statement made on behalf of UNICE. I finish with the general secretary's words——

Mr. Ted Rowlands (Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Since you have been in the Chair, I have often heard you rightly tell us that interventions should be interventions, not speeches. This is almost a wind-up speech by the Secretary of State for Employment. I hope that you will correct him, just as you have corrected many Back Benchers.

Madam Speaker: It is true that interventions should be short and to the point. *[Interruption.]* Order. When the House has settled down, I shall speak again. The point that I made earlier was that if hon. Members did not shout so much, whoever was intervening would be able to make his point quickly.

Mr. Hunt: I do not know why Opposition Members are trying to destroy the Leader of the Opposition's speech. I shall quote directly from the statement made on behalf of UNICE. The president—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. I shall wait until everyone is finished. This is now becoming very repetitive. We know what is being quoted; may we have a direct quotation now?

Mr. Hunt: The president said to the Council of Ministers:

"Then please stop taking measures"—

[Interruption.]

Madam Speaker: Order. I am waiting for the House to settle down. We cannot make progress unless the House settles down. I ask the Secretary of State to come to his conclusion.

Mr. Hunt: He said:

"Then please stop taking measures which unnecessarily destroy jobs."

Will the Leader of the Opposition now withdraw his earlier comment?

Mr. Smith: If the right hon. Gentleman, and those making noisy interventions on his behalf, was not seeking to destroy a speech, it is hard to work out what he was trying to do. I quoted exactly and precisely what the general secretary of UNICE said. *[Interruption.]* He said it in answer to a question on a BBC programme called "Analysis" on 6 June 1993, just a month ago. It was not a good point that hon. Members shouted at me.

I also remind the Secretary of State that UNICE is actively involved not only in the social protocol but in the machinery to implement it. It is in a special arrangement with the trade unions, about which I think the Prime Minister complained, but it can hardly be against the social chapter when it is in the middle of it, helping to operate it and make it work.

The fundamental point is why, if the employers were so compelling in their arguments, they have not been able to persuade Chancellor Kohl, Mr. Balladur and Mr. Lubbers, the right-wing Conservative figures in Europe, to listen to them. It passes belief that these people are involved in a nefarious plot to destroy their own prosperity. Are these right-wing Conservative leaders so muddled and confused that they have become socialists by accident? Do we really believe that, when the Prime Minister goes to meet these colleagues at meetings of the European People's party and other such gatherings, he bangs the table in his commanding style and warns them that they are closet socialists?

Is it not passing strange that 11 Governments of many and different political complexions are all incapable of discerning the weaknesses in the social protocol? Why is it that not one of the four countries seeking entry into the European Community wants to opt out of the social chapter? Fifteen countries in Europe—those in the Community and those wanting to join—are all of one opinion; only one party and one country is on the other side—all out of step except our John. The Prime Minister must believe that they are all deluded.

Surely the truth is that it is the Prime Minister who is deluded about the nature and effect of the social chapter which elsewhere finds such widespread favour. After all——

Mr. Michael Alison (Selby) *rose*——

Mr. Smith: I have given way generously. I do not think that the Conservative party deserves very much indulgence from me in terms of giving way, in view of the behaviour of the Secretary of State for Employment.

Mr. Alison *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. The Leader of the Opposition has made it clear that he is not giving way.

Mr. Smith: After all, it requires quite an acute form of delusion to claim a triumph of negotiating skill in getting one's country isolated and excluded from a decision-making process of great importance to the Community and, inevitably, of importance to this country. What kind of success is it to have engineered a situation in which, when social affairs are on the Community's agenda, British Ministers have to leave the room, bereft——

Mr. Garel-Jones: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman give way?

Mr. Smith: I have already given way to the right hon. Gentleman.

British Ministers will be bereft of influence over legislation which many believe will come to apply in Britain as a result of decisions by the Court of Justice, whether or not there is an opt-out.

Mr. Garel-Jones *rose*——

Mr. Smith: I have already given way to the right hon. Gentleman.

Only in the Walter Mitty world that the Prime Minister increasingly inhabits could such nonsense be thought to be an achievement. Of course, we know that the Prime Minister wants the country to believe that, whatever the mess at home, he is really an ace negotiator abroad. Like the comic strip hero, Clark Kent, as soon as he leaves our shores behind, the Prime Minister is transformed into a diplomatic megastar. There he is, Britain's diplomatic megastar, his Superman shirt tucked neatly into his underpants; there he is, a very special kind of hero, shaping the very destiny of Europe, clutching his Maastricht optout as his colleagues gently take him to the door marked "Sortie".

What the Prime Minister does not understand—*[Interruption.]* I do not think that the Conservative party will gain very much by making rowdy noises throughout my speech. *[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order, Mr. Richards.

Mr. Smith: Conservative Members sometimes forget that there is a wider audience for our proceedings than that in the House.

The Prime Minister and the Government do not understand that their opt-out is Britain's lockout—a lockout from decisions. I could not understand how the Prime Minister could argue that we had to be involved in decision making in the Community while also arguing the justification for an opt-out. Once again, decisions will be arrived at and policies forged in Britain's absence.

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Lancaster): Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman recall what was said in the press when my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister returned from his negotiations? In France, it was said:

"Holding his own"—

[Laughter.]

Madam Speaker: Order. The House must come to order.

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman: It was said:

"Holding his own against his eleven partners, the Prime Minister can show that he has fought a tenacious battle and resisted the interference of socialist Brussels technocrats and demonstrated his devotion to economic liberalism."

That was said in *Liberation* in France.

Mr. Smith: I do not think that I can congratulate the hon. Lady on her delicacy. As for the details of her intervention, I think that it would be wiser if I simply moved on.

In an interesting article in *The Times*—a few years ago, admittedly—that point was made forcefully. The author wrote:

"We paid a heavy price when others designed the Common Agricultural Policy. It would be unforgivable to repeat the mistake in industrial and financial policies . . . The same argument applies to the Social Charter. Britain has legislation in virtually all the relevant fields already. The issue is whether new policies come here by the back door following mergers and takeovers and designed by our competitors, or whether the Government battles to get the original proposals brought more into line with British initiatives and practice. I prefer the latter, as it will suit many in Europe as well."

That was the considered opinion of the right hon. Member for Henley (Mr. Heseltine). He is now President of the Board of Trade, but in 1989 he was free to say what he thought. How many Conservative Members are there who, given the freedom to do so, would gladly vote for the social chapter tonight? I am genuinely sorry that the President of the Board of Trade cannot take part in the debate; he is representative of many other Conservative Members who share his point of view.

Mr. Geoffrey Dickens (Littleborough and Saddleworth) *rose*——

Mr. Smith: I doubt whether the hon. Gentleman is one of them, but out of many years of affection for him I shall be happy to give way.

Mr. Dickens: The right hon. and learned Gentleman was talking about the back door. Has he thought how good industrial relations now are in this country, where, instead of confrontation, teamwork between work force and management is working well? Does he not think that the social chapter would undermine the Thatcher years, during which we rolled back the frontiers? Would it not mean that the trade unions would control the nation again?

Mr. Smith: I should be happy to argue with the hon. Gentleman about all those matters, but I must remind him, as I sought to do at the beginning of my speech—other hon. Members, too, might bear the fact in mind—that pay, the right of association, the right to strike and the right to impose lock-outs are not included in the social protocol, so they are not relevant to our discussion.

One should not be surprised to hear that the views that I have quoted were expressed by the President of the Board of Trade. One also hears them from Conservative Members of the European Parliament. In a debate in the European Parliament on 27 May this year, Sir Christopher Prout, whom I understand to be the leader of the Conservative MEPs, could not have put matters more plainly. What he said is on the record of the European Parliament:

"The Conservative Party is in favour of the social dimension"—

[Interruption.] I thought that Conservative Members might all agree with that, and I hope that they will also agree with what Sir Christopher said next. He added, for good measure:

"We all hope once Maastricht is ratified that a suitable intergovernmental agreement can be reached on this matter which will include all Member States."

The Conservatives will come back to the subject. I am sure that some hon. Members will have spotted their tactic. I find it fascinating that Sir Christopher Prout seems more determined to opt in than to opt out.

Mrs. Edwina Currie (Derbyshire, South): It may assist the right hon. and learned Gentleman to know that Mr. Bill Newton Dunn is the leader of the Conservatives in the European Parliament and that many of us have no problem with the social dimension; it is the details of the protocol that we dislike and wish to vote against.

Mr. Smith: I hear what the hon. Lady says, but I wish that she would weigh in the balance the comments that I read in newspapers such as *The Sunday Telegraph*. Last week that newspaper quoted a Dutch Christian Democrat, Jean Penders, on the attitudes of Tory MEPs.

Mr. Penders said that at first he was doubtful about his new British colleagues in the European People's party, but that now he is full of praise:

"Oh, they all believe in the Social Chapter, all of them." [HON. MEMBERS: "Who?"] The Tory MEPs.

The article, by the Brussels correspondent of *The Sunday Telegraph*, went on to discuss the dilemma over the manifesto being drafted by the European People's party for the European elections next year, in which I believe the hon. Member for Derbyshire, South (Mrs. Currie) hopes to stand. Will the British Tories be bound by it? According to the European People's party, the manifesto will be based on its policies and positions and the British Tories will have to defend every word. It seems that quite a lot of talking will have to take place.

The problem for the Tories is that the European People's party has not been reticent about its views on federalism and the social chapter. I shall quote from the Athens declaration of the ninth congress of the European

[Mr. Smith]

People's party—*[Laughter.]* Conservative Members should not mock their continental confederates in that way. The declaration, approved in Athens in November last year, comes straight to the point:

"The main political aim of the European People's Party is European unity. The party advocates European unification on the basis of democracy"——

So far, so good. I can see the Tories looking at me. But the declaration adds the words "and federalism." Even worse, federalism is described as "the ideal for Europe."

But it is when dealing with social policies that the European People's party, the Tories' new friend in Europe, really gets motoring. It says:

"the European People's party declares its support for the implementation of the European Social Charter, the introduction of minimum standards for working conditions and social benefits, and workers' participation in decision making and company profits."

Few of us could have put that better than the European People's party did.

Let no one tell me that the EPP is not having a positively beneficial influence on the Conservative party. I know that it has friends and admirers in the highest reaches of that party, because of a speech made earlier this month by the Secretary of State for Employment, in which he declared himself glad to be a Christian Democrat. He said:

"My own background in politics is a very European one, and I have always, willingly, described myself as a Christian Democrat as well as a Conservative . . . As the Union between the peoples of Europe, inch by questioning inch, grows ever closer, we will need to look for new alliances . . . I believe that political and ideological alliances between like-minded parties from different countries will soon come to complement—or supplant—old national rivalries and friendships . . . Our admittance"—

he means the Conservative party's admittance—

"to the European People's Party in the European Parliament puts that scenario into perspective."

I am grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for having said so clearly where the Conservatives stand. Revealingly, he also said:

"There is already far more common ground than people imagine".

Hon. Members may wish to ask him more about that when he speaks later and makes his second intervention in the debate.

Lest there be any doubt about the increasing influence of the European People's party on the Conservative party, the Secretary of State for Employment drove his point home by saying:

"There is even now, an EPP office at Smith square."

Gosh. That must be where Conservative Members can get their personal copies of the Athens declaration. But for the convenience of those attending the meeting of the 1922 Committee tonight, I have caused a copy to be placed in the Library. They can pick it up on their way.

Mr. Garel-Jones: I am the only one who has a copy.

Mr. Smith: Precisely. It was a document for which wide circulation was not desired. However, it is now in the Library and hon. Members can obtain it. When they read it they will find out how much they have signed up to in Europe. It is a case not so much of socialism by the back door as of federalism by the front door—the front door of Tory central office.

At the heart of the debate is a profound difference about the kind of policies that Britain needs if we are to succeed and to hold our own in a competitive world. The Conservative party, as the Prime Minister's speech confirmed, wants to persist with the failed policies of the 1980s, for which the people of Britain are paying such a heavy price today. It wants to persist with those policies despite the accumulating evidence of their failure.

For example, the World Economic Forum recently published its world competitiveness report on the countries of the OECD, which showed that over the past five years the United Kingdom has fallen down the league. That is the sharpest deterioration in competitiveness of any EC country. The truth which must someday dawn on this Government is that their policies simply have not worked. Even the expurgated version of the Government's own Department of Trade and Industry report shows that Britain is still 25 per cent. below France and Germany in terms of productivity.

The evidence shows that the member states which embraced the social chapter when Britain rejected it have more impressive records of competitiveness and productivity. The Conservatives fail to understand that low wages, inadequate skills and persistent under-investment are the real drag anchors on Britain's economic performance. We have no future as the sweatshop of Europe. If we persist in the policies of social devaluation which lie behind the opt-out from the social chapter, I fear that our relative decline will continue. Indeed, it will accelerate.

Warburg's briefing last week on competitiveness among the leading industrial countries stated:

"Despite having the lowest labour costs per working hour, Britain struggles with the highest unit labour costs."

That is proof surely, if it were needed, that having the lowest wages does not, as the opt-out merchants maintain, lead necessarily to competitive advantage. That is the answer to the question that I was asked at the beginning of this debate.

The Warburg study shows—sensible people know this—that improvement in productivity depends critically on capital investment, the pace of innovation and the quality of the labour force. That is the new economic agenda which Britain and Europe must embrace—not the bargain-basement techniques of wage cuts and skills depression. That is how we can best achieve the competitive edge which is vital to our economic success.

There is another view, the view adopted by British Conservatives, that by depressing wages and undermining the conditions of the work force, a relative advantage can be obtained. We have seen a grotesque example of that in the destruction of the wages councils which, for decades, offered protection to the lowest-paid workers in this country—the people at the greatest risk of exploitation.

The wages councils legislation was introduced at the turn of the century by Winston Churchill to protect the low-paid worker and the good employer. It has been swept aside by the mean-minded men and women of this Administration. Winston Churchill put the point forcefully to the House in 1909; feel free to remind the House of his comments, as it has seldom been put better:

"Where you have . . . no organisation, no parity of bargaining, the good employer . . . is undercut by the worst . . . where those conditions prevail you have not a condition of progress, but a condition of progressive degeneration."—*[Official report*, 28 April 1909; Vol. IV, c. 388.]

What a contrast that is with today, when a British Government actually place adverts in the German business press advertising Britain as a low-wage economy. Not for our skills, technology or productivity are we to be recommended—we are to be recommended just for our low wages.

There are low wages in a society in which income equality has dramatically widened over 14 Conservative years. Let me just remind the Prime Minister—*[Interruption.]* He may want to look at my notes and I hope that he will listen carefully to what I am going to say. I want to remind him of the wages that are actually being paid in the Britain of which he is Prime Minister today. A 28-year-old care assistant working in a private nursing home works 60 hours for £1·33 an hour. A coach driver works 60 hours a week for £2·10 an hour. A forecourt attendant in a petrol station works 70 hours a week for £1.40 an hour. That is the philosophy of the Conservative party and that is how it affects real people in the real world.

How many Conservative Ministers would contemplate accepting those rates of pay for themselves or for their families? If it is not acceptable to them, why should it be thought acceptable for anyone else? What makes it even harder to stomach is the constant rise in salaries, pensions and perks for the highest-paid executives at the same time as the exploitation of vulnerable people proceeds and the Government walk away from their responsibilities to those people. It is that weird Tory double standard on incentives: poor people can be motivated only by the thought of even greater poverty, but the rich are to be inspired by the lure of even greater wealth.

The Government's approach to international competition is just as crude. It is to compete against Taiwan on wages rather than against Germany on skills. The Government say that if our competitors pay low wages, we must follow them down. If there is no employment protection in countries against which we compete, such protection apparently cannot be afforded here either.

We in the Labour party believe that that approach is wholly flawed. Not only is it totally unjust to our people, it is not related in any way to the dynamics and realities of today's world economy. Investors at home and abroad today are seeking skills, technology and a highly motivated and self-confident work force. We hear a lot from the Government about inward investment and how that investment would be afraid to come near us if we were to sign up to the social protocol.

How strange that, in a recent study carried out by Arthur Andersen of Japanese inward investment, wages and social costs are not mentioned by Japanese companies as a factor determining decisions to invest in Britain. The problem which is highlighted and described as most important by Japanese enterprise is

"the difficulty in recruiting skilled or qualified employees."

The Nissan director of personnel gave evidence the other day to the Select Committee on Employment. He dismissed the social chapter as a significant factor in respect of inward investment.

It is also highly revealing that many Japanese firms in Britain bring with them much better working practices than are common in British firms and which far exceed anything that would be required by the social chapter. A recent survey—*[Interruption.]* It would benefit Ministers to listen to some of this evidence instead of, like the Chancellor of the Exchequer, rudely interrupting from a sedentary position.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Kenneth Clarke): I was merely provoked by the logic of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's position. Having used a 1909 quotation and 1909 sentiments, he went on to describe the attractions to this country now of Japanese investment, to a deregulated economy which is outside the social chapter. He illustrates that the Japanese are not creating a sweatshop economy here. It is a modern, thriving economy, and the Japanese are coming here because we are attractive outside the social chapter.

Mr. Smith: I am surprised at the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Surely the point about the 1909 quotation is that it is astonishing that someone in 1909 understood something which members of the Conservative party have not yet realised in the 1990s. Churchill said that when he was a Liberal. Apparently Conservatives only pay attention to what Churchill said when he was a Conservative, such is the narrow and partisan view of history and reality adopted by the Conservative party.

What the Chancellor of the Exchequer should understand—*[Interruption.]*—I hope that he will listen carefully to this—is that a recent survey of the pay and employment conditions in eight major Japanese-owned companies employing 15,000 people in the United Kingdom found that wages, maternity and paternity leave and fringe benefits in those companies were far more generous than those in Britain—[HON. MEMBERS: "What is the point?"] I hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will finally get the point that companies as progressive as that are not worried about a social chapter because they will easily be able to comply with its provisions.

I hope that some British companies will copy Nissan, which recently agreed two-year pay deal increases with maternity pay of up to 100 per cent. of average earnings for up to a maximum of 18 weeks. Maternity leave has been extended to 40 weeks after birth with existing rights of return to work maintained. Matsushita Electric, Sony and Komatsu have introduced parternity leave for their workers. Although Conservative Members often jeer at that, what in some ways is the most successful economic country in the world is showing us a better way forward in terms of social provision. Far from being put off by the social chapter, the Japanese are ahead of it.

In the real world, the new economic agenda requires a new approach—a positive combination of skills development, decent standards, humane standards, and ever-widening employment opportunities. That must mean giving greater opportunities at work for women on the basis of equal rights and adequate provision for maternity leave and child care—not just because that is their right, but because our economy needs the indispensable contribution that women can make to our future prosperity.

I see the Chancellor of the Exchequer nodding. That is why I find it odd that the Government should object to a social chapter which provides for

"equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work."

In rejecting that provision, what message is the Conservative party giving to the women of this country?

[Mr. Smith]

That is why the Conservative party is seen as socially the most backward in Europe, even by its own party colleagues.

It is now entirely clear that the whole of this argument about opting out of the social dimension of the treaty is not about Britain's national interest or our future prosperity. It is much more about the internal politics of the Conservative party and increasingly about the tattered reputation of a discredited Prime Minister. One day he tells us that Britain must be at the heart of Europe—that is to keep his Chancellor and his Employment Secretary on board. On another day he warns of the insidious socialist threats inherent in the European scheme—words to please his Home Secretary and his Secretary of State for Social Security. One thing to the 1922 Committee; no doubt something else to the European People's party.

We are, of course, accustomed to and indeed sometimes entertained by the right hon. Gentleman's increasingly desperate games with his own party, but, at the end of the day, that must be a matter for them.What is an entirely different matter is the Prime Minister's attitude to Parliament. It must be a matter of astonishment that he has not readily accepted that the decision on the social chapter is for this House to take. Throughout our deliberations on the European Communities (Amendment) Act, the Government sought to avoid the House coming to a decision and agreed to section 7 of the Act, under which this resolution is debated, only when they faced the prospect of inevitable defeat if they did otherwise.

Over the Conservative years we have seen the checks and balances of our system of government being persistently undermined in favour of the power of the central state. We see that, for example, in the deliberate diminishment of local government and in the creation of ministerially dominated quangos on an unprecedented scale. But I warn the Prime Minister that, if he seeks to take it even further and seeks to defy the will of the House, he will have exceeded the power of his office.

I urge the House to vote for the social chapter. It is our responsibility in this House to make the decision and, when we have made the decision, it is the unavoidable responsibility of the Government to accept and to implement what the House has decided.

5.42 pm

Mr. Tim Renton (Mid-Sussex): The right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) shows astonishing naivety or forgetfulness if he thinks that there is a natural majority in the House in favour of the social chapter. Has the right hon. and learned Member forgotten that a reasoned amendment was debated on Second Reading, on 25 May 1992, declining to give a Second Reading to the Maastricht Bill because it did not accord with the social protocol? The motion was defeated by 360 to 261 votes—a natural majority of 99 against the social chapter. That situation has not changed.

Today, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman knows, we are again debating the social chapter not because, in any sense, there is a majority in favour of it, but for two contradictory reasons. The first is that the Labour party and the Liberal Democrats still believe, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman has shown, that we should sign up to the social chapter, despite all commentators being against it. Evidently, the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East does not read the *Financial Times*. He does not read *The Times*. He does not read the paper published today by the Confederation of British Industry on behalf of all businesses, large and small, in which its members argue very strongly against our acceptance of the social chapter.

As the right hon. and learned Gentleman got into the business of quoting European leaders against my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, I remind him of what the German Economics Minister, Gunther Rexrodt, said in Brussels on 29 June after presenting a 10-point plan designed to put Germany back on its feet. He is reported as commenting:

"The plan is likely to undermine EC 'solidarity' in economic growth and related social policy matters."

When it was suggested to one of Mr. Rexrodt's aides that he appeared to be opting for the United Kingdom's approach to these issues, he commented, "What's wrong with that?"

The mood in the Community over the past 12 months has clearly been towards increasing concern about the social chapter, simply because it is now seen that, on average, wage costs in western Europe are 20 per cent. higher than those in the Pacific rim countries, and unemployment in western Europe remains constantly higher than in the United States, where the social costs of employing labour are much lower.

If we continued in that direction—the social chapter would emphasise it—jobs would continue to haemorrhage away from all western European countries towards south-east Asia, the Pacific rim and eastern European countries which are now newly competitive and, of course, interested in joining the Common Market, with lower labour costs.

Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend, East): Will my right hon. Friend give way?

Mr. Renton: If my hon. Friend will be brief, yes.

Sir Teddy Taylor: I shall be very brief. As there has been much talk about the importance of the social chapter and as my right hon. Friend has talked about the loss of jobs, will he give us an indication of what kind of directives could be made under the social chapter which cannot already be made under the Single European Act and article 101 of the treaty of Rome? I have asked that question six times during our long debates, and I am afraid that I have not had an answer.

Mr. Renton: My hon. Friend will know very well that to implement many of the suggestions in the social chapter would need directives which could come forward to this House for approval. But such directives, if they did not require a statutory instrument here, could go through in Brussels on qualified majority voting alone. That is where our problem arises. That deals with my hon. Friend's point. Although the social chapter is a relatively vague declaration—I agree with my hon. Friend, if that is what he is saying—it could be followed by specific measures which could slip through on qualified majority voting. That would be against the employment interests not only of this country but of other western European countries as well.

I wish to revert to the point that I was making to the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East. This

debate is happening not because it is in the natural course of events that we should have another debate on the social chapter—that suggestion was defeated in May last year by 99 votes—but, as I have said, for two very contradictory reasons. One is the continuing blind attachment of the Labour party and the Liberal Democrats to the measure, which can only lead to higher unemployment for western Europe if it is adopted and implemented by directives. The other reason is that a handful of my right hon. and hon. Friends, who do not believe in the social chapter for one second, nevertheless believe, as they might believe that the earth is flat, that by voting for the social chapter tonight they may somehow be able to scupper the Maastricht treaty. There is no possibility of that.

Mr. Ashdown: Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Renton: I am sure that the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown) will make his own speech in his own good time. I suspect that if he catches your eye, Madam Speaker, he will make it very soon.

Mr. Ashdown: On this particular point?

Mr. Renton: No. I wish to make progress. I do not want to delay the House.

It was emphasised by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister in his opening remarks that, whatever happened about the social chapter, we would certainly go forward and ratify the Maastricht treaty. Whether that is before or after Lord Rees-Mogg's action will doubtless depend to some extent on the way in which the judges carefully consider Madam Speaker's important ruling in the House yesterday.

I believe that I carry the right hon. Member for Yeovil with me when I say that we must ratify the Maastricht treaty. It cannot be right for this country to go on putting brakes on the development of the European Community. As an extremely powerful trading bloc, it is now far and away our most important partner in the trade which forms such a large part of our livelihood in this country.

As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has constantly said, we wish to be in the forefront of the discussions which lie immediately ahead on the widening of the European Community—on the joining of the four, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Austria, all of whom should join quite quickly in the months ahead. We also need to be party to the discussions within the Community about the attitude of the EC to the still unfinished GATT round.

Hon. Members on both sides of the House should remember that the next governmental conference is only three years away. There is a great deal of preparatory work to be done for that conference to continue the task of widening the Community. If we do not ratify the treaty, how can we be at the forefront in those important negotiations?

I hope that this will be the last time the House indulges in antics of the sort that we have seen in recent months while discussing this European treaty. I use the word, "antics" advisedly, and I suggest that the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East should listen for a moment, because perhaps he will agree with me. I shall not mince my words. I regard the unattractive alliance between Labour and Liberal and a handful of my hon. Friends on the Conservative Benches to force through a commitment to the social chapter as parliamentary horseplay.

I listened to the hon. Member for Hamilton (Mr. Robertson), and I am sorry that he is no longer present. He and I were in a short television debate this morning. He used high-minded language about the sanctity of Parliament and the huge constitutional issues involved in this debate today—talk that was echoed by the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East in his closing remarks. I do not think that the unsavoury alliance that I have described does any credit to the mother of Parliaments—to me, it is much more reminiscent of a Whitehall farce in which Brian Rix might play a part.

Yesterday Madam Speaker gave a ruling of very great importance, which was basically a warning to the courts not to interfere in the legislative process of the House of Commons. The ruling emphasised again the supreme position in law-making of this House. I find it very hard to understand how that ruling is compatible in moral terms with the short-sighted politicking that we are seeing in connection with the social chapter.

The hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) said during Business questions today that the Government should concentrate on providing jobs. I could not agree with him more, but at the heart of my argument is my belief that if the majority of the House is against the social chapter it is simply because it is an engine of unemployment. The hon. Member for Bolsover may be a surprising ally, but I hope that on that basis he will join me in the Lobby tonight in voting against the social chapter.

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): The reason why I talk about jobs is that, in the period the Government have been in office, about 3 million people have been thrown out of work, social chapter or no social chapter. Every pit in my constituency has been closed. The shipyards have been closed. The fishing fleets have been almost destroyed. The industrial base has been decimated. That is why I talk about jobs. The Tory Government are responsible.

Mr. Renton: It is a great pity that I gave way to the hon. Member for Bolsover, because he has not said anything to do with the social chapter or with the European Community.

My last point is a somewhat personal postscript. In recent days and weeks, as someone who was Chief Whip during Lady Thatcher's last year of government, I have often been asked for my comments on the whipping of Members in relation to this Act, as it now is, on the Maastricht treaty. I know that the job of Chief Whip is a lonely one, and I have very great sympathy with my right hon. Friend the present Patronage Secretary. As I have said in answer to those questions, however, the problem facing the Chief Whip and the Government Whips Office in the past few weeks is unique in my experience of nearly 20 years in the House.

Not long ago, Lord Pym—our Chief Whip during the passage of the European Communities Act 1972—told me how, during the passage of that Act, he and Neil Marten, who led the dissidents on the Tory side, met regularly to talk about tactics and how to handle the business. There was never any question of the dissidents, for example, voting against Government motions on time, or voting for business to go on after 10 o'clock. There was certainly never any question of the dissidents voting for additions to the European Communities Bill in which they did not believe, and which they would not have been honest in supporting, simply in order to embarrass the Government.

[Mr. Renton]

It is impossible for me to find an exact analogy, therefore, to the problems that we have seen in the last few weeks. I can only think, with a good deal of sorrow, of the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact of 1940, when those who were against communism joined those who were for communism in a very dishonourable alliance. That pact proved disastrous. The implacable enemies became partners. It was a pact based on wholly dishonest considerations.

Any pact forged today which resulted in the House, against its better judgment and against its natural majority, voting for the social chapter would similarly lead to disaster—disaster, above all, for this country, because it would lead not to more jobs on low wages but to higher unemployment on no wage and total dependence on social security benefits.

5.56 pm

Mr. Paddy Ashdown (Yeovil): I am sorry that the right hon. Member for Mid-Sussex (Mr. Renton) did not give way, because he gave the lie to, and showed the fraudulent nature of, the argument that lay at the heart of the Prime Minister's speech. It is the Prime Minister's weakness in this matter that has led him to the position that he is now in. He has never, throughout the passage of the Act, been prepared to articulate a single message. He has always played the part of the Whip, not the Prime Minister. That is exactly what he is doing in this debate, and, having spent so much time in his speech attacking me, he could at least, I believe, have been here now to listen to what I have to say.

As usual, our Prime Minister, who ought to be giving a lead to the nation, is telling two different parts of the House two different things. To his hon. Friends he says that this is a debate about the social chapter; but to us on this side of the House he says that this is a debate about ratification. Nothing could have made it more clear.

Since the Prime Minister is not in his seat now, perhaps the Minister would like to tell us what we will be voting on tonight. His hon. Friends would like to know. The Prime Minister has told them that we are voting tonight for the social chapter, but he told me that we would be voting for ratification. The right hon. Member for Mid-Sussex made it quite clear what he thought: he thought that we would be voting for the social chapter.

I will happily give way to the Minister, who represents the Prime Minister. Will he tell us, when we vote tonight, shall we be voting for the social chapter or for ratification?

Mr. David Hunt: As the right hon. Gentleman is aware, there will be two votes at the conclusion of this debate. The first vote will be on an amendment, which I understand he supports, that would impose the social protocol, which he has criticised on so many occasions. The second vote will then be in accordance with the motion on the Order Paper. As I understand it, there is a motion on the Order Paper provided the amendment is defeated.

The question which the Prime Minister put to the right hon. Gentleman, and which he had not yet answered—*[Interruption.]* No. I am just putting the point to the right hon. Gentleman——

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order, Interventions should be exceedingly short.

Mr. Ashdown: The House and the nation will have noticed, of course, that the Minister has not answered the question. We know perfectly well that both the motion and the amendment tonight are about the social chapter. We know beyond peradventure that the debate is not about ratification because Ministers—from the Foreign Secretary to the Prime Minister—have told us that. They have told us bluntly that, whatever the House does, they will go ahead and ratify anyway, so this is about the social chapter. That is why it is consistent to vote in the second Division in the same way as we vote in the first one, and so we shall do. We will vote on every occasion that we get——

Mr. Peter Shore (Bethnal Green and Stepney) *rose*——

Mr. Ashdown: I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will forgive me. I am in the 10-minute Bill, so I would be grateful if the right hon. Gentleman will forgive me.

Mr. Terry Lewis (Worsley): The 10-minute Bill?

Mr. Ashdown: The 10-minute rule.

We will vote tonight, and on every subsequent occasion, to give Britain the best opportunity to have the benefits of the social chapter for our economy and our work force. That is what we will do tonight.

It should come as no surprise to the Government that we will do that. We made a manifesto commitment, which has been repeated in speeches made by my hon. Friend the Member for Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber (Sir R. Johnston). I have made it clear to the Prime Minister and Ministers in private that that is our position.

The Prime Minister has no right to say—as he said recently—that he is bewildered about our position. That is a misrepresentation and he knows it. There are all sorts of reasons why our Prime Minister might be bewildered, but he cannot be bewildered about our position, and we will vote tonight consistent with that.

Mr. David Howell (Guildford) *rose*——

Mr. Ashdown: The right hon. Gentleman will speak in a moment. I have only 10 minutes, so I hope that he will forgive me.

I would prefer to vote for our amendment. Voting for the amendment in the name of the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) is our only way of expressing our commitment to the social chapter and reincorporation.

That does not mean that we do not have some reservations about the social chapter. I do not resile from a single word that I have said. We have reservations about articles 4 and 2·4, which seem to provide a mechanism to bypass democratic institutions of the European Community. We have reservations about all sorts of European legislation. We have reservations about Maastricht, just as the Prime Minister has.

But the whole point—as the Prime Minister clearly said with as much passion as he was able to summon—is that it is important that we are in the social institutions and shaping them, not outside. His speech made a wonderful statement about how it is important to be in Europe. It did not seem to be a speech that much supported the idea of opt-outs from Europe.

As a result of the way in which this matter has been portrayed by both the Government and the Labour party, we have made the social chapter into something that,

frankly, it is not. It is not the great new monster of socialism stalking across Europe which the Government try to persuade us to believe it is. Nor is it the archangel of socialism about to return us to the 1970s, as the Labour party would have us believe. It is an anodyne statement of broad intent. Those who examine the social chapter in the treaty of Rome, to which we subscribe, aided and strengthened by Baroness Thatcher with the Single European Act, will see that there is remarkably little difference between the two.

The social chapter simply codifies the established best practices of most modern British firms and almost all successful ones. Therefore, we take the view that on balance it is good for the country and our work force. If there is a move to a better understanding of the dangers of corporatism in Europe among the Germans—as there is—the French and the Portuguese, that is no reason to be outside it, as the Prime Minister argued. It is a reason to be inside it, helping to mobilise that movement and reshape the social chapter.

The Government have two reasons why they should not be in the social chapter. The first reason—the Prime Minister laboured this point—is that it would make Britain uncompetitive. However, most of our firms, certainly all the successful ones, already exceed the terms of the social chapter. They already go further than the social chapter in the way in which they treat their work force.

The Prime Minister invited us to talk to business. I did. Three weeks ago, I went to Toyota, which has made a massive investment near Derby. I asked about the secret of its success. Toyota is the most successful car manufacturer in the world. I asked the managing director, who took me round, "What is the secret of your success?" He said, "The secret of our success is that we value our work force. We recognise that our work force are our most important asset. We invest in our work force. We provide them with terms and conditions that will keep them. Those terms and conditions far exceed the terms of the social chapter." I asked, "Why do you succeed in the market place?" He said, "Because we provide quality goods. It is quality that wins in the market place. You cannot produce quality goods unless you have a quality work force." That is what the social chapter is all about. This is not inimical to success; it is the secret of success.

There are only two ways for this country to go. We may choose to become a low wage, low investment, low skill and low technology industry. That is what we may choose as our industrial base. I warn the Prime Minister that, if that is what he wants our country to be, we will have miserable years ahead. If we go in that direction, many emerging countries in eastern Europe and elsewhere will do it better and cheaper than us. That is the way to poverty in this nation.

Alternatively, we may choose to go down the other route. We may choose to be a high value-added, high skill, high investment and high wage economy. There is no way that the country will assure its future prosperity other than by taking that route. That is what the social chapter is about.

The second part of the Government's case is that we cannot afford to give our workers decent standards. The Government could not have revealed the poverty of their aspirations more powerfully than by telling British workers that they cannot afford to provide the terms and conditions that will be enjoyed by workers in Greece and Portugal. Is that what we are saying to the people of our country? is that what we are saying the Government will create? They will create an economy in which our workers will not even have the rights of workers in Greece and Portugal. God forbid if that is where we are going.

The reality of this is clear. It has nothing to do with the good of British industry and British jobs; it has everything to do with the divisions in the Conservative party. The Prime Minister had to return from Europe with a piece of paper in his hand that he could wave at Conservative Back Benchers. This is what it was all about: game, set and match in an attempt to unite the Conservative party, but lose, lose and lose for the country. The Prime Minister is more a Whip than a leader. He is more concerned about uniting his divided party than in providing the country with a stable basis for future prosperity.

Workers who have lost their jobs, their businesses and their homes as a result of the Government's recession must now lose their rights because of the divisions in the Conservative party. That is what it boils down to in the end. We will vote for the social chapter as the best way of ensuring that Britain and British workers have the rights, the abilities and the advantages of it.

There is a majority in the House for the Maastricht treaty, and there is a majority in the House for the social chapter. It takes a Government of this bungling ineptitude never to be able to mobilise the treaty or the social chapter. That is the reason why the Prime Minister and the Government are in the mess that they are in tonight. I hope that the vote is carried. If it is carried, we expect the Prime Minister to obey it.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Madam Speaker has ruled that speeches from now until 8 pm shall last for 10 minutes only.

6.8 pm

Sir Cranley Onslow (Woking): I shall not follow the leader of the Liberal party, the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown), in his by-electioneering speech, because there is not enough time to go into it.

I am convinced by the right hon. Gentleman's reliance on Toyota as a typical example of the problems now faced by British industrialists. To pick out an international company, which was established here on a green-field site and which negotiates successful deals with its work force, and claim that its position is similar to that of Rolls-Royce, GKN or any other major British company competing in the world market, distorts the truth. The Leader of the Opposition also distorted the truth with his reliance on the example of Nissan.

If what the right hon. Member for Yeovil and the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) say is true, how do they account for the fact that the Confederation of British Industry, the Institute of Directors and all employers who have appeared before the Select Committee on Trade and Industry have been unanimous in their belief that the costs that the social chapter would impose upon their businesses would be ruinous to our search for competitiveness in Europe or elsewhere?

We must judge British industry on the basis of international competition. We must recognise that we face the fiercest competition that we have yet to encounter from

[Sir Cranley Onslow]

the far east and the Pacific rim. The trend in Europe is to make European industry less competitive. I believe that that experience will show the the Europeans, through their enforcement of the social chapter, are in grave danger of saddling themselves with costs that will make them progressively less and less competitive.

What also impressed me in the speech of the Leader of the Opposition was his apparent belief that the social chapter would be good for employment prospects. I do not know what particular section of industry or work force are likely to benefit if we do as the Opposition amendment obliges us to do.

I appreciate that the enforcement of the social chapter may lead to more employment for bureaucrats and trade union negotiators. It might also give a lot more employment to lawyers, and I can see that that must be dear to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's heart. However, I cannot see any way in which the social chapter will increase productive employment. We do not need to give it such a boost, given the improvements to working practice that are constantly being achieved in our efficient industries.

I do not find either of the cases deployed by the Opposition parties particularly convincing. I do not see how the amendment, were it to be carried tonight, could have the effect that it claims. There is certainly a majority in this House and in the other place in favour of the Maastricht treaty. We have the figures to prove that, and they have been quoted more than once.

The House has only given my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister the power to ratify the treaty that he signed. If he were required by the House to seek to amend it, he would be unable to do so. A new treaty would have to be negotiated, and the House of Commons would have to give my right hon. Friend new powers.

What makes today's debate such a curiosity is that, in practical terms, it does nothing. It does not empower the Prime Minister to import the social chapter into our law. The House of Commons alone can do that. I am fairly sure —I believe that all my colleagues on the Conservative Benches would probably agree with me—that, if a Bill were brought before the House to impose a new social chapter treaty, it would be defeated on its Second Reading.

The debate is becoming increasingly irrelevant. The only possible explanation of the position in which we find ourselves today is that an unholy alliance, on the part of some of my hon. Friends, is seeking to wreck the Maastricht treaty and prevent its ratification. I regret that. If they said that that was not part of their intention, their words would be believed. Should they join the Opposition in the Lobby tonight, however, I doubt that they could possibly say that there is no intention to wreck the Maastricht treaty. I see no sign of dissent from my view.

Mr. William Cash (Stafford): I am only too delighted to intervene on my right hon. Friend. Does he agree that the Labour amendment does not in any way impose the social chapter upon the United Kingdom? Furthermore, under the wording of that amendment, it is merely a question of whether the Government were to notify their intention, which they clearly would not do.

Sir Cranley Onslow: I am sorry that I gave way, because I knew that my hon. Friend would be long-winded. *[Interruption.]* If my hon. Friend reads the amendment, he will see that it states that the Government should not ratify the treaty unless and until they have done what is stipulated under the amendment. If the Opposition amendment is not a wrecking one, I do not know a wrecking amendment when I see one. The objectives that my hon. Friends seek to achieve are, similarly, wrecking objectives. I believe that they intend to leave the House without a resolution tonight, which would be thoroughly——

Sir Teddy Taylor: Hear, hear.

Sir Cranley Onslow: That would be cynical and unscrupulous. It is clear from my hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) that that is their intention.

That takes me back to the real point at issue. There is a majority in the House in favour of the treaty. If the majority in the House goes against the Government, the stipulation in the treaty will make it impossible——

Mr. Cash: It is stipulated in an Act of Parliament.

Sir Cranley Onslow: That Act of Parliament makes it impossible for the Government to seek to ratify the treaty, because no resolution has been reached.

The whole purpose of the unholy alliance into which my hon. Friends have entered is simply to wreck the ratification of the treaty.

Dr. John Cunningham (Copeland): Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Sir Cranley Onslow: No, I am bound by the time constraint.

I do not believe that Parliament should allow itself to be abused and twisted in this way. The simple facts are straight. There is a majority in the House in favour of the treaty——

Sir Teddy Taylor: But not in the country.

Sir Cranley Onslow: The power to ratify that treaty has been given to the Government by the House. That is what we need and that is what we should do. There should be no further messing about.

6.15 pm

Mr. Peter Shore (Bethnal Green and Stepney): Two issues will be decided tonight: a minor one and a major one.

The minor issue is the social chapter, and the major one is the entire Maastricht treaty. More precisely, the minor issue is whether the agreement attached to the protocol on social policy should be adopted or rejected. The major issue is whether the European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993, which enacts most of the Maastricht treaty—the treaty of union—should come into force.

The social chapter is the minor issue, for a number of reasons. I fully understand why, however, those on both sides of the House who have spoken have tended to exaggerate its effects. The Prime Minister made it very clear that it would ruin British industry and destroy jobs. I am afraid that some in the Labour party would have people believe that vast benefits will be bestowed upon working people in Britain as a result of the social chapter. Not so. It will do neither.

The social chapter will have a barely discernible effect, for three reasons. First, let us consider the most direct item of cost—wages and salaries. As my right hon. and learned Friend the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, wages, salaries and benefits are explicitly excluded from the social chapter. They will not be affected one iota by it.

There will be no effect on the right of association, the right to strike, and the right to impose lock-outs—all of which could significantly affect collective bargaining and therefore pay, wages and salaries. Those issues will not be affected by the social chapter, because they are excluded from it.

Secondly, one may ask about non-wage cash benefits. Social security payments, national insurance contributions, social protection of workers generally, redundancy pay and compensation for the termination of contracts need not cause any worries. Any change to any of them would require unanimity of voting and that is subject to the veto.

Thirdly, what about indirect costs? Those costs include control over working hours, night-time working, paid holidays, leave and pay for pregnant women, and the employment of children and young workers under the age of 18. They are important matters, but the social chapter does not deal with them. They are neither included nor excluded, because they are already enacted under article 118A of the European Communities Act 1972, as amended by the Single European Act. They are already imposed in full or in part on the United Kingdom by qualified majority voting.

The costs and benefits proposed in the social chapter are minimal.

The other non-work force factors that influence productivity and unit costs that my right hon. and learned Friend the Leader of the Opposition mentioned—Management efficiency, innovation, the quality of products and capacity utilisation—are so small that what can be done under the social chapter defies measurement.

There was once a fairly plausible case against the social chapter: that any increase in costs might affect a country whose productivity was very low. However, that possible effect was under a fixed exchange rate system. Since 14 September 1992, when the pound floated free, there has been no problem whatever of competitiveness arising out of the social chapter.

The argument on the grounds that it would impose crippling costs on British industry is entirely bogus. Equally bogus is the argument that it would provide measurable benefits for people at work in Britain. It is what *The Guardian* in its leader column yesterday called "a waffling irrelevance", which applies to both sides of the argument.

We all know why the Government, and to some extent my right hon. Friends, have attached so much importance to the social chapter. We well know that the Government have not had an easy time with the Maastricht treaty. There are many things in the treaty that Conservative Members find it difficult to swallow. Therefore, the social chapter was brought back as a great prize, not only because we opted out, but, I regret to say, to appeal to the more primitive instincts of the Conservative party. It was waved about as a banner.

The Maastricht treaty is not very popular with Labour Members and among those who have read it and understood it. Labour party members and our supporters have not yet understood that what is proposed, which the Front-Bench spokesmen of my party have accepted, is that it entails the handover of the powers of economic decision-making to unelected bodies in Europe. They have not yet understood that it will allow those bodies to decide the Chancellor's Budget and his borrowing requirement, it will abolish the Bank of England as a nationalised industry and hand it over to a totally independent European central bank that will decide the interest rates and exchange rates of our country.

The Labour party Front-Bench spokesmen and our shadow Chancellor need to offer something in return to the British people. That is why they too have given such exaggerated importance to the social chapter; a little something, a little bit of sugar to cover the bitter pill of the surrender of serious economic powers.

So much for the minor issue, now for the major one: the treaty itself. I read Madam Speaker's splendid ruling yesterday when she dealt with the possible challenge by the courts to the supremacy of Parliament. She quoted the words of the Bill of Rights.:

"freedom of speech and debates or proceedings in Parliament ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament."

I agree with every word. I repeat the words:

"proceedings . . . ought not to be impeached or questioned . . . in any court or place out of Parliament."

The British courts or Whitehall is not the primary threat to Parliament. That threat is massively present in the treaties of the European Community that proclaim the supremacy of Community law over British law, and in its courts of justice that can and do strike down and render nugatory any Act of this Parliament that conflicts with European law. Through the Maastricht treaty, it will massively extend its powers to large new areas of policies, including the ultimate power of imposing fines on this country if its rulers dared to pursue policies contrary to those imposed by the European Community.

All this and more is at the heart of the Maastricht treaty. That is the major matter, and to resist that further encroachment of powers should be the aim of all hon. Members who cast their votes tonight.

6.24 pm

Mr. David Howell (Guildford): My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister made many excellent points in his powerful opening speech, but he never spoke a truer word than when he said that, since the time of the signing of the Maastricht treaty, the argument has changed throughout Europe. He is completely right to say that many of the issues considered at the time of the signing of the treaty as British eccentricities and doubts have how become universally agreed and actively supported by the policy makers of Europe as they face totally new conditions.

In many ways, the doubters of Maastricht—heaven knows, that included the British Government throughout the 1980s and even at the signing and the negotiating of the treaty—have won the argument. We have listened over long nights and weeks to my hon. Friends the so-called "Tory rebels". They have shown courage, and they have fought the good fight in their corner, and I respect that.

In a way they have won the argument, not to their desired extent of stopping the ratification of the treaty, but in having validly and accurately pointed out the absurdities of the high, complete Maastricht doctrine and

[Mr. David Howell]

its dangers. Yesterday's editorial of the *Wall Street Journal* said that the old taboos of European union—the gobbledegook and the Euro-speak—have been smashed.

It is curious, although my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister cannot say it himself, that he has been one of the most effective Euro-rebels. His vision and that of my right hon. Friends on the Front Bench, proposed against a storm of sneers and opposition from the party opposite and many others in Europe at the time of the Maastricht treaty, has gained ground.

Now every banker says that monetary union will not come about and that it is an absurd idea, but they did not say it then. Now every commentator says that the Maastricht treaty has many over-centralising elements and that we must decentralise. The great idea of subsidiarity was dragged up somehow to counteract the trends of Maastricht, but the over-centralising elements were not noted at the time, either. Further summits were needed to establish a completely new mood.

It would be comical if it were not tragic to see the great British Labour party once again climbing too late on the bandwagon of yesterday's causes. It brought the whole Maastricht package, and that is now out of date. Europe is facing completely different problems.

We all know perfectly well—this is the main reason why I want to see the treaty ratified and to get on with things—that, as soon as the treaty is ratified, we shall move on to new ground. We shall not merely seek amendments to the Maastricht treaty, or merely wait until 1996—that is much too long—but we shall look for amendments to the Single European Act, as the Maastricht treaty itself does, and for amendments to the treaty of Rome.

Mr. Cash: Will my right hon. Friend give way?

Mr. Howell: I do not have time, although I respect my hon. Friend's view.

Many of the issues that have recently been debated will form the basis for a new agenda and new treaties that will begin to head Europe in the right direction. That is what my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister saw months and years ago. He has led the way, and that has been the growing theme throughout the rest of Europe.

We know that the vision of Europe resting on the nation states, with a huge return of powers from the Community machinery and institutions to the nation states, with far tighter controls on the central machinery, such as the Council of Ministers and the Commission, and with the entrenchment of the rights of nation states with carefully circumscribed power only to the central authorities needed to run the common, free and open market, are now the common aspirations and the mood of more and more Europeans. We know that, in the larger Europe that is coming, more Europeans will welcome the great European confederation of nation states which replaces the old-fashioned centralised ideas which were too prevalent at Maastricht.

I should like to see the Government not sitting around and saying that they have reached a point where it is all too difficult, and that we must wait until 1996. I should like to see all hon. Members, and certainly my right hon. Friends, visit present and future members of the enlarged Community and bring home to them the new agenda for which we intend to push and gain agreement right through Europe, with more decentralisation—a confederal commonwealth of Europe based on the nation state.

Although my hon. Friends, the famous rebels, fight on, theirs is in a sense yesterday's battle. They would be ill advised to ignore the advice of many wise people outside this House; they should not listen only to other Members of Parliament. They should see where they should now stand and how they should consolidate what they have gained. They should help to build the better Europe that we all want to see, instead of the old, centralised Europe.

There is some glorious confusion about social policy, which was shown especially in the speech by the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith). He does not understand that social policy at European level is based on two legislative origins. It is based on the social chapter, which is the social provisions in the treaty of Rome, which have been largely accepted. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has signed up to them.

Britain is the leading country in implementing those provisions. From the list supplied by the European Commission, it can be seen that we are the only country that has applied all the EC social directives since we joined the European Community. Every other country, including Belgium, which is always lecturing us on these matters, and Germany, which tells us that we are dumbheads and do not understand the social dimension, has non-compliance written against its name. Britain is the only country of the 12 that has complied in all circumstances, except in two in which the appropriateness of compliance is being questioned. Every other country is a non-complier.

We have accepted the social chapter; that is not an argument. The social chapter covers a range of important issues concerned with health and safety at work, the equal treatment of men and women, rights at work, the free movement of workers and a variety of important social issues. We accept all that, although it is absurd that it should be done from so remote and central a place as Brussels.

What we question is something quite different, which the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East did not seem to understand. We question the social charter, which was put together in December 1989 and which formed the basis of the protocol which is now in the Maastricht treaty. More and more people in Europe are realising that that great move on from the normal social provisions in the Rome treaty and in the Single European Act is largely unnecessary, and increasingly out of date.

My right hon. and hon. Friends need no lectures from anybody about the implementation of either European social policy or of national social policy. We are entitled to lecture in return that the case for social policy being dictated centrally and uniformly is absurdly out of date. The whole mood now is for more flexibility, and for more differentiation and variety between the nation states.

The real problem of Europe which the policy makers now face is not the social protocol, which is an out-of-date and unnecessary concept. The real problem is competitiveness, which is draining away throughout Europe, to the point where we are finding it difficult to sustain our living standards, let alone improve them. The real problem is the 19 million unemployed throughout Europe, half of whom have been unemployed for more than a year.

The social protocol thinking and the detail of it are not wrong because they do not sound good. Of course the

social protocol sounds good, and it appeals to Opposition Members. It is wrong not because low wages are good and because we want to make this a low-wage economy. It is wrong because lower overheads are essential throughout Europe if we are to begin to compete and to enable our present social standards to be maintained.

I read a document produced by the Labour-supported Commission for Social Justice, which began with a call for Britain to wake up in social matters. Opposition Members should listen to that message. This nation should wake up if we are to maintain, let alone to advance, our capacity to provide social provision and a high-wage economy.

High wages must be earned by much harder work, by a much tighter control of social overheads, and by moving away from the placid idea that the whole of Europe can have long weekends while Asia does not have weekends at all. We have to have far tougher schooling, we have to work longer hours and we must now move in the 1990s into a far more dedicated and hard-working environment if we are to maintain our existing social entitlements, let alone have all the fat, generous layer of entitlements which are promised but cannot be delivered by the social protocol.

Japanese children are told in school, right from the beginning, when they are three or four years old, that no one owes them a living. They are told that they must save, encourage investment and work extremely hard because no one in the world owes them a living. They are told that they must compete.

That is the social and compassionate message that should come from those concerned with jobs, with employment and with the prosperity of the people of Europe, especially the people of this island. That is the message that we should hear instead of the out-of-date absurdity of a social protocol that belongs to yesterday.

6.34 pm

Mr. Stuart Randall (Kingston upon Hull, West): The major aspect of the social dimension is the scale of unemployment that we are experiencing in Europe. It is a major problem, and action is needed if we are not to impair our competitiveness as we move into the 21st century, with the burden of 16 million or 17 million unemployed people, and if we are not to damage the fabric of our society.

The challenge is to be able to maintain a balance between improving our society through our social policy and social fabric, and retaining the competitiveness of our industries. The social chapter provides a framework for creating social policies. There are no rules that one cannot sack people or change wages under the social policy as it is written. The social chapter also extends majority voting.

To arrive at new policies that will determine what costs there will be on industry and the sort of social fabric we have involves a long consultative process. However, the decisions will be made by the Council of Ministers. There is nothing in Maastricht that will increase the overhead costs of business, as some hon. Members have claimed. They will be determined later through the Council of Ministers.

I have a little confidence in the Council of Ministers. I believe that it will take into account the changes that have emanated throughout Europe since the treaty was written. We have had the recession. Unemployment has gone up since the treaty was written. The target dates for economic and monetary union must have changed. There is now a Conservative Government in France and a right-wing Government in Italy.

We also have the Commission's document, "Community-Wide Framework for Employment" which was sent by the Commission to the Social Affairs Committee. That document drew unfavourable comparisons between EC growth and employment and growth and employment in the United States and in Japan. The latest statement from the European Convention in Copenhagen made some comments on that. All hon. Members must take that into account if we are being realistic. All the changes are creating an atmosphere among member states. They realise that they have to be a bit more wary, and that they must not be wild about social policy or wild in other ways, because of the costs involved.

Mr. Iain Mills (Meriden): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Randall: I will not give way, because I do not have time.

The key to our competitiveness is to reduce the burden of unemployment and to create jobs in high-tech areas. I welcome the Commission's proposals to do that, whereas I find the Government's approach of just reducing labour costs rather pathetic. The Commission's proposals for reducing unemployment are comprehensive and very good. They contrast markedly with the way in which the Government are going about the matter.

What are the implications of signing the social chapter? Signing does not in itself commit us to any change in our employment legislation or to any measures that could, even theoretically, reduce our competitiveness. That contrasts strongly with the line put by the right hon. Member for Woking (Sir C. Onslow) who gave no specific example of how costs would be raised.

All that would do is extend areas of the EC labour laws where the EC already has competence, and extend areas that can be decided by majority vote. The new powers will depend ultimately on the Council of Ministers and the direction that member states collectively decide they should follow in the future. I have sensed a changing mood from certain people to whom I have spoken. The panic from the Government, who think that everything must be screwed down, and that we must go back to low tech and low wages, is absurd. The mood within the EC is that we must be more wary.

There are reasons why the signing of the social chapter may not have the dire impact on competitiveness that some have predicted. The social chapter covers areas where decisions are made by qualified majority voting. Those areas involve safety, working conditions, information and consultation with workers, equality for men and women and matters of labour market inequalities. I have spent 25 years in business and in industry, and no business man would be afraid of that. To all intents and purposes, it would have a nil effect.

My right hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green and Stepney (Mr. Shore) referred to social security, the social protection of workers and the termination of employment contracts and the representation and collective defence of the interests of workers when they are unemployed. There is a long list, which I cannot go through.

[Mr. Randall]

I believe that many of those areas would undoubtedly increase industrial costs if we were to go wild in Europe. I do not believe that we will go wild, but if we did, the Government could have a veto. The Government's opt-out may have lost that influence, and I regret that. Other issues, such as pay, the right of association, the right to strike and the right to impose a lock-out are not even included in the social legislation.

Another reason why signing the social chapter may not make much difference is that many of its powers already exist under the treaty of Rome, and were extended by the Single European Act. Those are social powers that have been agreed within the Conservative party and the Government, and all the major decisions have been taken.

For example, the EC directive on the protection of pregnant women was opposed by the Government, as it supposed to increase costs. That is absurd, and has now been included in the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993. The draft directive on the working time limit of 48 hours will probably become legislation, contrary to what the Minister has said. Both the examples have nothing to do with the social chapter. The fact that both measures were opposed shows the rather pathetic priorities of the Government.

The Prime Minister played on the argument that, if Britain is within the social dimension, we will be in a position to be involved in the drafting of social chapter measures. The Government will not be in that position now. If one looks at the 1989 social action programme, however, one can see that it did work as far as the Government's priorities were concerned. The pregnant women directive reduced the measure from full pay to sick pay, and changes will also occur in the legislation for the 48-hour working week. The Government can do it if they want. I see no reason why Conservative Members are afraid of the social chapter, which will have little impact.

I should like the Minister to respond to another point made by the Prime Minister, who said emphatically that we must be in the heart of Europe to be able to influence things. I know of certain United Kingdom multinational companies which have pointed out that, without the United Kingdom influence which will now be lost because of the opt-out, social policy will be determined by the other 11 member states.

That policy will be implemented in the branches of those companies on the continent. In practice, however, the United Kingdom will have to carry out the policy that has been agreed by the other 11. There must be some uniformity within a company. I refer to multinationals, which are large companies.

6.46 pm

Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend, East): It is a great pleasure for me that you have called me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I am grateful. It is 22 years ago this week that I had the pleasure of resigning from a Conservative Government to oppose this country joining the EC. I know that you were still at school at the time, but it is interesting to look back 22 years to see what I was saying. I was, of course, regarded as mad by most people.

I said that our joining the EC would have an adverse effect on trade. We have had a deficit in our trade with Europe since then of £100,000 million. I thought that our joining would mean, unfortunately, that we would not be able to solve the problem of food prices, and that the poor would be hit. We know that the common agricultural policy is now wholly out of control, and no one can do anything about it.

I thought that our joining would destroy the Anglo-American alliance. We can see how our friendship and co-operation with the USA has been undermined almost every day. I said that our joining would destroy jobs, and we can see that Europe's share of world trade is going down and down. Jobs are being destroyed, and people are suffering. Finally, of course, I said that our democracy would be undermined. It has been, largely by the treaty of Rome, and it will be more so if the Maastricht treaty goes through.

As one of the few remaining rebels, I shall not be voting for the amendment, because I am in favour of the social chapter. The amendment does not say that, but rather that it will not be possible to ratify the treaty until the Government say that they want to sign the social chapter. Should I worry? Far from it. We had the clearest statement from the Chancellor during the Budget speech that Britain would never sign the social chapter.

The Government—I am sure that those on the Front Bench, including the Secretary of State for Employment will agree—are never to sign the social chapter, and the amendment says that there can be no ratification until the Government say they are to agree to the social chapter. Is not that the ideal thing for someone to vote for who does not like the Maastricht treaty?

In fairness, I do not see why everyone is so worried about the social chapter. I have heard hon. Members say that it would cost us millions, and that it would put up costs because there would be a 48-hour working week. As has been found throughout the treaty, that is a load of rubbish. There is hardly anything in the social chapter whatsoever. The only new provision relates to social security, and it is subject to unanimity. There are three small items, one relating to men and women, that are already covered by the court through the majority voting.

If any hon. Member is worried about majority voting, he should look at the Maastricht treaty. There he would see massive areas such as visas, youth training, trans-European networks, telecommunications, distortion of competition, health, education, culture, third-world development, consumer protection and cohesion. For all those, majority voting will be introduced. If the Minister, who seems to be happy, is worried about majority voting, let him worry about all of it that is contained in the Maastricht treaty, which is destroying the basis of our democracy.

The sad fact is that, on the social chapter, there has been flag-waving between the parties. The Conservatives have been saying that it is a dreadful thing, and were not we glad that they had got us out of it? Labour said that, because the Conservatives had got us out of it, it must somehow be a good thing. I wish there had been some honesty in debate.

Both sides should have accepted that there is precious little in the social chapter at all. The only new thing relates to social security and is subject to unanimity, and a small extension of majority voting. Even in those areas, I believe that the EC will use the powers contained in the Single European Act.

You must be fed up hearing my speeches, Mr. Deputy Speaker, although you are a patient man. I remind you

that, during debates on the Bill, I asked the Government six times to tell me anything that could be brought in under the social chapter that could not have already been brought in under the Single Europe Act or the treaty of Rome. I have not had an answer. It is clear, however, that some hon. Members—despite assurances from me, and although they have not had the pleasure of reading the Maastricht treaty—are worried about the social chapter. If they are worried about the social chapter and if, by a remote chance, we are successful in carrying the amendment—I and possibly one other rebel remain—they should join me in voting the main motion down. I shall be glad to do it because, as the Government have said so often, they are worried about the social chapter.

We should worry more about ratification. That is what the amendment is about. We should ask ourselves what right we have to say that ratification should go ahead when the treaty surrenders vast powers of our democracy. We hear the Labour party and the Conservative party shouting at election time about their economic policy. If Maastricht is ratified, the same thing will happen even if the Communist party or the National Front wins the next election. Economic policy will be laid down by central institutions, and there will be nothing that we can do about it.

Some people, particularly people in the Whips Office, are hopeful. People say, "We know that it has gone wrong. We know that is is a mess. But we now have a new Administration who will change things." I appeal to them to ask themselves how the Government can change things. We know that half the member states of the European Community receive a great deal of money from it. Only a small number, including Britain, put money in. Where is the incentive for change?

Even if people doubt me and remain hopeful because the people in Europe are all nice people who want to do nice things, I ask them to consider where the progress is on the common agricultural policy. Time and time again in the House, I have heard Agriculture Ministers say that they have achieved a new formula, new arrangements and reform. They say that things will be better. Every single year it gets worse and worse. Today, the food mountains are the highest that they have ever been. The expenditure next year will be about £6 billion more than it was last year.

Sadly, the consumers and the poor people—the people we should worry about—face extra costs of £20 a week. If we believe that reform is possible, why has it not happened with the CAP? I ask those who say that we can reform the Community why we should pass over all the power and extra money to the EC without stopping to think.

The tragedy of the treaty and of the debate tonight is that the parties have grown apart from the people. If one asks people whether they believe that Maastricht will do good or harm, the majority will probably say that they do not like it, and that they want a referendum. I believe that it will undermine our country and our democracy if we shove through a massive new transfer of power and money without asking the people what they think.

I appeal to hon. Members on both sides of the House to remember the issue at stake. Let us not have silly, squalid arguments about the social chapter. The social chapter is basically meaningless compared with what we have already handed over. The real issue is that we simply) not have the right to hand over huge freedoms and ontrols to boards, commissions and councils without asking the people first. That is the issue for tonight. That is why I shall vote for the amendment, in the firm and secure knowledge that the Government do not want the social chapter. Let us all vote for an amendment which proposes no ratification without the social chapter.

The Maastricht treaty will increase protectionism. It will be bad for jobs and bad for people. It will increase the amount of money that we hand over to Europe. It will be bad for poor people and for employees. It will increase the costs of production in Britain. That will destroy jobs. Having listened to all the debates on the treaty, we should stop and think. The right thing for us to do is vote for the amendment and then vote against the motion, as amended. We should spend the summer period rethinking. The Government may say that they want to go ahead. They may do some deal with someone. That is a matter for them.

The Maastricht treaty is going through at a time of economic hardship for Britain and Europe. The EC seems to be getting worse in every possible way. At such a time, we should stop and think. After we have stopped and thought, we should ask the people. Let us remember that the power and freedom do not belong to us. They do not belong to thin or fat, old or young politicians. They belong to the people of Britain.

That is why we should vote for the amendment tonight. Let us remember that we have no right whatever to ratify or approve anything which involves a transfer of power unless we ask the people first. Let that be our intention tonight. Let us ask the people. Let us seek their views, and remember that the country belongs to them.

6.54 pm

Mr. John Hume (Foyle): Today's debate has obviously and understandably attracted a great deal of attention. The forecast that the vote will be close has focused attention on the smaller parties in the House and in particular on my honourable colleagues from Northern Ireland. It has been suggested that the Government may attempt to purchase their votes. I hope that my colleagues will be wise enough—as I know that they are—to recognise that if one is bought on Thursday, one can be sold on Monday. If the Government are prepared to engage in such unprincipled behaviour, they would not step back from doing so again on a future occasion.

However, I have been assured by Ministers that they are principled and that no offers of any description have been made to my honourable colleagues. It would be a serious mistake to deal with serious problems in my part of the world in that way. The only way in which we shall resolve those problems is to reach agreement on how we can respect our differences and work together for our common interests, which are considerable.

The debate this evening has great significance for my part of the world. As other hon. Members have said, the debate is not only about the social chapter but about European union. I am a strong supporter of the steady evolution towards European union. I should have thought that everyone in the Chamber wanted to see not only a united Europe but a united world and recognised that a united world was not a uniform world and a united Europe was not a uniform Europe. It is noticeable that those who oppose the steady evolution of European union have uniform minds and wish to impose their uniformity on society.

[Mr. John Hume]

It is interesting to look at the people across Europe who join the so-called sceptics. They include the National Front in France, the neo-Nazis in Germany and the extreme communists. Those people believe in imposing their will on the rest of the people. That is the mind-set that created two world wars and imperialism. The world is still suffering from both. European union is emerging from that. It is a difficult process, but one that we should all pursue steadily.

When I speak about European union, I often ask people to cast their minds back 50 years. For the second time in a century, bombs were falling everywhere across Europe and 35 million people lay dead. If someone had said then, "Don't worry—in 50 years we shall be in this Chamber voting for European union among those peoples," people would have said that that person should be locked up. The fact that we are moving towards European union is one of the great achievements of human history.

Conflict has been ended by the adoption of the simple principle that difference does not threaten us but enriches us. The answer to difference is not conflict or war. Nor is it to impose one's view on other people. It is acceptance and accommodation of difference. That is not an easy task. The peoples of eastern Europe are suffering severely today as a result of the mentality of uniformity which seeks to impose on them a certain view.

I find the Government's case on the social chapter difficult to understand. They have said that the approach to European union of staying out of the Community was a mistake. Now they propose staying out of the social chapter, leaving us behind again. That is something of a contradiction. I do not understand it.

Britain is one of the biggest contributors to the European Community. Britain has bought a first-class ticket, but asks that the poorer people of this land should not take full advantage of it. By rejecting the social chapter, the Government are telling people to buy a first-class ticket but to travel in the luggage compartment. The Government tell us that we suffered because we were not in the Community at the start. Shall we not suffer from not being included in the social chapter at the start, shaping the whole thing? We are told that by staying out of it we shall be more competitive. My part of the world has the lowest wage rates in the United Kingdom; it also has the highest unemployment. If we provide minimum wage rates for our working people, there is no logic in suggesting that that will create higher unemployment. The lowest wage rates and highest unemployment in my part of the world were there before the troubles started, so that argument does not stand up at all.

A more fundamental point is that in this day and age we are living through the greatest economic revolution in the history of the world—the technological revolution. It is the biggest since the industrial revolution, and it is making a fundamental change in our whole way of life. In the industrial revolution, the real wealth was created by the labour and sweat of people; in today's technological revolution, wealth is being created by fewer and fewer people.

As a result, the role of the state in looking after the welfare of its people must totally change. At the end of the day, if there is all the money and land in the world but no human beings, then it will all blow away. We should care for human beings at every level of society. Unfortunately, the Government, with their Reaganomics and Thatcherism, are going in the direction of the law of the jungle and the survival of the fittest, rather than going in the direction that we should be going, where the state takes much more responsibility for the welfare of all its people.

The social chapter is about ensuring that there are minimum wage levels, and that we care for the employed, the unemployed, the elderly and the sick. The whole concept of European union is that humanity transcends nationality, and that we have moved beyond the nation state and are living in an interdependent world. Unless we are in there at all levels, shaping that interdependent world, we shall lose out.

7.1 pm

Mr. John Carlisle (Luton, North): I hope that the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume)—for whom I have great affection, not least because he is my parliamentary pair—will forgive me if I do not go down the line that he has taken.

In reply to the hon. Gentleman's criticism of my hon. Friends and myself—the so-called Euro-sceptics—I should make it clear that we have no connection whatever with right-wing or far-left organisations in Europe, and we resent that accusation.

Mr. Hume: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Carlisle: I hope the hon. Gentleman will forgive me if I do not.

It is interesting to note that, as usual, most Conservative Members who are present are those of us who are suspicious of and opposed to the treaty. We have always attended in great numbers, and it is good to see so many here this evening.

I owe it to my hon. Friends and to the House to explain why I have decided to support the Government, and I do so with some pride. I was not bullied by the Whips; they did not delve into what is, after all, a pretty bland past to try to persuade me. I had an invitation from my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister to attend at No. 10; I asked him to save the gin and tonic for later, because I had already decided to support the Government.

I remain totally opposed to the Maastricht treaty. I only wish that opportunities were still available for the House to reject the treaty. It appears at this stage that we are now virtually at the end of the road. It is perhaps not apt for us to vote for the social chapter purely on the basis of trying to postpone ratification of the treaty—which is not, of course, inevitable.

I admire my hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor), but when he says that we are not voting for the social chapter, I know that if he were presented with an early-day motion by colleagues and asked to sign it, and the words of that early-day motion were the words on the Labour amendment, he would totally reject it. I cannot put my name to the amendment, or follow the Opposition into the Lobby.

My opposition to the treaty is know in the House and has been consistent. I was one of those hon. Members who declined to vote for the Single European Act, on both Second and Third Reading. There are people in the so-called sceptic mould who voted for that Act. That was

probably the start of our troubles, let alone the wretched treaty that the House has considered over the past few months.

I was critical of the Government, the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister on their monetary line, the effect that that had on jobs in my constituency and the effect that the whole treaty will have on jobs and prospects in my constituency. My opposition to the treaty remains, and will remain throughout my parliamentary career, and I am representing the views of my constituents on that basis.

A wag asked me earlier whether I feel like Judas Iscariot at this particular time. I have received no pieces of silver, but if my body is found floating down the Thames at 10.15, so be it—although the Whips were anxious to make sure that it was 10.15 and not 9.15, so that I could be here to vote for the Government.

My main reason for supporting the Government and rejecting the social chapter is based on constituency experience and what the social chapter would do to businesses in my constituency. The classic case is the one that I cited earlier when my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister allowed me to intervene. It is the case of a company that manufactures in my constituency but is so worried about its European set-up, and the manufacturing going on there, that it is seriously considering either closing down or withdrawing part of that manufacturing base in Europe because conditions and productivity in the United Kingdom were improving so much.

Mr. Tony Marlow (Northampton, North): Will my hon. Friend give way?

Mr. Carlisle: I am sorry; there is not enough time.

General Motors is the principal employer in my constituency. Earlier this week one of its executives told me about the cost of production and wages. I am sorry that the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) is not here to listen to this. The company's production and wages costs in Germany are $24·9 per hour; in the United Kingdom, they are $18·9 an hour. Before Opposition Members jump up and say that that is because we have sweated labour, let me add that the cost of production in the United States is $13·9 an hour. But the production lines in the United Kingdom are doing far better than both those major competitors.

If we adopt the social chapter tonight, by whatever means, it will be a devastating effect on a company like that in terms of increased costs, which we would then have to bear because of the social benefits that would have to be brought in under the terms of the social chapter—*[Interruption.]* It is unique for me to be barracked by my hon. Friends, who are some of my closest colleagues. I hope they will remain so after 10 o'clock. I remind them that, if the social chapter was adopted, this country would have a voice only by majority voting. As for social benefits, they will be brought in by those with their own interests at heart rather than the interests of the United Kingdom.

As to tactics, I understand my hon. Friends' intention, but I think that at this stage they are wrong. I apologise immediately to my hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr Cash) for describing it as futile—that was perhaps a little too strong—but in any parliamentary, policy or business argument, one can go so far and no further.

I feel that at this stage the ratification of the treaty ems almost inevitable; I bitterly regret that. As the Prime Minister rightly said, there have been votes here and in another place and the Bill has been given Royal Assent. The Governmenet rightly assume that, even if Labour's amendment were passed—I sincerely hope that it is not—they could proceed with the treaty without the social chapter, and I support that. I do not want them to go ahead with the treaty, but if they must do so, it must be without the social chapter. They are entitled so to proceed as article 7 asks only for a resolution of the House.

I regret that there is no other way in which we can express our opposition to the treaty. I say to my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton, North (Mr. Marlow) that the time has come to question our credibility as colleagues in this place, but I believe that we can take some pride and honour in the way in which we have changed the Government's mind.

In his speech to the 1922 Committee tonight, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister acknowledged that we have come a long way and that we have fired many warnings shots across the Government, warning them that we must not again embark on such an exercise without the full-hearted consent of the Conservative Benches or the people.

Tonight's debate is purely on the social chapter. Those are the words on the Order Paper, which I believe will be voted on at 10 o'clock tonight and I want to reject them.

An hon. Member: You ratted last time.

Mr. Michael Carttiss (Great Yarmouth): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The use of the word "rat" in this House is surely out of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): Order. I call Mr. Enright.

7.10 pm

Mr. Derek Enright (Hemsworth): The saddest feature of the debate has been Conservative Members' lack of idealism and vision, which was typified by the hon. Member for Luton, North (Mr. Carlisle). What is this vision of Europe? What are we doing? We are having a penny arcade that pays no regard to ordinary human beings—to those who are essentially the citizens of Europe.

What is the social chapter that we have been debating this afternoon? I certainly did not recognise it. The Prime Minister once stigmatised it as socialism by the back door. It has been suggested that it is the means by which the bureaucracy in Brussels can get into our system and do terrible things. That completely fails to recognise the continental tradition of a proper relationship with workers.

I shall quote from 1891, from a document that the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Cash) certainly knows very well indeed, Rerum novarum. He is talking about hours that are too long to work, about wages that are too low, about the necessity to consult workers to see how things can be resolved, about the just wage and how families should be supported.

Forty years on, we have similar quotes. I shall quote from Quadragesimo anno:

> "In the first place, the worker must be paid a wage sufficient to support him and his family . . . But to abuse the years of childhood and the limited strength of women is grossly wrong . . . It is intolerable abuse, and to be abolished at all cost . . . Every effort must therefore be made that fathers of families receive a wage large enough to meet ordinary family needs adequately."

[Mr. Derek Enright]

That is the whole spirit of two encyclicals. It is the whole spirit of the Christian Democratic Union, which has been joined by left-wing Conservative Members of the European Parliament. They feel extremely strongly about the matter and have said time and again that it is crucial that we should stay in the social chapter.

It is quite true that the social chapter, as it exists, is not nearly as strong as we would like. Certainly, relatively few costs are entailed in it. Any firm that cannot absorb those costs is not worth its salt.

One of the big problems with British industry, which has not been mentioned today, is the quality of management. The quality of far too much management is extremely poor and something must be done about it. Management courses are often almost like a catapult: they are not properly thought out. For real training in management, people must go to the continent or the United States. Nothing will be done about quality of management as long as managers are allowed to get away with their lackadaisical way of treating workers.

The Prime Minister talked about labour costs. That showed his attitude. Apparently, it is not human beings, men and women, who are trying to provide decently for their family: it is labour costs. He says that labour costs must be kept down, which is precisely the same as saying that we must keep the workers down. That simply will not do.

We undoubtedly need a minimum wage, and I have no qualms in talking about it. I talked about it in the last election. I well remember the manager of a factory who said, "You bring in a minimum wage when you get in in 10 days and I will have to close down." Only three months after the Government were returned, that factory closed down because it went bankrupt under the financial policies that were being followed.

Mrs. Currie *rose*——

Mr. Enright: I do not have time to give way; the hon. Lady will be allowed to speak later.

If we do not have the minimum wage because it is unaffordable, what do we have? It has been announced today that chairmen and directors of water boards are allowed to take a huge number of £1 shares and then sell them tomorrow for £3. That is £2 for no productivity whatever, which is a scandal. We are informed that that means that almost £2 million, which is totally unaccounted for, will go into the pockets of directors of water boards without any work being done for it, yet we cannot afford the social chapter. Is not that the veriest nonsense?

What are the freedoms for which the Government are fighting? What are those firms being allowed to do? They will be allowed to sack pregnant women. The minute a woman becomes pregnant, a firm will be able to sack her. Without the social chapter we will not be able to do anything to stop such behaviour. We know that it goes on and that it is widespread. Families will be paid starvation wages. Kiddies will be allowed to grow up in poverty and therefore in crime.

Those are the freedoms for which the Government are fighting. Their most famous victory was in securing the no-holidays provision. The right hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Howell) said that people had to start working seven days a week. When all car dealers start to work seven days a week, that will indeed be the day. An agreed maximum week of 48 hours is not too much to ask for.

I well recall a strike against compulsory overtime in a liquorice allsorts factory in your constituency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because my mother led it. She worked there to ensure that we had an education, because, as a railwayman, my father was not paid enough. She refused to work compulsory overtime and leave families outside —the majority of workers there were women. We are debating such social conditions. Unless we have the social dimension to Europe, Europe itself will perish.

We have talked a lot about the democratic deficit, but we are concentrating on the social deficit, and it is entirely correct that we do so. There is a social deficit in Europe which we must plug. We must not plug it only by this safety net. That is all it is, a sort of safety net, which is happily accepted by those who agree with the social market. Frankly, it is happily accepted by a large number of Conservative Members who want a free vote and would vote for the social chapter. There are no two ways about it, because one can hear the European Movement happily expressing it.

There is a social deficit in Europe, but above all there is one in this country. Of course there has been internal investment and investment has come into the country, but hon. Members fail to mention that three times as much investment has gone to the continent instead of coming here, and that is a serious problem which should be properly analysed.

Twenty per cent. of those who are classified as poor in the Community live in this country. That is not a cause for complacency or contentment while the Government are talking about deregulation, and getting rid of regulations here, there and everywhere—if they were only red tape I would be entirely in favour. The Government are pushing the poor further down. They are deregulating the entire catering industry so that they can burn and poison people and get away with it. That is a disgrace.

7.21 pm

Mr. Ray Whitney (Wycombe): I respect the views of the hon. Member for Hemsworth (Mr. Enright) on Britain's place in Europe, and largely share them. I was especially dismayed, therefore, by his backward-looking speech. It reflected that of the Leader of the Opposition, who took us back to 1909, whereas the hon. Gentleman took us back to 1891. I did not recognise the Dickensian portrayal of the so-called social deficit that he alleged exists between this country and the rest of the continent of Europe. As he well knows, that is completely misleading.

The House and the other place have debated in great detail the Maastricht treaty as negotiated, successfully and skilfully, by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, and time and again they have approved those provisions. No Chamber in the European Community has given the treaty anything like the detailed examination to which it has been subjected here. It is right, therefore, that we should have proceeded to approve the treaty, and I welcome the fact that it has now been given the Royal Assent. It is right that the motion as laid down in the treaty and passed by the House, and the motion standing in the name of the Government, should be approved.

It would, however, be wrong for the House to accept the amendment tabled in the name of the Labour party.

That would first require a complete revision of the treaty, because it would be materially changed. Much more important than that procedural fact is the fact that it would seriously damage the interests of United Kingdom workers. Most of those who advocate adherence to the social chapter have recourse to the sort of Dickensian rhetoric that we have just heard from the hon. Member for Hemsworth. We have heard the usual cliché, to which the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith), the leader of the Labour Party, descended—talk of Britain becoming the sweatshop of Europe. Everyone knows, in the Chamber and outside, that there is no question of Britain being the sweat shop of Europe. On the contrary, to put it as kindly as possible, anyone who suggests that is being disingenuous.

We must ensure that the workers are protected from losing their jobs and from the damaging implications of the introduction of the social chapter, which have been pointed out by every employers' organisation in the country. They are the people who know. The fascinating exchange between the Leader of the Opposition and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Employment demonstrated that European employers share the same view. That was game, set and match to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Employment.

Mrs. Currie *rose*——

Mr. Whitney: My hon. Friend knows that I have only the time limit allowed to me. I hope that she will forgive me for not giving way.

My hon. Friends who have shown some inclination to vote for Labour's amendment, such as my hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor), who is not in his place at the moment, recognise—possibly even more than some of the rest of us do—the enormous damage that the social chapter would do to jobs and employees in this country, but seem determined to follow that unwise course because of their deep dislike of the Maastricht treaty.

I can only believe that that dislike is based, contrary to what they insist, on a fundamental misunderstanding of what was achieved in the negotiation of that treaty and what has developed and been worked into the system since it was negotiated in Maastricht. Virtually all the developments since then have been in the direction of the sort of Europe that the vast majority of us on both sides of the House wish to achieve: a Europe where national identities are respected, a Europe of allies where the national interests of national states can be protected but the benefits of union developed. That is the treaty that they resolutely refused to recognise.

For six weary months, as we all painfully know, those hon. Members allowed their anxieties to be displayed in Committee in the Chamber. It is worth remarking that there were about 240 words in the European Communities (Amendment) Bill as first drafted, but it spent six months in Committee—one month per 40 words. However important those words are—I yield to no one in accepting their great importance—it does not take six months to negotiate a Bill of 240 words. Indeed, some of my hon. Friends felt so strongly about particular amendments that it took them two or even three hours to explain their objections to or support for them.

The normal reaction to a performance of that nature would be dismay at the lack of clarity and powers of expression of the hon. Member who was speaking. Sadly, it has led to loss of the Chamber's prestige, and everyone outside the House now has a poor view of its capacity to deal with important issues. The irony is that the very hon. Members who profess to be deeply concerned about the dignity and power of the Chamber have contributed to that loss of status, and it is a loss to us all.

It is especially ironic that hon. Members who have used the parliamentary procedures that we are all privileged to enjoy have been at the forefront of that charge. In the past day or two they have been helped in seeking further delay by the person whom I might call the "Lord of lost causes", the noble Lord Rees-Mogg, who has so long been a prophet of doom. He is an espouser of hopeless quests and the gentleman who, in a notable article in *The Times* in May, suggested that he knew what happened on doorsteps, which those of us who know him had some difficulty in accepting.

That noble Lord and his offshore billionaire supporters seem determined to exercise their influence on the United Kingdom's right to develop an important relationship with the European Community, and are trying to get the courts to frustrate the strongly expressed will of Parliament. Were the issue not so vital, it would be hilarious for a former editor of *The Times* to have made himself a suitable subject for the fourth leader of that newspaper, rather than performing the distinguished role that he ought to be playing.

A fog was created around the Maastricht treaty, but that fog has now cleared and the issues are clear. The first of those issues is that the Maastricht treaty, as negotiated by the Prime Minister and his colleagues, is good for Britain. The second is that the social chapter, as now on offer, is potentially bad for Britain and British workers. Therefore, it is clear that all hon. Members should support the Government motion and resist the Labour party's amendment in the Lobby tonight.

7.32 pm

Mr. Geoffrey Hoon (Ashfield): The hon. Member for Wycombe (Mr. Whitney) has failed to explain the central problem that confronts the Government he supports: how can the Government, who claim to be at the heart of Europe, exercise influence by opting out of basic and fundamental policies? Conservative Members have consistently claimed that the social chapter opt-out was a negotiating triumph for the Prime Minister at Maastricht. They also say that it is not only in Britain's interests, but those of the whole Community, to resist the social chapter.

The Conservatives claim that the opt-out protects Britain from the alleged costs of the social chapter, but no proper statistical evidence of those costs has ever been presented. We have had some back-of-the-cigar-packet figures from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. However, there has been no evidence to explain why, when at Maastricht the Prime Minister refused to agree to the social protocol, the other 11 countries went to extraordinary legal lengths to ensure that they could pass European legislation to give effect to the provisions of the social chapter.

At previous intergovernmental conferences, negotiations have generally continued until agreement is reached, with countries recognising that the resulting compromise contains elements with which they are happy and items that they oppose. They were content with compromise, viewing it as the only means of making progress. The social

[Mr. Geoffrey Hoon]

policy opt-out was a significant departure from that process. Unlike a parallel agreement allowing the British Government to opt out of economic and monetary union, the social policy opt-out emerged only during the negotiations at Maastricht. That opt-out appears to have been no more than a convenient political fix—a political solution without regard to the complex constitutional questions that it created.

The immediate consequence of the opt-out was an agreement by the other 11 member states on the social protocol. That addition to the treaty was necessary to allow the remainder of the 11 member states to have the opportunity of passing European legislation to give full effect to the social chapter. The fact that the other 11 countries were prepared to go to such lengths to achieve their objective demonstrates their determination to implement the social chapter and nails the lie that Britain is leading the way in Europe.

Britain's refusal to accept the social chapter gave any other country in the Community that had doubts about the social chapter a perfect opportunity to opt out as well. I recognise that such action would have killed the idea of protecting social rights in the Community. The opportunity was available to them, but what happened? Governments of the left and of the right and coalition Governments of the centre rejected that opportunity unanimously. Every one of the other 11 countries was determined that killing the idea of protecting social rights should not happen—they preferred to agree the social protocol among themselves rather than allow the British Government's intransigence to frustrate their social policy plans.

The first constitutional consequence of the social chapter opt-out means that Britain's people will be less well protected in the Community and under European law than are their continental and Irish counterparts. It follows that there will be a development of a separate legal system in the community. That system will apply to the 11 member states that have adopted the social protocol and have agreed laws under its provisions, while Britain will once again be on the outside, looking in. That will inevitably cause confusion in the legal system of the Community. It will mean that, instead of having a single system of European law, with the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg applying it, the Court will be forced to interpret directives made under the social protocol in a different way from those made with the unanimous approval of all 12 member states.

What will be the effect of the decisions? Will they apply to all 12 countries, to the British Government who have opted out of the social protocol or simply to the 11 countries that have agreed to the protocol? There will be an absurd state of affairs brought about by the deliberate policy of the British Government. How could they claim to be at the heart of Europe and the European Community when their decisions had destroyed a basic legal and constitutional principle of the European Community—that a single system of law should apply equally to all is citizens?

It appears inevitable that, at some stage, the opt-out will be challenged by the European Court of Justice. It follows from that—perhaps in the light of the Court's decision on the proposals for a European economic area—that the European Court of Justice will state that the opt-out cannot stand constitutionally. Therefore, either directly or indirectly, the United Kingdom will be forced to accept the social protocol and the social chapter. The social policy opt-out will then be revealed as no more than the cheap political fix that I described and not a negotiated triumph.

If the legal and constitutional arguments at the European level appear remote, similar issues undoubtedly apply in the context of our constitution. British citizens who work for Ford or ICI in this country will enjoy different standards of social policy protection from their continental counterparts who work for the same organisations elsewhere. Should a continental country fall short of the standards set out in a directive which passed under the social protocol, continental and Irish citizens will be able to appeal to their own courts and, ultimately, to the European Court of Justice. The same process will not be available to British citizens, who will be denied rights before the British courts and, ultimately, in European law, before the European Court of Justice. They will be denied basic rights available to every other citizen in the European Community.

That is why it is crucial for the House of Commons to signal clearly its determination to carry the Labour amendment. It requires the British Government to show their willingness to adopt the social protocol. Such a clear statement by the House of Commons appears, sadly, to have caused further constitutional difficulties for the Government. In the past few weeks we have seen a series of briefings and statements attributed to the usual anonymous Government sources suggesting that, even if the House of Commons recommends the adoption of the social protocol before ratification, the Government will ignore that recommendation.

In so doing, the Government would strike at the very heart of our unwritten constitution; they would strike at the basic principle set out by the leading constitutional authority, Professor Dicey. He said:

"The one essential principle of the constitution is obedience by all persons to the deliberately expressed will of the House of Commons in the first instance, and ultimately to the will of the nation as expressed through Parliament."

That applies to the Government, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and everyone else in this country who supports our constitution.

But the Government lawyers have apparently advised the Prime Minister that he can proceed to ratification whatever the view or opinion of the House of Commons. Not for the first time, the Government appear to be relying on conveniently timed legal advice to get them off the painful Maastricht hook. Such advice in only a partial account of a complicated legal picture.

It is clear that treaty-making in this country is subject to what is known as the Ponsonby rule—a practice introduced by a Labour Government in April 1924 to require the Government to lay treaties before Parliament for 21 days before they could be ratified. The primary purpose of that rule was to ensure publicity and to end any risk of a Government using the royal prerogative to conclude secret treaties. It may appear ironic that such a rule should apply to the Maastricht treaty, which has perhaps received more publicity than any other treaty in our history.

The Ponsonby rule is relevant because it has always been assumed that, during the 21 days, it would be open to

the House of Commons to object to a treaty, even though it had been made under the prerogative. That is the closest that the British constitution comes to the constitutional arrangements available in most other countries. Elsewhere, treaties can be ratified only after a parliamentary process which allows for a democratic vote either to approve or reject the treaties. In the past, Parliament has specifically been invited to approve important treaties such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in 1949 and the 1954 agreement, which brought Germany into NATO and the Western European Union.

It is inconceivable that the Government could have gone ahead without parliamentary support on those occasions. That reinforces the view that the ultimate purpose of the approach is to obtain the approval of Parliament for a treaty and that, without such specific approval, the Government of the day should not proceed to ratification.

The relevance of the Ponsonby rule to the Maastricht social chapter is clear. If Parliament has the power to approve or disapprove ratification of a treaty, it must have the power to approve ratification subject to a condition —in this case, the acceptance of the social chapter. That issue goes to the heart of our constitution. We have no written constitution against which the actions of our Government can be measured and, where appropriate, tested before the courts. In those circumstances, it has always been left to the good sense of Ministers to behave within the basic principles of our constitution—above all else, giving effect to the wishes of Parliament and the House of Commons. If our Government fail to follow that principle, our parliamentary democracy will be put at risk.

7.39 pm

Rev. Ian Paisley (Antrim, North): Yesterday Madam Speaker gave us a ruling. As an Ulsterman, I am glad that tonight I am speaking under the freedom of the Williamite revolution settlement. Some people in Northern Ireland will smile when they think of the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume) enjoying that liberty, too, under the Williamite revolution settlement. It puts this debate into a European context.

Those who oppose the Maastricht treaty cannot be blamed for the fact that this debate is taking place. A lot of blame has been spoken of, as though those who oppose the treaty are responsible for it. That is completely untrue and must be nailed immediately as a falsehood.

The Prime Minister is responsible for our being here tonight. When he could not manipulate a majority for the Bill when it was before the House, the Whips had the clever idea that a special provision should be included in the Bill: that the Act should come into force only when each House of Parliament had come to a resolution on a motion tabled by a Minister of the Crown concerning the adoption of the protocol on social policy.

We found next that the Government questioned the morality of those who voted against them. The Prime Minister and his Whips examined the souls of each Member going into the Lobby and said, "But he is going into the Lobby because he is against the treaty, not because he is against the social chapter, so he should not be included. That is not really a majority against us."

I have sat in this House for many years and have vigorously disagreed with various people. They, even more vigorously, disagreed with me, but we went into the same Lobby because of particular issues. No man has the right to say to a Member of this House, "You have no right to vote the way you intend to vote tonight because of certain things you dislike in an amendment." Those of us who are against the treaty have the right to say that the Act cannot come into force because each House has to come to a resolution. Do the Government think that those who oppose the treaty can be forced into the Lobby? Therefore, my colleague and I will vote against the treaty being implemented. That is why we are here.

Much has been said about the social chapter. It is a pity that more hon. Members were not in the Chamber to listen to the interesting speech of the right hon. Member for Bethnal Green and Stepney (Mr. Shore). Not one of the points that he made has been challenged. He explained just what the social chapter really means and what its limitations are. Many hon. Members would be far happier if there were many more safeguards for employees than those that are to be found in the social chapter, but that is not the issue that those who oppose the treaty are here for tonight.

People may say to us, "Why do you oppose the treaty?" We believe that it strikes at the very heart of our democracy. I am here tonight because the people of the south of Ireland said, in a referendum, "You must have the treaty." If they had said no, the treaty would have been killed. I am here tonight because the people of France voted in a referendum. The result was poor, but there was a majority for the treaty. They did not examine the morality of their souls. Their souls were all right, so long as they voted the right way. Denmark had a referendum. The people of Denmark voted against the treaty, so they had to have another chew at the cherry. They were given certain concessions.

That is why we are here tonight. Those who have taken part in the debates are entitled to take as long as they want to discuss this issue.

I do not agree that our House has been debased. I am a Member of the European Parliament. My European colleagues say, "That's a great Parliament you have over there. You really go into matters. In our local parliaments we would never be given the opportunity to examine Bills in the way that you examine them." So I think that this Parliament has enhanced itself. People realised that we were taking this issue seriously.

Under the Act that we were told by Madam Speaker is the foundation of Parliament's authority, the freedom of speech and debates and of proceedings in Parliament should not be impeached or questioned in any court or place outside Parliament. However, the long hand of the European Court comes into this nation. The long hand of the European Court says, "We don't like what you did at Westminster. We do not approve of what you are doing and we have the power not only to question but to overrule what you are doing." That is at the very heart of the argument.

If the people of the Republic of Ireland, France and Denmark had the right to say yea or nay to the treaty, the people of the United Kingdom should be given the same privilege and the same opportunity to say whether they want it or not.

I am afraid that fear of the people hangs over the Government. That is why they are not prepared to go to the people. I do not believe that they would get a majority. Therefore, they are using every means to oppose a

[Rev. Ian Paisley]

referendum. I, as a Member of this House, resent the fact that the Government have not told us what, if they do not get approval for their motion, they intend to do. They should be duty bound to say, "We cannot ratify." They should obey their own Act. If the Government are hoist by their own petard, there they will have to hang.

The Government have tried in many ways to flout the wishes of the House of Commons. It is all very well to talk about majorities at other stages of the Bill. I was here for the Second Reading of the original common market Bill. I know what happened. There was a tremendous fight in the House. I saw the then leader of the Liberal party beaten over the head by a Labour Member until he was nearly flattened into his seat. I was approached and offered all things by the Government, if I would change the way I voted. I was threatened that if I did not change the way I voted, the Government might resign and we might have a Labour Government. No Government could be more terrible for Northern Ireland than the Tory Government who brought in the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Even the Labour party could do no worse than that.

The Government have not approached me. I have no links with them. My party has a policy on this issue and we shall stand by it. I hope that tonight the Maastricht treaty will sink, not swim.

7.48 pm

Mr. John Hutton (Barrow and Furness): The hon. Member for Antrim, North (Rev. Ian Paisley) was right to say that we are having this debate because the Government themselves accepted the need for it. If the Government had felt that there was no need for it, they should have opposed the amendments at the time that they were proposed in Committee. It is utterly disingenuous, therefore, although typically in character, for the Government to claim that the debate is a red herring and that it is inappropriate for the House to discuss issues concerning the protocol on social policy.

My right hon. and hon. Friends and I do not take that view. It is entirely appropriate that Members of the House should have the opportunity to express their collective view and opinion about the merits, or otherwise, of the social protocol. It is one of the issues that we must discuss during this debate. Many hon. Members in all parts of the House have concentrated to a large extent on that issue, to which I shall return later.

The debate also raises other important issues. As my hon. Friend the Member for Ashfield (Mr. Hoon) said, one of those issues is the right and power of the House to assert its authority over the Executive. It is very important, especially after 14 years of one-party rule, that Members of Parliament assert their sovereignty and their right to tell the Executive that we have a collective opinion and that it is our opinion that counts. I am therefore astonished that the Prime Minister has felt unable to say that to the House and that he will not necessarily accept the view of the House of Commons. It raises profound constitutional issues relating to the sovereignty of Parliament and the rights of hon. Members.

Hon. Members are elected to speak on behalf of our constituents and, on occasions, to use our collective power to express our opinion to the Government of the day. We have a right to expect the Government of the day to honour a majority decision in the House.

My hon. Friend the Member for Ashfield also drew the House's attention to Professor Dicey's seminal work on constitutional law. It is a sign of the times that, when my right hon. and learned Friend the Leader of the Opposition referred to Professor Dicey earlier in the week, Conservative Members laughed. Clearly, they no longer read books. If they had read Professor Dicey's work, they would have understood exactly what my right hon. and learned Friend was saying. It is not appropriate for the Government of the day to refuse to accept the collective will and wisdom of the House of Commons.

There cannot be any doubt, in terms of the constitutional legality, that we have the right to direct the Government as to how they exercise the royal prerogative. It has been resolved in constitutional law and is not an issue. If, as I hope, the House expresses the wish that it wants the social protocol to form part of the Maastricht treaty, and for it then to be implemented in United Kingdom law, the Government are duty bound to accept it. In that sense, the will and authority of the House to exert its power over the Executive should perhaps be the issue that is uppermost on hon. Members' minds and the focus of our debate. I hope that we make that judgment later, not only for the substantive issues raised by the social protocol but for the status of the House.

The debate has rightly and perhaps inevitably focused on the merits or otherwise of the social protocol. I have listened to most of the contributions to the debate and have been dismayed by the lack of honesty revealed by Conservative Members. It is wholly bogus, and rather silly and sad, for Conservative Members to claim that the social protocol will somehow price British workers out of work. It is pathetic and absurd to hear them say that it is the Government's duty to protect British workers from the benefits of improved social and employment protection. There is no doubt that British workers need and deserve improved social and working conditions. The benefits of the social protocol are widely accepted around Europe by Governments of all political persuasions—Christian Democrat, Conservative, Liberal and Socialist; only this reactionary and rather bigoted Government have refused to accept the primary need for the protocol.

The case for the social protocol is simple. We all know that Europe is undergoing fundamental and profound changes. European business under the single European market and the convulsions that are taking place during the reorganisation of Europe's industrial base make the case strongly for a social dimension to accompany any changes. It is inappropriate for hon. Members to concentrate exclusively on the notion that Europe is all about markets. It is not only about markets; it is a community of people and the common interests of those people in making valuable and sustainable social progress. That is the case for the social protocol. It is regrettable that the case against it has been so flagrantly exaggerated and over-egged by Conservative Members.

The terms of the social protocol are elementary and straightforward. They offer basic employment protection measures which will improve the working environment of and the terms on which people are employed and will advance equality between the men and women who are in employment. It is distasteful that, in the last few years of the 20th century, the House still seems locked in the

Dickensian attitude that it is inappropriate for us to extend any measure that will improve the social and employment conditions of British workers. It is contemptible and those outside who are listening to our debate will also find it so.

We can conclude only that the social protocol has become a totem pole around which the Government are making their case in favour of the Maastricht treaty. The Government are telling the right wing of their party that they are standing firm against the European bureaucratic bandwagon whereas, in reality, they have already conceded huge chunks of sovereignty, jurisdiction and competence to the European Commission, rightly so in my opinion.

However, they are arguing simultaneously, that by accepting the Maastricht treaty, subject to the removal of the social protocol, they are remaining at the heart of Europe. That is not and cannot be true. We cannot be at the heart of Europe and go in the direction that the Community is taking when we have deliberately absented ourselves from matters relating to social policy, one of the key aspects of the Community's development in the 21st century.

It is naive for Conservative Members to pretend that the social protocol is out of date and represents yesterday's thinking. The right hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Howell) tried to create that impression, but, in fact, the social protocol is tomorrow's thinking. It is ridiculous for Conservative Members to continue to believe that social issues related to the construction of a new Europe are going to go away and that it is inappropriate for Members of the European Parliament, the Commission, the Council and the domestic Parliaments of member states to have a say in how social progress can be maintained and developed. The issue will not go away. If we are truly to play a full and integral role in the development of the Community in the coming years, we need to wake up to the reality.

My hon. Friend the Member for Ashfield raised interesting questions about the legality of Britain staying out of the social protocol. Such questions undermine the Government's case. There will be substantive legal difficulties ahead if the Government refuse to adopt and embrace the social protocol. I name only two.

First, will our continued opt-out be unconstitutional under the treaty of Rome because it offends the principle of non-discrimination against European Community workers? It will be a running battle that the Government will fight and lose, as they have always lost such battles. Secondly, there is a case for saying that the opt-out will infringe the treaty's provisions relating to competition policy. Again, it is naive of the Government to think that they can escape the looming legal battles. There will be arguments and I hope that, if we cannot persuade Conservative Members of the strength and logic of our case, they will at least be forced kicking and screaming, as they often are, into the right way of thinking by other member states.

There is something absurd about the notion that the Government are playing a full integral role in developing the shape of the Community. They are not. How can they argue that when, every time the social protocol surfaces in the Council of Ministers, Ministers representing the United Kingdom have to absent themselves from the proceedings? It is absurd.

The logic and strength of the case in favour of the social protocol is overwhelming and self-evident. It is only because of an outdated and clapped-out faith in their own argument that the Government manage to believe that they have won. In fact, they have lost the argument about the need for the social protocol. We have won it and I hope that, having won it, we shall go on to win the vote this evening.

7.58 pm

Mr. John Butcher (Coventry, South-West): I am grateful to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for allowing me the opportunity to explain my reasons for voting Aye in the first vote and for voting against the motion as amended in the second vote. I owe this explanation to my hon. Friends and, in particular, to my right hon. and true Friend the Prime Minister.

I make it clear that I have always believed that it is possible to be against the Maastricht treaty but in favour of a different and better Europe. I shared the dream that everyone had in the 1970s. I was assured that there would be no loss of sovereignty as we opted for a free trade area. I also shared the dreams of our fathers who said that they did not want their children to fight in another European war.

I assert those things tonight, too, but retrospection is a great harbinger of wisdom. I think that if we examine Europe's economic record we shall in time come to the view that the salad days of Europe, the days of great concepts and economic initiatives, were already coming to an end by about 1980. As our continent's competitiveness has fallen, our share of world exports has declined by one fifth since 1980. Worse, there is a widening deficit in high-technology goods—in semiconductors, for example, which are the building blocks of virtually every industrial and commercial process in the western world today. Between 1982 and 1990 high-tech exports from Europe went up by the tiny margin of 2 per cent., yet imports increased by 7·7 per cent. per year.

The worst factor of all, and that which we in the House dread most—the reason why, in terms of social policy, we are here—is the rate of employment in our country and in our continent. In western Europe, unemployment is now 10 per cent., in the United States it is 7 per cent. and in Japan 2·3 per cent.

I fear that, if the methodology and the psychology in the treaty are perpetuated, there will be an inexorable drift towards protectionism, probably with France in the vanguard, with allies in Spain and, if Germany's difficulties continue, perhaps with allies even there, too, in the medium term.

Mr. Roy Thomason (Bromsgrove): Will my hon. Friend give way?

Mr. Butcher: I shall not give way if there is still a 10-minute time limit on speeches. I do not know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the rule is still in force.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): The 10-minute rule no longer applies.

Mr. Thomason: Does my hon. Friend feel that in supporting the social contract he is doing anything for the people of Coventry and the rest of the west midlands, part of which I represent? By voting as he says he intends to vote, will he be doing anything for the industrialists who want to produce our goods in the most competitive way?

Mr. Butcher: The short answer to my hon. Friend's second question is yes. I grew up in the high-tech industries and I am proud of my continuing connections with them. If the 48-hour rule were brought in, it would not damage the so-called sweatshop industries as much as the high-tech industries. My hon. Friend would find that systems analysts, programmers, installation engineers and the people who commission huge electronic systems in our companies, who have to work all day and all night to tight deadlines, would be the class of people whose efficiency would be impaired.

I must also tell my hon. Friend that my vote tonight will not be in favour of the social chapter. My second vote will be against the social chapter; that is what the motions say, if we read them properly. I believe that in recording a vote against the social chapter I may do a little bit to delay the implementation of the treaty. If we do not want the social chapter, let us wipe the protocol out by wiping out the treaty. That protocol would advise the European Court of Justice on the ways in which it could bring in the social chapter by the back door to our industries and our companies, especially our high-tech manufacturing sector.

I have thought deeply both about the social chapter and about the future of the treaty itself. I am bound to say that there is a hint of arrogance in this Parliament. There is one French philosopher with whom I agree—a chap called Rousseau—who once said:

"the first prerequisite for learning is humility".

We must learn from our recent history. We must not assume that we in the House and in Europe are the sole controllers of events. Others have powerful views that contradict ours. If we do not mind their views and do not try to assess the future for Europe in the light of the consensus that will emerge there, we shall have failed ourselves, failed the House and perhaps failed the people of this country.

I believe that I have visited the heart of Europe. If we plot the geo-economic centre of Europe we find a little town that I know well, called Pirmasens. It is, literally, a small town in Germany. The people there do not hate the British, nor do they necessarily love us. I suppose that they get on with their own lives, and take notice of us only if we start to compete and to damage the competitiveness of their local companies. Their view of us can be summed up thus: "Where are your products?" That is their view of the British and that is the question that they ask.

I do not believe that the Maastricht treaty will deliver the level playing field that our successful industries require. I shall sit down later tonight having demonstrated that I am an optimist about our economic and industrial prospects. It is because I am an optimist that I do not want to see Europe dissolve into some dirigiste row, with the jockeying for position and the horse trading that takes place in a market that is no longer free.

The Germans have a concept that they give a typically German name—"das gesamtkonzept". Typically, they have a system and a methodology that they apply. Their political classes, using the gesamtkonzept, which is in contradiction to our own, say that there will be a federal Europe with strong systems. It will be interventionist and free trade will more or less govern its external relationships. The Gesamtkonzept holds stronger sway at the moment than does our concept of freely trading nations behind a common tariff barrier.

In France, too, there is a view described as "la préférence européene". That is an elegant phrase, but what it really means is protectionism and protectionism not only for France but for the continent as a whole, if it finds the competitive climate too difficult for it and can find no other means of protecting the well-being of the people of France. I fear that if Germany's economic and political difficulties continue, it may move from a camp more or less allied to ours over to the French position of la préférence européene.

In Spain, too, there is a concept called "la cohesion"—cohesion. The Spaniards speak for the poorer nations of southern Europe and they wish to see central funds directed towards those countries to make up for their inability to compete in truly open free trade. La cohesion means grants and handouts for the poorer countries. That is another concept against which our Prime Minister will have to struggle. But although those concepts are embraced by the political classes of Europe, they are not necessarily shared by the peoples of Europe. A recent huge Europewide Euro-barometer poll found that only two in five Europeans were positively in favour of Maastricht.

If we are to amend the treaty of Rome and the Single European Act—I am in favour of doing so—this is not the way to do it. Some of my hon. Friends who may not count themselves as cynics or sceptics may prefer the term Euro-realists. I ask them to examine the treaty, because large chunks of it could have been incorporated into the Labour party manifesto at the general election and we would have fought it tooth and nail. We live in strange times.

Tonight there will be many ghosts in the Division Lobby, some friendly but some, shall we say, atavistic in their attitude to life. I believe that if events in Germany and Britain unhinge the Maastricht treaty there will be a rethink about how to amend those two earlier treaties. There will be, dare I say, a fresh start.

We should not be so unambitious as to believe that, if we voted against the treaty, we should somehow be sidelined. We will provoke a rethink. The terms under which all nations agreed to ratify the treaty were that, if one country, perhaps Germany—and, of course, no longer Denmark or Britain—were to go against the general trend, they would have to go back to the drawing board. That would be no bad thing given the figures that I outlined earlier.

However, I return to the ghosts and to my difficulty in saying to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister that I remain his hon. Friend in every sense of the word. I ask him and the House to consider who will be in the Division Lobby with us tonight. The ghosts of past Europeans will be there.

My Conservative Friends will be sharing the No Lobby with the ghost of Colbert, the man who invented the methodology of the Maastricht treaty all those centuries ago. They will be sharing that Lobby with the rather clammy ghost of Richelieu, the man who thought that he could be the great arbiter of things European, but who ultimately failed. Perhaps we see his reincarnation in today's French President. They will also be sharing that Lobby with the ghost of Bismarck. As I am an admirer of A. J. P. Taylor's history, I ask all my hon. Friends to reread their dusty university books which were written by A. J. P. Taylor.

Bismarck knew that, when he created the Zollverein, that was the beginning of a political union. However, he did that for his country and his countrymen to unite the various German peoples. We want a Zollverein in Europe,

but we do not want a Europe united in the way that Bismark envisaged. In due course, nor will the German people.

As I share the Lobby with the live bodies of many Labour Members, I will comfort myself with the thought that there will be two ghosts with me. One will be the greatest Scotsman who ever lived. He was a man who won all the arguments and wrote in elegant prose. Although he is accepted throughout the world, he is still a prophet who has not been accepted in his own country. I am referring of course, to Adam Smith, who wrote "The Wealth of Nations". The title referred to the plural—to "nations", not to a single "nation". I hope that he will pat me on the back as I walk through to record my vote tonight.

I pay tribute to another ghost who will be with me tonight—an Anglo-Irishman called Edmund Burke. As I put my head on my pillow tonight, I will say to him, "I did my little bit when they tried to put the lights out," and I shall sleep well.

8.12 pm

Mr. Peter Mandelson (Hartlepool): I do not share the judgment of the hon. Member for Coventry, South-West (Mr. Butcher) about the Maastricht treaty, nor do I share in his eulogy to Adam Smith. However, we can all agree that the hon. Gentleman spoke with great sincerity and honesty as he expressed his views tonight. I pay him that tribute.

However, the speech of the hon. Member for Coventry, South-West marked him out from the contributions made by many of his hon. Friends. In particular, his speech marked him out in respect of that made by the Prime Minister, who showed himself utterly contemptuous of public opinion.

It is worth remembering that public opinion, by any measure of that opinion, is overwhelmingly in favour of the social protection, measures and benefits set in the social chapter. The Prime Minister showed himself to be almost as contemptuous of public opinion as he seems to be in danger of being in respect of parliamentary sovereignty and of our will tonight. That remains to be seen.

The Prime Minister's speech also revealed his abject lack of vision about Europe's future development. His speech was more barren and shallow than the kind of vision that we used to hear from Mrs. Thatcher. At least she had an idea of what she wanted to do in Europe. She at least had an idea about her destination, even though I and many of my hon. Friends profoundly disagreed with it. On the basis of his speech this afternoon, the same cannot be said of the present Prime Minister.

Probably the most important point to be revealed in the speeches made so far by Conservative Members relates to their views on the long-term future of the British economy and how we are to succeed in building real economic strength. Conservative Members are profoundly out of touch with reality, so much so that it is hard to believe that many of them speak to people who work in business or industry. It is hard to imagine that they even bother to read the many reports produced by Government Departments.

Did not the Department of Trade and Industry's competitiveness unit reveal only last week that our competitive position is so weak that Britain is now 18th of 24 countries in terms of national income per head? We are behind Finland, Iceland and Italy. We are falling to the levels of Spain and Portugal in many of the ways, and for many of the reasons, described by the hon. Member for Coventry, South-West. We are so unproductive that, according to a survey carried out by the London Business School and IBM, only 2 per cent. of United Kingdom companies achieve world-class standards of performance.

Yet the Prime Minister's argument against the social chapter today was that we are doing so well that we must not spoil our success by implementing the social chapter. He said that the social chapter would somehow ruin all the Government's good work in sorting out the problems of British manufacturing.

Given the relative industrial performance of Britain in relation to other EC member states, does not the Prime Minister think that there is a lesson that we can learn from the fact that the more successful countries have embraced the social chapter and have been practising its ideas and methods of social support and protection for many years? In contrast, over the bulk of the past decade, we in this country have been experiencing a laboratory-controlled experiment of a labour market operating without rules. If the Government's case was right and lack of employment rights and standards produced greater or equal success, we should be economically booming by now. Manifestly, we are not.

Whatever incipient recovery may be beginning now, during the years of Britain's deregulated labour market, we have had the highest rising unemployment, the lowest levels of investment and the lowest growth anywhere in Europe. That is the testimony to the Government's failed policies for industry, in relation to employment and at the workplace. That is why the Government's approach to the social chapter and all its provisions is so wrong.

Mr. Andrew Rowe (Mid-Kent): The hon. Gentleman's points are very interesting. Very close to my constituency, a port is rapidly growing which will be the second largest container port in Britain. That port will compete with Rotterdam. That investment was impossible to make while the dock labour scheme existed. Much of that kind of investment was chocked off by socialist proposals which it took a long time to get rid of under this Government.

Mr. Mandelson: I congratulate the hon. Gentleman on the success of his constituents in attracting that investment. However, I hope that he is not suggesting that the national dock labour scheme is among the horrors, in the hon. Gentleman's terms, which are threatening to return to this country as a result of the social chapter. That is not the case, like so much else that Conservative Members claim.

Mr. Marlow: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Mandelson: In a moment.

The hon. Member for Mid-Kent (Mr. Rowe) has come in right on cue, because it suits the Government's case to exaggerate widly and to falsify the consequences of adopting the social chapter. At one time, Ministers said time and again that the social chapter would wipe out 750,000—they then changed it to 500,000—jobs at a stroke. They even claimed that 300,000 boys and girls would no longer be able to deliver newspapers as a result of the introduction of the social chapter in this country.

Their arguments became so ridiculous that at times our very future as a trading nation, not to mention the future

[Mr. Mandelson]

of western civilisation as we knew it, seemed to be at stake. How expedient and convenient it has been throughout all the hyperbole that has been——

Mr. Marlow: Is not the real answer to the question of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid-Kent (Mr. Rowe) that if we are concerned about the social chapter—the point was made by the leader of the Liberal Democrats—if we are there, we can prevent what we might think are dreadful things from happening, but if we are not there they will happen, because they will be decided by the other 11 and be forced on us by other parts of the treaty?

Mr. Mandelson: The hon. Gentleman makes a good point. He will acknowledge that other treaty provisions are already in place which will enable those measures to be introduced via other routes.

It is very important to nail again many of the lies that have come—no doubt unwittingly—from Conservative Members tonight. An enormous amount of disinformation is purposely being pumped out by the Government—aided and abetted, I am sorry to say, by branches of the media, including the BBC in recent days.

The social chapter is a framework of ideas and goals. It is not a set of detailed obligatory rules. That is its advantage over the original social charter and the social action programme. The social chapter has had built into it the very flexibility and principles of subsidiarity which are apparently so favoured by the Government. The social chapter explicitly says that national laws and practices must be respected in applying the social chapter, particularly in respect of contractual relationships. It cannot be used in any way connected with laws relating to strikes and unions, despite what we have heard from many Conservative Members.

The fact that the hon. Member for Northampton, North (Mr. Marlow) and I have mentioned—I stress it again following my response to him—is that the treaty of Rome and the Single European Act, regardless of the Maastricht treaty, have articles which present a series of open doors through which the social chapter's intentions can and will be implemented in this country. Whatever the outcome of our vote on the social chapter and the Maastricht treaty, the treaty of Rome and the Single European Act, all the relevant articles are already in place, agreed by Ministers in the previous Government under Mrs. Thatcher and under the present Prime Minister.

The crucial difference, however, is that, without our signing up to the social chapter, Britain will not be able to influence the implementation of the social chapter in this country. We shall not be at the table to determine how, when and on what terms the social chapter will be implemented if we continue this futile and self-defeating opt-out. What on earth could possibly be the sense of that?

Of all the baseless arguments that I have heard, not only in this debate but throughout the Committee proceedings in which I was an active participant, probably the least defensible is the claim by some that, by adopting the social chapter, we shall harm inward investment. What frightens business people looking to locate in Britain is not that we might start to act and perform like the rest of Europe, but that we are so far on the fringe of Europe that we are becoming too little part of Europe. That is what frightens potential inward investors from Japan who want to invest in Europe and in Britain. They want to invest in a Britain which is clearly part of the wider European Community.

What will put off potential inward investors is not that we observe elementary standards of social protection and benefits but that we fail abysmally to invest in the skills, talents and motivation of our work force. In the north-east, we have attracted Nissan and Fujitsu, and Stadium in my constituency, not because those companies are looking for a downtrodden, exploited, untrained, low-wage work force, but because they take seriously the need to put a lot into their work force if they are to get high motivation, high productivity and high skill back.

That is precisely the philosophy at the heart of the social chapter. The Government are grossly out of step and out of tune in rejecting it. They are out of step not least with business people in this country as well as potential inward investors.

Sir Teddy Taylor: Does the hon. Gentleman agree that one of the reasons why those wonderful Japanese companies came to Britain was because, if they did not come, the EC would deliberately make it more and more difficult for Japanese cars to come into this country? Although we welcome them, let us not forget that one reason why they came was that the EC is becoming more protectionist every day and it was keeping out Japanese cars and restricting the numbers more and more.

Mr. Mandelson: If that is true, it is precisely why we should continue to be a full and active participant in the European Community.

The industrial culture that I have described and the resulting enterprise that we need are absolutely vital if we are to succeed economically in Britain. That is how others have done it and are doing it in Europe and also in many emerging economies. People often describe the emerging economies of Asia, the Pacific rim and the far east as though they were mere sweatshop economies employing sweatshop labour. In fact, many of those countries are investing hugely in the education, training and development of their work forces.

That is what is so vital to success in the modern world, and that is what we must do if we are to get ahead and prosper again. That is why Labour's amendment should be strongly supported in the Lobby tonight.

8.27 pm

Mr. Michael Lord (Suffolk, Central): Much has happened since the paving debate in the autumn that created such a close finish in the voting. Tonight I have heard many of the arguments that were deployed then. I particularly enjoyed the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, South-West (Mr. Butcher). He spoke very well, and made some tremendous contributions to the debate. I shall not be with him in the Lobby tonight, but I think that he and I have thought very much along the same lines during most of these difficult months.

I have sat through almost all the debates in the House and in Committee, and I have made the odd contribution. No one is more opposed to the concept of the Maastricht treaty than I am, and no one is keener on the idea of a referendum. I believe that to impose this treaty on the people of this country without asking them first whether

they want this amount of power transferred from this House of Commons is something that we shall all live to regret.

In the referendum debate, I said that I believed that my vote that night would probably be the most important vote that I would ever cast as long as I was a Member of the House of Commons. I still believe that, no matter how important the vote tonight. I believe that my vote that night on a referendum to ask the British people about what we are doing was probably the most important vote that I would ever cast. So it is with enormous sadness that I am reluctantly forced to accept that the Bill for the Maastricht treaty has received Royal Assent and is now an Act. In fact, it has now received Royal Assent and is an Act.

I also believe very much that the social chapter issue is a separate matter altogether. I appreciate that, in terms of tonight's debate, it is linked to the Bill, but, if we are all honest with ourselves, there are two fundamentally separate issues before us. One is the Maastricht treaty and the other is the social chapter.

I simply cannot bring myself to vote for the social chapter, no matter how much of a purely political device it may be. Despite all that has been said tonight, I believe that it will damage British industry. It is clear from the debate that the social chapter, like so many of these things, can mean to any one of us what we want it to mean. Some people think that it is the end of the world; some people think that it is so trivial that they do not know why we are bothering with it. But I believe that it will have an influence on business life in this country.

This is one of the problems with the whole European idea. Some countries that have developed their industrial systems over centuries, whose industrial relations have been built up over a long time, all in individual and separate ways; and suddenly it is proposed that a uniform framework should be planted on all 12 nations. I cannot see how that can fail to bring in restrictions and create a great deal of harm. In an earlier intervention, I mentioned the effect that it would have on companies such as ICI in my constituency. I really believe that it will be damaging if we vote for the social chapter.

Apart from that, we may think tonight that it is only a technicality, but we must remember the signals that that gives to people both in our own country and in the rest of Europe. There is no doubt at all that, when the dust settles, a vote for the social chapter here tonight will be seen as just that. We may try to explain that we hoped that something else would result, and that, as a result of that result, yet something else would happen. But it gets very convoluted and, if we are not careful, we will lose ourselves in the maze of technicalities.

I have thought very carefully about what this vote would mean, and I believe that it would be a vote for the social chapter. I believe that that is how my constituents, and indeed most of the country, would see it, and I am not prepared to go down that road.

I have sought to impede as much as possible the passage of the Maastricht treaty Bill through this House, but I honestly do not believe that voting for the social chapter will do any particular damage to the Maastricht treaty. I believe that, very sadly, as I have said, it will now be ratified. I believe that a vote for the social chapter tonight would do a great deal of damage both to our Prime Minister and to our Government. I really believe that, and it is time that the House acknowledged it.

I will not urge colleagues to follow my example in the Lobbies; there has been far too much urging of one kind or another over recent months. They obviously must, and will, decide for themselves what they will do. But I am quite sure that the European issue will not go away. There will be other battles to be fought, and I very much hope that on this side of the House we will fight them as a more *united party*.

I believe that my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, South-West is right: many things are happening in Europe, and we will see great changes. He used the words "fresh start". I believe that a huge rethink is needed, and I hope that, as a country and as a party, we will take the lead in that fresh thinking.

One national newspaper started one of its articles today with the simple words:

"It is time to start talking about things other than Maastricht."

I believe that to be true. Huge problems face both our country and the world at the moment. We must, as a Government, get on with them. To prolong this process further will not merely damage the Government more, but damage its ability to govern.

That is why I shall support the Government in the Lobby tonight against the social chapter.

8.33 pm

Mr. Frank Cook (Stockton, North): I have sat throughout the debate and listened intently to all the contributions. I have scribbled a few notes, and I would like to give the House the benefit of them this evening.

I speak as one who campaigned to come out of the Common Market at the time of the national referendum, but also as someone who realised over the years that it was unrealistic to maintain that stance. We have been in too long, and we have become embedded too deeply, to change now.

I suppose, too, that I was attracted by the improved conditions common throughout Europe that appear to be beneficial to European citizens. I visited Holland and Germany. I appreciated the measurably higher standards of living in those two countries, which their citizens attributed to membership of the European Community, and I thought that perhaps we could get a piece of that improvement here.

When we talk about the Common Market, what does "common" mean? We, of all hon. Members, ought to appreciate that it means equal. We insist on equality, do we not? We refer to it, with regard to Europe, as a level playing field—level in terms of trade, commerce and marketing—but if a level playing field is desirable for the captains of industry, why do we reject it for the players on the field? Why do we penalise the people who invest their whole lives in the industry of this country and create the wealth of the nation?

The social chapter is not the final imposition of on-costs that the Government imply. The majority of respected companies in the United Kingdom already provide standards of pay, conditions and protection that clearly exceed European requirements, so what threat is there to companies such as ICI in my constituency?

We have just heard the hon. Member for Suffolk, Central (Mr. Lord) pleading the case for ICI and talking about the threat that the social protocol would pose to that corporation. I did not see the same hon. Member in the vanguard protecting ICI from the threats of a noble Lord

[Mr. Frank Cook]

in the other place when he was trying to buy up shares in that corporation. Now, for some reason, he seems to think that the social protocol would be a great threat to it. I know ICI as well as anybody, and its standards already exceed any requirement that the social protocol would impose.

The Prime Minister went further. He quoted Sir Denys Henderson as saying that Her Majesty's Government should ratify the treaty. I can accept that, but he then went on to report that Sir Denys said:

"Equally important, the Prime Minister should sustain the opt-out from the social chapter which he gained last year."

That, I am afraid, I cannot swallow. I cannot believe that Sir Denys could be so incredibly callow, and I will tell the House why.

ICI already operates throughout Europe in numerous countries. I cannot believe that Sir Denys would paint himself into a corner by seeking an environment in which he could deliver his British work force conditions substantially poorer than those that he was required to provide in other European states. It just does not make sense. I do not believe that Sir Denys would be so stupid as to provoke his British work force by making such a crass comment. But I shall find out, and I can promise the House that so will his work force, because I shall see that they do.

Since the Prime Minister is so keen to quote Sir Denys Henderson, he might like to note the same gentleman's assessment of the annual cost to his corporation of European transactions—not the amount of trade, not the value of sales, but the simple cost of changing money to make commercial transactions possible. Sir Denys estimated, 15 months ago, that the annual figure stood at £90 million: an annual added on cost of £90 million, without any kind of ensuing production promise. What price a single European currency under those conditions?

My right hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green and Stepney (Mr. Shore) asserts that the added costs of the social protocol are minuscule. The Government disagree, and say that the added costs are prohibitive. If the Government are right, the European transnationals will have one level of on-costs in this country and another for operations elsewhere throughout Europe. That is not a saving; it is a recipe for industrial unrest for all European transnationals throughout the United Kingdom.

The Prime Minister said that membership of the common agricultural policy would enable us to work for change from within, yet he rejects the same logic with regard to the social chapter. Does that mean that he will be content to stay outside discussions, or does he expect his European counterparts to allow him to contribute like some cuckoo in the nest? What price the Common Market then?

This week, two reports have highlighted the widening gap between the rich and the poor in the United Kingdom. The opt-out promotes a climate that will cause that gap to widen even further. The Government's unheeding, doctrinaire proposals have become a party fetish, a sightless totem clearly displaying their readiness—no, their eagerness—to put profit before people.

Their objective seems to be simply a penny-pinching, cost-cutting sweatshop economy. Their attitude is that British workers should be worked long and hard, sold cheap, and employed in dangerous conditions. The people of this country will never forgive such disloyalty, nor should they ever forget it.

8.40 pm

Sir Anthony Grant (Cambridgeshire, South-West): Hon. Members have stated their positions, so I should say immediately that I am not a Euro-sceptic or a Euro-fanatic. However, I was perhaps one of the earliest Euro-sceptics—I hereby make my confession—because, as long ago as 1961, at the Conservative party conference, I made an important speech against our entry into the Common Market: I was pulled up short by a most powerful speech in favour of our entry from none other than my right hon. Friend the Member for Shropshire, North (Mr. Biffen). He was so persuasive that I was largely converted by the speech. It would be presumptuous of me to suggest that my speech had the reverse effect on him.

At that time, I argued the old-fashioned case for the Commonwealth. That was before Mr. Enoch Powell described the Commonwealth as having

"nothing in common and very little wealth".

I did not go as far as that, but I recognised that it had long since gone as an alternative to the European Community. I did not believe that we should retire into our shell. I was entirely opposed to the parish-pump, little-England nationalism that we heard in those days. Since my conversion on the road to Damascus—perhaps I should say on the road to the conference centre in Brighton—I have constantly supported our membership of the Community.

In that speech, I certainly opposed federalism, and I still do. I do not envisage a united states of Europe, nor does my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, as he has made clear repeatedly. However, we want to influence the development of Europe. In that powerful speech so long ago, my right hon. Friend the Member for Shropshire, North said:

"If we go into Europe, it is not in the spirit of defeat, despair or disillusionment. It is in the determination to lead and to form and to shape the policies of a really strong and resourceful West."

Those are fine words, which I wholly endorse today, even if my right hon. Friend does not.

We shape such policies by working with allies in the European Community and playing in the team, not squawking on the touchline. Some say, thus far and no further. That is to treat the Community as a dead thing. It certainly is not a dead thing: it is a live and moving organism. It brings forward or moves back. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister wants it to move forward, but in the right direction. That is why he negotiated so skilfully and successfully at Maastricht, avoiding some of the nonsense that prevailed at that time.

One such nonsense is the issue that concerns us tonight—the social chapter. For years, I have been concerned about unemployment. When I was in the Government, unemployment in this country rose to 1 million, and all hell was let loose. We then took certain initiatives and it went down to 700,000—we are still cursed about that. We then lost office, and it went up again under the succeeding Labour Government, as it inevitably does.

Unemployment is one of the greatest curses on our country and it will continue. It is a problem in the whole of Europe and, indeed, in many other parts of the world. It will not be solved by the expansion of great companies.

because so many of them have adapted their affairs and made structural changes. The only way to solve unemployment is through the growth of small and medium-sized firms in Britain and Europe.

Small firms have always been a cause dear to my heart. It seems absolutely ridiculous and wholly contrary to the battle to reduce unemployment to put further burdens on them. We should be reducing the burdens on people who are expanding their firms, rather than putting more burdens on them.

Although Labour Members may argue that it is not as bad as all that, the plain fact is that people who run those firms and those who work to make them develop believe that we should not impose on them the burden of the social chapter. That is the basic economic reason why it is right —and the Prime Minister was absolutely right—to opt out of the social chapter.

Sir Russell Johnston: The small and medium-sized firms about which the hon. Gentleman is rightly concerned are specifically excluded from the operation of the social chapter.

Sir Anthony Grant: The whole point is that small firms do not stay small; they grow and develop, and must take on more employees. The undesirability of the social chapter was well illustrated by the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown), who said that the social chapter provides for an expansion of treaty-based Community competence into areas of wage bargaining and social security that should rightly remain with member states or individual firms and citizens. I entirely agree. The right hon. Gentleman said that after the Prime Minister negotiated the treaty, so I cannot understand why he is now standing on his head.

The Confederation of Business Industry made its position clear when it said:

"Good employee involvement, for example, is the product of the individual company, the individual workplace—not of EC directives."

The decision to reject the social chapter is absolutely right, and should be supported tonight.

People are immensely bored with our activities in the House, and the rest of the world is completely mystified. People want us to get on with restoring our economy and our prosperity. They want us to deal with matters such as the reform of our criminal justice system. They know that this issue has been debated almost interminably. It has been voted on repeatedly and has always been passed by this House and another place.

People regard the court case that is taking place as absolutely preposterous, as I do. In my parliamentary life, I have always opposed most strongly Parliament interfering with the work of the courts. It is equally preposterous that the courts should interfere with the workings of Parliament, so I disregard that ludicrous performance.

My hon. Friends who are sceptics and rebels are my hon. Friends, and will remain so in every way. They have shown considerable courage, and I respect them greatly for that. Although my hon. Friend the Member for Suffolk, Central (Mr. Lord) is right and my hon. Friend the Member for Coventry, South-West (Mr. Butcher) is wrong, I respect them for their views and the courage that they have shown.

However, they have been fighting past battles. In 1972, we had a great battle over entry into the Common Market. We had a tremendous battle over the Single European Act, which was whipped through the House with great ferocity. Those are past battles.

We have had endless debates on the Maastricht treaty, but now the battles are over. Despite the courage of my hon. Friends, I would ask them not to fight this fight. They should not repeat Custer's last stand—we all know what happened to him. We do not want Cash's last stand to take place.

Before my hon. Friends decide to vote with the Labour party, they should reflect on my final observation. I suppose that I am one of the few hon. Members who is old enough to have just known action in the far east at the tail end of the war. The House will recall that everyone admired the immense courage of the kamikaze pilots. I do not recall, however, that, in any of their exploits, kamikaze pilots crashed themselves into their own ships.

8.50 pm

Mr. Harry Barnes (Derbyshire, North-East): Our role in this House is essentially to enact social provision. We may have different views about how that should be done and how wealth should be created and distributed, but the condition of the people is, or should be, our prime concern, because we represent the people. The policies we adopt should reflect that responsibility.

As a number of hon. Members have pointed out, the problem with the social protocol is that its areas of responsibility are limited. We should not have any illusions about it being the means by which a great deal of social provision can be enacted. At best, that protocol is like a set of hooks, on which we can hang different forms of social provision. We must, however, obtain the agreed regulations and directives from the various insititutions of the European Community to hang upon those hooks. That prototocol does not instigate a programme of massive social reform and improvement. I wish that it did.

The Prime Minister has said that the social chapter is a tool for socialism. I rather favour socialism, and I am all for the means by which socialist ideas could be expounded and social provision made. The social chapter is not, however, an encyclical written by Karl Marx. We are not trying to get in on the act, because the social protocol is subject to many limitations.

As the hon. Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) said, even if we opt out, there is sufficient in the Maastricht treaty to achieve the things that are laid down within the social protocol. That may not be done as easily and as readily as it would be if the social chapter was in place, but we know that the EC is an ever-changing institution. It will grow and develop because of the Maastricht treaty, and its competence will extend considerably to cover social provision.

The opt-out is likely to run up against other provisions of the treaty of Rome and the Maastricht treaty. Article 101 of the treaty of Rome may be used to contain the operation of the opt-out. If the opt-out did work, however, and if it had some fantastic impact—after all, we are talking about a significant piece of legislation—I do not believe that it would save jobs. I believe that it would have the opposite effect.

We must consider how multinationals will operate in the future. If we choose to opt out of the social chapter, those multinationals that must occasionally rationalise their activities will choose to do so in the United Kingdom.

[Mr. Harry Barnes]

It will be easier for them to do so because, in other European countries, the social provisions of the social chapter will hem in the way in which capital can act and work.

I do not believe that the Maastricht treaty represents the best means of extending social provision. The best way in which to do that is through the development of democracy—to follow the pattern established in the House. Various people have fought for democratic provisions. A statue in the Members Lobby commemorates Disraeli, who was involved in the introduction of the Reform Act 1867. Shortly after that, under a new Parliament, Forster's Education Act of 1870 initiated the general provision of education. Forster said that it was time to educate the masters, because the people had begun to have a say and a vote.

Another statue in the Members Lobby commemorates Lloyd George, who introduced the people's Budgets of 1909 and 1910, and pension provisions. A statue of Attlee is also out in the Lobby; the welfare state was established when he was Prime Minister of the 1945-51 Labour Government.

Once people have been given democratic provisions, they can use them to press for social provisions. We need arrangements in Europe to extend democratic provision. We need to abandon Maastricht and go back to the drawing board. We need to put in place a fully fledged, federal, democratic system, because that will enable legislation on social welfare and social provision to be introduced.

The Maastricht treaty will lead us towards bureaucratic centralism and will develop still further the institutions of the Community. Many of them operate secretly. The procedures of the Council of Ministers are still not open to scrutiny. The real parliament that exists within the Community is the Council of Ministers, but its meetings are held in secret. We are provided with no decent details of its voting record. Those details are beginning to be nudged out in this Parliament because I have pursued a campaign to obtain that information from parliamentary questions.

Within the Community, there is no means by which the European Parliament can learn about the votes within the Council of Ministers. The Edinburgh summit was supposed to represent a great advance in democratic accountability, but it has not meant that the key institution of the Community, the Council of Ministers, is now open to scrutiny. Subsidiarity has done nothing to break the centralising nature of the Maastricht treaty.

If the opt-out provisions work—I do not believe that they are significant enough to work—they would hit the island of Ireland hard. Northern Ireland would be subject to the opt-out, but Ireland would be subject to subsequent social provisions. How does that affect the supposed arrangements under Anglo-Irish provisions that say that there should be some common developments in that area? Northern Ireland has been used in a quite outrageous way in tonight's debate. Things that involve Northern Ireland have nothing to do with Maastricht.

The hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume) argued some of those points, but time is running out, and I know that other hon. Members wish to speak. I feel strongly that, whether talking of Select Committees, improved procedures or proper local government, Northern Ireland should be dealt with in its own right and there should be no attempt to use Northern Irish Members as Lobby fodder in the debate.

8.59 pm

Mr. Andrew Rowe (Mid-Kent): Since we all begin with confessions, I am a Conservative who is not as anxious about the social protocol as some of my colleagues. I would certainly prefer to have the Maastricht treaty with the social chapter than to have no Maastricht treaty at all, but that is not the real point. In politics, important messages must often be reduced to simple terms if they are to get through at all. The message that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister and his colleagues have sought to get through is that the European Community is already dangerously uncompetitive, but I shall return to that.

Through a long succession of debates and eventual success of negotiations, my right hon. Friend secured a complete reversal of the European Community's attitudes towards competition and its own competitiveness.

Last summer, I went to Bordeaux to meet a French politician and friend. When I got there, I discovered, to my amazement, that he was helping to organise the no vote in the French referendum. He was totally clear why he was doing so. As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister had achieved a much better deal for the United Kingdom than the French negotiators had achieved for France, my friend was determined to shipwreck the entire treaty to try to regain the competitive position that he felt France had lost.

In one sense, it hardly matters how the vote goes tonight, because the European Community has so absorbed the message that my right hon. Friend was trying to get across that, even if the social chapter were to be incorporated into United Kingdom legislation, the European Community would be wary about imposing most of the obligations under the social chapter, for fear of losing out to the rest of the world.

We are indeed uncompetitive. One of the most striking features of the debate is that little has been made of the extraordinary rise in the competitiveness of the Asian-Pacific rim, to name but one section of the world. The growth of the European Community and its share of visible exports is shrinking, and we are outpaced by China, Malaysia and other Asian-Pacific nations.

It is rich of the Labour party to berate the Government for having such enormous unemployment. All of us are distressed by that, but how does the Labour party explain the fact that, of all the countries in the European Community, ours has the second highest percentage of its working-age population in employment?

It is rich of the Labour party to berate us for low productivity and low investment. As I pointed out in an intervention, it is exactly because of the legacy of the socialist Government that such things as the dock labour scheme—which took many years finally to eradicate—totally discouraged the sort of investment which Labour now blames us for not having increased more quickly.

I was delighted to hear the Leader of the Opposition make it so clear that he has totally reversed the Labour party's attitudes to alien employers. Indeed, I am struck by

the fact that the Japanese, whom he was so keen to praise, have made it clear that they are not prepared to accept the traditional attitudes to unions in the workplace.

I share the view held by many Opposition Members and by many of my hon. Friends that the United Kingdom's future does not lie in being a low-wage economy. Just as I believe that the United Kingdom should welcome the move away from national wage bargaining within this country, so I believe that it is barmy to try to determine centrally in the European Community the conditions of employment in all the countries of the Community.

The ratios of wage-related costs are as follows: in Germany, the figure is approximately 50, in the United Kingdom, the figure is 30, and in China, the figure is five. That is such a huge difference that United Kingdom employers will be bound to take much of their manufacturing work abroad. They will export British jobs to keep British firms in business.

We need high-tech, high-skill employment. That is why I welcome the fact that, in the past five years, there has been an increase in the British work force of over 2 million people who have an A-level or equivalent. I am delighted that the Department of Education has set a target that one third of 18-year-olds should be in higher education in the year 2000.

If we secure an economy of high-skill and high-tech employment, it is inconceivable that employers, whether large or small, will be able to compete with one another for rare skills by driving down the levels of working conditions. It is perfectly clear that, in such an economy, employers will find themselves, through force of competition, driving up the levels of conditions without any imposition from the European Community.

I accept that there will be fierce arguments within the European Community, for as far ahead as any of of us in the Chamber can see, on organisation, on policies and on the aspirations of the European Community. After all—none of its members is present in the Chamber at the moment—there are fierce arguments between the Scottish National party and the rest of the United Kingdom, despite almost 300 years of the Union of the Crowns.

The competition between different parts of the United Kingdom can hardly have been better illustrated than by the recent argument between Devonport and Rosyth. The European Community will never become the Community that we want it to be unless arguments between different parts of the Community are conducted in the spirit in which we have arguments within the United Kingdom.

I remain convinced that the outcome of such debates will be infinitely preferable to the ways in which we resolved our disputes throughout this century. We were reminded earlier that, throughout this century, we have tried to resolve disputes between different parts of what is now the Europen Community by plunging the whole world into war. I strongly believe that the Government are right in their view, and I am happy to vote with them this evening.

9.8 pm

Mr. Giles Radice (Durham, North): This afternoon, the Prime Minister staked his future and the Government's future on the social opt-out. I suspect that he is staking his future on something that few have read. When we debated the social opt-out in Committee, I read out the social protocol. Conservative Members looked at me with astonishment because none of them had understood what was in it. It is an extremely mild declaration of principles and it lays down a mechanism by which those principles can be achieved. The main advance of the measure is that it extends majority voting beyond health and safety to working conditions, the information and consultation of workers, equal opportunities and integration of persons excluded from the labour market. How many Conservative Members are against those things? I suspect that the answer is, not many. At least, they are not saying that to their constituents.

The measure also gives the EC competence in social security, in social protection and in other areas. But those areas are subject to veto and the issues of pay, the right of association, the right to strike, the right to impose lock-outs are specifically excluded from the social protocol. Article 2 says that directives must take into account the needs of small and medium-sized businesses. It says also that the measures must take account of the different forms of national employment practices and the need to maintain the competitiveness of the EC economy.

The document is mild, and the economic arguments against it are thin indeed. The arguments are purely political. The social opt-out exists because it was used to buy the support of the Thatcherites at the time of Maastricht. The Conservative Government were offered a weaker version and, because of the pressure from the former Secretary of State for Employment, did not take the opportunity. As a result of that decision, we are where we are today.

The Prime Minister says that there is not a majority for the social protocol. I believe that he is wrong—there is a majority. There are many Conservative Members, including the hon. Member for Mid-Kent (Mr. Rowe), who are in favour of the social protocol. There are other Conservative Members who would support the protocol, rather than see ratification blocked.

If the Labour amendment is carried, and if the amended motion is carried tonight, the Government should accept the decision. They cannot hide behind the outdated doctrine of the royal prerogative. Parliament's will should prevail. I support ratification and the social protocol, and I hope that tonight we will achieve it.

9.13 pm

Dr. John Cunningham (Copeland): I should begin by apologising to the House for the state of my voice, from which it will be obvious that I will not be shouting in the debate. In view of the treatment that was given to my right hon. and learned Friend the Leader of the Opposition during his speech, however, I will not be shouted down.

The debate has taken place exactly because of the success of the Labour party in securing the inclusion of section 7 in the European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993. Throughout the long drawn-out process, our aim was always to secure the adoption of the social chapter for the benefit of the people of Britain and our economy generally. That was, and remains, our consistent view.

Two other issues have emerged subsequently—the attempt to use the courts to circumvent the decisions of the House of Commons, and the apparent unwillingness of the Government to accept decisions taken in the Chamber. Both represent fundamental challenges to democratic government and to the authority of the House of Commons.

[Dr. John Cunningham]

It is important to deal with those matters in addition to the merits of the social chapter. First, I must congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Durham, North (Mr. Radice) on his speech. He is my Member of Parliament, and I am delighted to have his support in the Chamber this evening. I also wish to congratulate my hon. Friends the Members for Hartlepool (Mr. Mandelson), for Ashfield (Mr. Hoon), for Kingston upon Hull, West (Mr. Randall), for Hemsworth (Mr. Enright), for Derbyshire, North-East (Mr. Barnes) and for Barrow and Furness (Mr. Hutton), together with the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume), on their speeches.

The House is having the debate because the Government, in the person of the right hon. Gentleman the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, accepted the Labour new clause 74—now section 7 of the Act. He said at that time:

"If new clause 74 is accepted, we shall abide by it."

There was no hint there that the Government would not accept the result of the debate which would ensue.

The Foreign Secretary also said:

"We have no difficulty in accepting the challenge with which the proposers of new clause 74 present us."

Indeed, he implied in that speech that the vote tonight would be the definitive decision of the House, as we intended it to be. He said:

"That will enable the House to vote on the merits of the social protocol itself."—[*Official Report*, 22 April 1993; Vol. 223, c. 548-49.]

Throughout the proceedings, the Foreign Secretary has repeatedly asserted that the House of Commons was the place where decisions should legitimately be made—indeed, had to be made. He said:

"As Parliament is sovereign it is clear that it could decide . . . we owe our constituents our judgement, and if we decline to exercise that judgment we are to some extent damaging the authority of Parliament."

In respect of the third stage of economic and monetary union, the Foreign Secretary said:

"the Government have specifically and successfully reserved the decision for the House of Commons. . . . Governments are elected to govern and, in this case, to propose, just as parliaments in the United Kingdom are elected to decide and, indeed, to dispose. . . . The decision for Britain lies where it belongs—in the hands of the British Parliament."—[*Official Report*, 21 April 1993; Vol. 223, c. 453 and 458.]

So, throughout our proceedings, the right hon. Gentleman made it abundantly clear that he expected the House of Commons to take the decisions. That is the real reason why he is not here tonight and why he will not reply to the debate. What the Foreign Secretary said destroys the argument that the Prime Minister put to the House of Commons earlier today. The Prime Minister said that the debate was some sort of device and that the House had no business moving the amendment provided for in the Act of Parliament.

So the House is having the debate. However, no hint that the Government would not accept the result was given until it became apparent that the Government were in trouble. That is the reality. We agreed with what the Foreign Secretary had to say in his various speeches. Both Houses of Parliament agreed with him on the specific issue of the referendum. But now the Government are apparently saying, "We did not want a referendum. We did not want the people to decide, but now we shall not accept the decision of the House of Commons either."

In other words, the Government do not want anyone to decide but themselves. What duplicity. What hypocrisy. What a reneging on their fundamental position that parliamentary scrutiny and debate, and decisions in this Chamber, were the proper way and the only way to make decisions about the Maastricht treaty. Now that the Government have gone back on their word, I am not surprised that the Foreign Secretary is not with us tonight.

Like many others, on Tuesday I observed the Prime Minister wriggling under questions from my right hon. and learned Friend the Leader of the Opposition. The Prime Minister was unwilling to give a straight answer to a straight question. Earlier we witnessed his dreadful evasions when he was questioned by the BBC's Jonathan Dimbleby. It was pass after pass: clearly, the Prime Minister could never be a candidate for "Mastermind". It is as well for him that his Government have not yet abolished the right to silence. The Prime Minister seems determined to die in the last ditch of prevarication on this matter.

But now an entirely novel concept of parliamentary democracy has emerged. It is, apparently, that the Government need not accept a decision of the House of Commons because of the nature and quality of the majority. We know that the European Community already has qualified majority voting, but this is a new and ridiculous argument. It seems that, if this was a boxing match, we would have to knock the Government out to get a draw.

The theory has great flexibility. Governments need not accept defeat because there were too many Scots in the Lobby, or too many Irish, or too many Welsh people, or too many women, or too many people who write with their left hand. The possibilities are endless.

Perhaps I ought to remind the Prime Minister and his right hon. and hon. Friends that it was a Tory, Winston Churchill—and he was a Tory at the time—who said "One is enough." If we win the votes tonight, we shall expect the Government to accede to the wishes of the House of Commons.

The Government's argument on that issue—like their case against the social chapter—is bogus. Where were these people and arguments in November 1992? The Government did not care then who joined them in the Lobby, or how they got them there; all they cared about was a majority of the House of Commons.

Is this the same Prime Minister who said to my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) in June 1992:

"common consent in this country is exercised through a parliamentary democracy and through the voices and words of Members of Parliament in this House."?—[*Official Report*, 3 June 1992; Vol. 208, c. 832.]

Or is it, more accurately, really the kind of Government described by Disraeli, who said:

"A Conservative Government is an organised hypocrisy"?

This is dangerous and unacceptable behaviour. If the Prime Minister and the Government ride roughshod over the decisions of the House of Commons, how can they call upon the people to accept other decisions of the House? The authority of this place would be seriously undermined. The reputation of the House is already too precarious for us to accept any further serious damage to it.

Is it not the inevitable outcome of the Government's position that other tangled webs of wealthy people, whether living in Britain or abroad, would seek to

circumvent or undermine in the courts the decisions of the House? Would they not always be able to produce sanctimonious dupes such as Lord Rees-Mogg to give a superficial but threadbare respectability to their plans?

We should not accept these developments, Madam Speaker. Your ruling yesterday, in response to the important questions raised by my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield, is of fundamental importance to the House, the nature of our democratic decision making and its future well-being. You deserve the thanks and support of everyone here—and, more important, of our constituents.

Rarely in my experience have a Government used such bogus arguments to avoid defeat on such a bogus case. The Tory case against the social chapter is a ragbag of half-truths, deceptions and downright fabrications. The dishonesty of the Government's case has been completely exposed in this as in earlier debates on the subject.

At Maastricht, the Prime Minister erected the social chapter as a threat to Britain and Europe. He was isolated —no one else agreed—and he planned the opt-out as a political insurance policy to ease the passage of the legislation. He failed. Even a superficial examination of the social chapter demonstrates that the claim that it is a charter for industrial unrest is completely untrue.

Article 2.6 of the chapter says:

"The provisions of this Article shall not apply to pay, the right of association, the right to strike or the right to impose lock-outs."

It applies to working conditions, information and consultation of workers on the basis of qualified majority voting. It applies also to social security, protection from dismissal, collective bargaining, employment conditions and job creation, but on the basis of unanimity.

The social chapter includes the novel provisions drafted by unions and employers, including the TUC and the CBI, enabling flexibility to be built in by collective agreements, replacing or complementing legislation. As we have all pointed out again and again, pay, the right to strike or impose lock-outs are explicitly excluded from legislation agreed under the social chapter.

As yet there is not even an action programme of legislation for the social chapter. The Commission is currently putting together a Green Paper on the future of social policy. All Governments are invited to make submissions. Perhaps the most interesting question will be how far the legislative route will be used and how much use will be made of the more flexible procedure, leaving those involved—unions and employers—to reach agreement on common standards.

What is clear is that the British Government will be excluded from those deliberations. British Commissioners, Members of the European Parliament, trade unionists and employers, as members of the economic and social committee, will have a formal role, but Britain's Government will be excluded from all the deliberations.

The only people who oppose the social chapter are the British Conservatives and the French neo-fascists: by their friends shall ye know them. Try as they might to dupe the British people or garner support for their reactionary views, the Government have totally failed. The European summit in Edinburgh at the end of the British presidency reaffirmed the commitment to the social chapter and urged Britain to join. That remains the unanimous view of 11 partners in spite of ministerial allegations, including those to the contrary from the Foreign Secretary.

Tories in Britain want Europe to be simply a big business club. We want a Europe with a continuously developing social dimension in the interests of greater efficiency and social cohesion. Our view is supported by industrialists such as Mr. Peter Wickens and others at Nissan who gave evidence to the Select Committee on Employment earlier this year. In March, he said:

"all I know is that any company that seeks to pay low wages ends up receiving low-quality, low-calibre employees. What we have got to do, in this country . . . is to be high-wage with a high-quality workforce, achieving high productivity and high quality products; that is the equation that we need, not low wage, low quality, low productivity. That is the route that is doomed to failure and disaster".

The House should also know that, when taking evidence in Japan, the Select Committee received exactly the same opinion from Aiwa, Fujitsu, Komatsu, Nissan, NSK and the Sony Corporation.

Another myth is that small businesses would be hit by the social chapter, yet article 2.2 of the social chapter specifically says:

"To this end, the Council may adopt, by means of directives, minimum requirements for gradual implementation, having regard to the conditions and technical rules obtaining in each of the Member States. Such directives shall avoid imposing administrative, financial and legal constraints in a way which would hold back the creation and development of small and medium-sized undertakings."

The social chapter specifically recognises

"the need to maintain the competitiveness of the Community";

and Labour certainly wants to see a successful, efficient, productive Community.

The truth is that the Government do not want, as the Prime Minister claims, a nation at ease with itself. Unlike us, the Government do not want more equalities in British society. They want to return to an era where there was little social protection for millions of British workers, but they are not supported by Britain's best employers in that aim. My hon. Friend the Member for Stockton, North (Mr. Cook) in particular exploded the myth that British companies such as ICI would be badly affected if the social chapter was implemented.

The Government want a labour market that exploits young people, women and ethnic communities in particular—in short, a deregulated labour market. But Britain can never succeed on that basis. Hong Kong has labour costs only 25 per cent. of those in Britain, and the figure for Taiwan is 35 per cent. and for Korea 35 per cent. They will always undercut our labour costs. Our failure is on unit labour costs compared with the United States of America, Japan, Germany and France. Our failing is because of low skills, low investment and low productivity.

As ever, the Tory party emerges from these debates as what it always has been—the party of exploitation of ordinary people. It is the party that always wants to pay those at the top more, to to give those at the top more power and more security to make them perform better, but those at the bottom are denied support and protection: they must be paid less, trained less, protected less and made less secure to make them perform better.

So we ask the House to join us in the Lobby tonight to give British people the advantages, the support, of the social chapter and to ensure the British people the support of a House of Commons that protects them, upholds its decisions and requires Governments to act upon them.

9.32 pm

The Secretary of State for Employment (Mr. David Hunt): This has been a debate without precedent. It is not a debate about the European Communities (Amendment) Bill, which is now an Act. It is a debate about the fundamental aspect of the Maastricht treaty, which was signed by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. In doing so, he secured an opt out from a protocol relating to an agreement for social policy.

Several hon. Members have misunderstood the differences between the social protocol, the social agreement, the social chapter and the social charter. Fortunately, my right hon. Friend the Member for Guildford (Mr. Howell) spelt out exactly what we are talking about. This debate is about the effect that the protocol would have on jobs in the United Kingdom and indeed, were it to come into effect, the very damaging impact that it would have on business.

I took the side of the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith)—if he is paying attention to the debate. When he is ready, I will, if I may, refer to his speech. I wanted to reply to a point that he made. The right hon. and learned Member depicted the social contract that he described between employers and unions, in the form of the protocol relating to social policy, as a matter of considerable importance. He was not in the House to listen to his right hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green and Stepney (Mr. Shore), who described the social protocol as a matter of comparatively little importance. My hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) also described the social protocol as something that did not really matter. I must therefore return the debate to the words of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister at the outset, when he set the agenda by describing the damaging effect that the social protocol would have upon business and jobs.

I do not have to do anything other than to refer the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, West (Mr. Randall) to the words of the president of the Confederation of British Industry. The hon. Member said a few moments ago that the social protocol was something of which no business man should be afraid. The president of the CBI said:

"Community interference in such social policies is far more likely to destroy jobs than enhance their quality".

There are about 18 million unemployed people in the Community. The president of the CBI went on to say on behalf of the CBI:

"A Common vote tonight, leading to the inclusion of the social chapter in the ratified Maastricht treaty would set back the cause of common sense and competitiveness in Europe by several years".

I refer my hon. Friends to the following comment:

"Members of Parliament should bear that in mind as they wrestle with their consciences today".

A statement issued a short time ago by the Institute of Directors says that the social chapter is

"a job destruction machine which will kill jobs by piling up the costs of employment,"

The director general of the IOD, Mr. Morgan, has said:

"The Maastricht Treaty has already become law. It would be folly now to add the Social Chapter to it."

I say that particularly in answer to the points made by my hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East. Mr. Morgan continued:

"What the European Community needs now is not a charter for the destruction of jobs by pricing them out of the market but forward looking policies which would enable firms to create more jobs and for people to establish new companies".

Mr. Carttiss: Can the Secretary of State explain, and understand, how Conservatives who have campaigned to deregulate British industry to enable us to compete in world markets, and who are totally opposed to increasing the Brussels bureaucracy's shackles on this country, can vote for the social protocol tonight?

Mr. Hunt: My hon. Friend the Member for Great Yarmouth (Mr. Carttiss) is absolutely right.

The right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East earlier sought to quote UNICE in favour of the social protocol. The right hon. and learned Gentleman should reflect on the words of the president of UNICE, who said to Employment Ministers:

"Please, stop taking measures which unnecessarily destroy jobs."

One has only to look at what has been said in Japan recently. The right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown) quoted the Toyota company, but the director of the Japanese equivalent of the Confederation of British Industry, Mr. Ota, has expressed his concern about the consequences of the social chapter on labour flexibility and wage costs. He made it clear that the Japanese would take that factor into account in future investment decisions.

Anyone who knows what is happening in Japan today knows that any Japanese firm considering firm considering further investment in the European Community will be watching our debate carefully to see if any message comes from the House of Commons to show that we shall have any truck with the social protocol.

Mr. Nigel Spearing (Newham, South): The Minister has referred to the social agreement and the social charter. My understanding is that the agreement puts into effect that charter's terms. If it is so damaging, why have Her Majesty's Government not published it, as they have admitted in a written answer today?

Mr. Hunt: I will answer the hon. Gentleman. I hope that hon. Members on both sides of the House will read the protocol carefully to see what is contains. [HON. MEMBERS: "Answer the question."] Yes, I will.

The preamble to the protocol states that 11 member states

"wish to continue along the path laid down in the 1989 Social Charter".

The protocol continues to authorise those 11 member states to have recourse to all the procedures and mechanisms of the treaty for the purpose of taking, among themselves, decisions relating to the social chapter referred to in the preamble. The protocol contains a clear statement that Acts adopted by the Council and any financial consequences shall not be applicable to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland—that is explicitly excluded.

The right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East omitted to mention in his description of the agreement that article 2 applies to working conditions. I do not know whether it was a slip of the tongue, but the right hon. and learned Member forgot to mention those conditions. The sort of question raised by the hon. Member for Newham, South (Mr. Spearing) is directly relevant when we consider the topics that could come under working conditions.

To my hon. Friends who do not fear the effect of that article, I must say that a document has come into my hands from the European Trades Union Congress. Let us consider what they mean by "working conditions"—precisely the sort of danger that many of my right hon. and hon. Friends, including my hon. Friend the Member for Luton, South (Mr. Bright) and many others, have given as the reason why they cannot support the social protocol. The document is in French, but I shall endeavour to give a translation.

Mr. Richard Ottaway (Croydon, South): A few minutes ago, my right hon. Friend referred to the position adopted by the Liberals and their attitude to the social chapter. Is he aware that while the leader of the Liberals, the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown), was extolling the merits of the social chapter this afternoon, a spokesman for Westland Helicopters, the largest employer in his Yeovil constituency, issued a statement saying:

"We support the CBI's opposition to the social chapter because we want to be competitive in Europe and in the world."

That is the approach of any business, whether or not it supports the Conservatives.

Mr. Hunt: The right hon. Member for Yeovil was wrong about Toyota, as I have just explained. He is now wrong about Westland and about the effect of the social chapter on British business.

Mr. Richard Spring (Bury St. Edmunds): My right hon. Friend knows that during the late 1980s employment grew rapidly and that 70 per cent. of that growth in employment was in the small business sector. Can my right hon. Friend speculate on the appalling damage that would be done to the revival of small businesses, which have been helped by the Budget proposals, by the imposition of the social charter?

Mr. Hunt: Yes. That is why the European TUC would like to introduce the following measures, which come under working conditions. First, it would like the inclusion of social clauses in public contracts. I dread to think what that would mean. Secondly, it wants equality of treatment for all third-country nationals dwelling legally in the Community. Thirdly it wants harmonisation of certain social protection objectives and policies. Next, it wants psychological and stress problems associated with working conditions and surroundings to be addressed. It also wants work performed at home and night work to come under working conditions.

Opposition Members should be made aware of the fact that under the protocol on social policy it is possible to bring forward a measure that would ban all overtime throughout the European Community, as well as all night work. That is what we are talking about when we say that we do not accept the social charter.

We know why Opposition Members want the social charter. Jacques Delors explained to the TUC that what it could not get through the front door of British politics it could get through the back door of Brussels. It was such an overwhelming speech that Mr. Willis made the memorable phrase, "Delors is my shepherd." We on this side are not part of the Delors flock.

Sir Jim Spice (Dorset, West): My right hon. Friend knows that a quarter of all the people who work at Westland live in my constituency and that there are 50 sub-contractors for Westland in the south of England, including seven in Christchurch. Not one of the people who work at Westland—the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown) does not want to listen to to this because he has no answer to it—and who know how competitive Westland must be against all other competitors would vote for the social chapter. I do not believe that the right hon. Member for Yeovil has spoken to anyone in Westland about that.

Mr. Hunt: I am very glad that my hon. Friend has raised that point as we are giving examples of the type of damaging directives that could come into effect under the social protocol. On only Monday of this week Brussels presented us with a new proposal for a directive on parental leave. It would allow a man or woman to take up to nine and a half months' leave in a single year. In addition, the working time directive provides for one month's leave, which means a total of ten and a half months' leave out of 12. If the Opposition believe that any business or any economy could operate on that basis, they do not understand economics.

If my hon. Friends read article 4, they must be convinced of the dangers of what I have read out. Under article 4, it is perfectly possible for the European TUC to introduce a measure which is then an agreement concluded at Community level. That agreement would come into force without ever coming anywhere near the House of Commons. Is that the type of measure that we should be accepting? I warn the Opposition that we should not play dangerous games with the future economic life of this country.

To reassure my right hon. and hon. Friends, some of whom have a very long-standing commitment to oppose Europe and what it stands for, I confirm that I respect what they have said in the past and what they have said today. The Prime Minister made it very clear earlier today that our present plans are exactly as he said, but for the avoidance of doubt I repeat them.

It is not the Government's present intention to re-enter the exchange rate mechanism or to move to a single currency. We negotiated an opt-out at Maastricht as the Government considered it to be in the interests of the United Kingdom to do so. It is the Government's policy that any matters involving foreign affairs or defence and security should remain subject to unanimity. I know that that will do much to reassure several of my right hon. and hon. Friends, but the important issue that we now face——

Mr. John Sykes (Scarborough): My right hon. Friend knows that I speak as a northern manufacturer. Does he agree that many Opposition Members would not know a business if it jumped up and slapped them in the face? Does he also agree that the provisions of the social chapter would throw hundreds of thousands of people in this country out of work?

Mr. Hunt: I agree. What the House must understand is that there are very serious dangers in sending out the wrong message from the House.

Mr. Graham Riddick (Colne Valley): Will my right hon. Friend confirm that, whatever happens tonight, the Government will continue to fight the so-called social—in

[Mr. Graham Riddick]

reality job-destroying—legislation emanating from Brussels, just as he is fighting the working time directive through the European Court at the moment?

Mr. Hunt: I can tell my hon. Friend the Member for Colne Valley (Mr. Riddick) that I have here the legal case that we propose to put before the European Court when fighting the working time directive. However, if we accept the Opposition's amendment tonight, I might as well tear up—*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. *[Interruption.]* Order. Mr. Banks! *[Interruption.]* Order. The House will settle down for the last few minutes.

Mr. Hunt: You are right, Madam Speaker, to stress that this debate is one of historical importance. When the House votes tonight we shall be sending a clear message about the sort of Europe, and the sort of United Kingdom, that we want to see. Whatever the motives——

Mr. Nick Hawkins (Blackpool, South): Does my right hon. Friend agree that any Member of the House who votes for the social chapter tonight will have to explain to hundreds of his or her constituents why that vote is costing them their jobs? Such hon. Members will have that on their conscience for ever.

Mr. Hunt: I agree with my hon. Friend.

Whatever the motives for Members' voting decisions tonight, the message must be clear. I want the House to vote for the sort of Europe where entrepreneurs and individuals can make their own choices—a Europe of diversity, enterprise, and personal freedom. If Conservative Members consider voting with the Opposition they are playing into the hands of those who would destroy the livelihoods of the people of this country.

Who would applaud most loudly if the proposed social chapter were ever to be forced upon us? It would be those who have lost their power over 14 years of Conservative government, and who yearn for the bad old days. And we know who they are. They are the militants who called strikes at the drop of a hat without thought of a ballot, the shop steward brigade who cared not a jot for the companies that they bargained over, and the armchair reformers who were prepared to tolerate anything but the idea of companies making profits. Those are the people who would smile if the Opposition amendment were passed.

The electorate has rejected the Labour party at four successive general elections. The front door to power has slammed firmly shut. No wonder they are slinking round to the back door. It used to be beer and sandwiches at No. 10. Now they want claret and croissants with the Commission.

If hon. Members wish to vote for the Opposition amendment, let them be clear what they will be voting for. They will be voting to overturn the reforms that we have fought so hard for over the past 14 years. They will be voting to put the trade unions back into the driving seat, not just here but in Europe. If, on the other hand, hon. Members share our vision of a Europe in which power moves increasingly away from Brussels bureaucrats to ordinary men and women—the very people whom we in the House represent—if they want a Europe of free trade, competition and open markets; if they want a Europe in which free people create jobs through individual effort and enterprise, they will support the Government tonight, both in rejecting the Opposition amendment and in supporting the Government resolution.

I recognise that some Members of my own party have real and genuine doubts about many aspects of the European Community. They have been consistent in fighting for their views and they have fought conscientiously and determinedly against the Maastricht Bill. But that Bill is now an Act. My hon. Friends have been motivated by a determination to see the United Kingdom play the right role in Europe, but surely that is a role based on the principles that brought us together as members of the Conservative and Unionist party—principles that we have refreshed and renewed in the light of changes in our social and economic reality.

I, and everyone on the Conservative Benches, share a concern about the future of this country. There is only one place for the United Kingdom to be in the Europe of the next century and that is leading from the front in the Europe of freedom, enterprise and initiative. I urge the House to throw out the Opposition amendment.

Question put, That the amendment be made:—

The House divided: Ayes 317, Noes 317.

Division No. 358] **[10 pm**

AYES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Body, Sir Richard
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Bruce, Malcolm *(Gordon)*
Burden, Richard
Butcher, John
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Cash, William
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret

Fatchett, Derek
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galbraith, Sam
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Hendron, Dr Joe
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hume, John
Hutton, John
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Jessel, Toby
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Ieuan Wyn *(Ynys Môn)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Leigh, Edward
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McGrady, Eddie
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mallon, Seamus
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Richardson, Jo
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shepherd, Richard *(Aldridge)*
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Sweeney, Walter
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Wilkinson, John
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Ray Powell and
Mr. Eric Illsley.

NOES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Butterfill, John
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Critchley, Julian
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*

Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heath, Rt Hon Sir Edward
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maginnis, Ken
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Smyth, Rev Martin *(Belfast S)*
Soames, Nicholas
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sykes, John
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trimble, David
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Nicholas *(Macc'f'ld)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Irvine Patnick.

Madam Speaker: The numbers being equal, it is my duty to cast my vote. It is not the function of the Chair to create a majority on a policy issue where no majority exists amongst the rest of the House. In accordance with precedent, I therefore cast my vote with the Noes.

Question accordingly negatived.

Main Question put:—

The House divided: Ayes 316, Noes 324.

Division No. 359] **[10.20 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Butterfill, John
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcliff)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek

Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Critchley, Julian
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heath, Rt Hon Sir Edward
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maginnis, Ken
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Smyth, Rev Martin *(Belfast S)*
Soames, Nicholas
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sykes, John
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trimble, David
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Nicholas *(Macc'f'ld)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Sydney Chapman and
Mr. Irvine Patnick.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Body, Sir Richard
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Bruce, Malcolm *(Gordon)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burden, Richard
Butcher, John
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Cash, William
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*

Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cran, James
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galbraith, Sam
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Gardiner, Sir George
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Gill, Christopher
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Hendron, Dr Joe
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hume, John
Hutton, John
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Jessel, Toby
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Ieuan Wyn *(Ynys Môn)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kilfoyle, Peter
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McGrady, Eddie
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mallon, Seamus
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Richardson, Jo
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shepherd, Richard *(Aldridge)*
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Sweeney, Walter
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Thompson, Jack *(Wansbeck)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Wilkinson, John
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Ray Powell and
Mr. Eric Illsley.

Question accordingly negatived.

The Prime Minister *rose——*

Madam Speaker: I call the Prime Minister. *[Interruption.]* Order. The House must come to order. Seats are available in the Chamber; I ask hon. Members who are standing at the Bar to sit down.

The Prime Minister: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. The House has not come to a resolution, as required by section 7 of the European Communities (Amendment) Act, and so the Act cannot come into force. We clearly cannot leave the matter there. Tonight's debate has shown that there is no majority in the House for the United Kingdom to join the social chapter; however, as we know, a majority of the House is in favour of ratifying the Maastricht treaty. I therefore invite the Members of the Opposition parties who say that they support ratification, and that they respect the opinion of the House, to reconsider their position.

We must resolve this issue; it cannot be allowed to fester any longer. I therefore give notice that the Government will invite the House to come to a resolution tomorrow in support of the Government's policy on the social chapter by tabling a motion of confidence in the following terms:

"That the House has confidence in the policy of Her Majesty's Government on the adoption of the Protocol on Social Policy."

Mr. John Smith: Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. The Prime Minister may seek to maintain that there was no vote in the House for the social chapter; but there was no vote against it. The plain fact is that the House tied. I note that the Prime Minister has been driven to use the confidence factor because he cannot win the vote on any other terms. But, when he tables his resolution, we shall table an amendment that will give a tied House of Commons the opportunity to vote positively for the social chapter tomorrow.

Sir Russell Johnston: Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. One has to say that, in this tied vote, the Government have been willing to strengthen sectarian politics in Northern Ireland to deny workers' rights in the United Kingdom as a whole. The fact is that, in a free vote, there is a majority for the social chapter in the House, and we on this Bench shall continue to vote in that direction.

Mr. Benn: Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. In your statement yesterday you quoted article 9 of the Bill of Rights. I ask you to consider overnight article 1 of the Bill of Rights, which says:

"That the pretended power of suspending of laws or the execution of laws by regall authority without consent of Parlyament is illegall."

Under section 7 of the European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993, the House rejected the Government's policy—rejected it in accordance with a statute which the Government promoted and on which the House voted.

There is no provision for reversal under section 7. If the Prime Minister, using a vote of confidence, which is not catered for in section 7, were to seek to ratify the treaty by regal authority—the royal prerogative of ratification—would it be illegal? It is a matter that you, Madam Speaker, will wish to consider overnight, but I believe that the issue is whether the Government intend to defy Parliament or accept the clear vote of a rejection of their view.

PETITION

Unitary Authority Status (Meirionnydd)

10.43 pm

Mr. Elfin Llwyd (Meirionnyd Nant Conwy): With your leave, Madam Speaker, I wish to present a petition to the House in support of unitary authority status for the old country of Meirionnydd, part of which I represent.

The petition bears 12,242 signatures and I support it strongly because the old county has been a unit of local authority since 1284. It was recently described by the district auditor as well run and proactive in nature. It reads:

"Wherefore your Petitioners pray that your Honourable House oppose the said proposals by Her Majesty's Government and provide that the historic district of Meirionnydd and adjoining areas shall be the area of the new unitary authority of Meirionnydd."

To lie upon the Table.

HIV (Government Policy)

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Arbuthnot.]*

10.46 pm

Miss Joan Lestor (Eccles): I could not have picked a better night for the Adjournment debate. I raise the issue of AIDS and HIV in an attempt to discover the Government's current attitude towards the Day report and projections about the development of the disease in future.

It is a pity that leaks and speculations about the contents of the Day report took off well before its publication. Many who, prior to publication, claimed that the matter was being exaggerated, have not, to my knowledge, amended their comments in the light of the report. Andrew Neil frequently claims that there is little or no danger. He is quoted as saying,

"You have more chance of being run over by a car on the way to see your girl friend than you have of contracting AIDS from them."

The use of the word "them" is interesting in that context, as is the absence of reference to protection and the reference to sex with them. The analogy is also interesting. We all try to make people, particularly the young, responsible in their attitude to traffic and I ask no more than that we extend the same principle to sexual activities.

I shall quote an extract from the paper by Professor Anderson and Robert May, in which they state:

"The degree to which infection will be constrained within a small core of highly sexually active people depends on who mixes with whom: the network of sexual contacts among those who are very active sexually and those who are not. To define such a network, one must ask questions not only about numbers of sexual partners but also about"

other matters in relation to their habits.

We must have a detailed answer from the Government on the Day report and matters related to it. In that connection, I congratulate the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon (Mr. Howarth) on his ingenuity in raising the subject of education on HIV and AIDS during the debate on the guillotine motion on the Education Bill on Monday. He made a forthright and sensible speech. As I agreed with it and as time is limited, I shall not repeat his case, except to say that the Lords amendment was never discussed here. The country has never heard the arguments for and against keeping the teaching of AIDS in the core curriculum.

We are depriving our children of the right to be educated about such matters. In the light of the knowledge that we possess, it is indefensible for us to make it easier for our children to die of ignorance, as the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon said. We all like to think that our children are innocent—they are until a certain age, but times have changed. We now know from the research that has been carried out that 35 per cent. of under-16s and 50 per cent. of under-18s have full sexual intercourse and one third use no protection—so we know that we have a problem. Some 20 per cent. of HIV infections in this country occur in the 15 to 25-year-old age group.

The Government have said—I support them in this—that they are anxious to reduce teenage pregnancies and other sexual problems and some sexual-related diseases. The Government should be seen to be effective. According to the reply given by the Minister on 12 July to my hon. Friend the Member for Islington, South and Finsbury (Mr. Smith), there are 500 reports of children in the United Kingdom born to women who are known to be infected with AIDS. Large numbers of those women were very young and many of them had had unprotected sex. Some 152 of those children are known to be uninfected, but the status of the rest is not yet known.

The worrying factor is that the results of unlinked, anonymous HIV surveys showed that there have been many pregnant women whose HIV infection was not known to the staff in the hospital. Therefore, there are an unknown number of children born to HIV infected women and their plight is yet to be known. Anyone who has looked at how AIDS has swept across certain continents and the effect that it is having on families and children, born only to die a few years later, knows that, although we do not have that problem here, we have no cause for complacency.

The Day report suggests that the number of AIDS cases will soon level off among homosexual men and that HIV infection is declining among drug users. The report, however, also predicts an increase in new cases of AIDS among heterosexuals and suggests that that increase will continue over the next few years.

I was also alarmed to read that, of men tested in Brighton—I stress, of those who came forward to be tested, because they were concerned—one in four homosexual men were infected and one in seven heterosexual men were infected. That figure may be due to the peculiar circumstances of that area, but we have to bear it in mind.

It is important also to bear in mind when we look at statistics that we cannot categorise people as belonging to one particular group: homosexual, heterosexual, drug takers, or whatever. In many instances, behaviour in one group can be found in another.

The Government's attitude is somewhat puzzling. That is why I applied for this Adjournment debate. The Government say that their policies have worked and that predictions about the spread of the AIDS virus have not been borne out by the facts. I am glad to hear it, as I am sure everybody is. If the policies that the Government have adopted are right, why on earth are they reducing the facilities that have contributed to keeping AIDS and HIV under control? It does not make sense.

The Government say that the figures in the Day report vindicate the policies that they have put into practice to fight the disease. Why, then, change those policies? When we look at the spread of any disease, we know that, if people grow careless about inoculation, the educative process has to start all over again.

Why are grants to voluntary organisations, such as the Terrence Higgins Trust, being cut? Why are the Government putting an end to the ring fencing of AIDS funds? Why is the Department of Health AIDS unit being integrated with the communicable diseases branch? Why is the Health Education Authority being reorganised? What are the implications of all this for education campaigns and the independence of such an authority? Ring fencing provided additional resources, for the significant care implications of AIDS and HIV could not be met by the national health service budget.

The George House Trust in Manchester has done excellent work in dealing with victims of AIDS and the HIV virus. Its work has been acknowledged by many

people. The trust has entered into correspondence with the Department of Health about the cut in funds. It makes very worrying reading.

When he asked for extra funding, John Nicholson, who runs the George House Trust, said:

"Nationally, the result of the F64 allocation is that direct Department funding continues to be restricted to the London national voluntary organisations. Regionally, the north-western regional health authority continues to be unclear as to how it will organise funding for regional-wide voluntary organisations after the 1st April 1994 and continues not to fund them directly. Our core grant from the north-west regional health authority, through North Manchester health authority, ended on the 31st of March this year. Locally, all local authorities in the north-west, except Manchester, are in difficulty. Many have bid for contributions on our behalf, but"—

he says, and I know this to be true—

"I understand they have now received a 20 per cent. cash cut for 1993-94, while Manchester itself has a cash standstill."

John Nicholson said that they seem unlikely to be able to implement the guidelines which insisted on the same level of funding being provided next year to the voluntary sector. I am sure that that does not apply only to the George House Trust in my constituency. It has implications for all voluntary organisations and for funding which had been ring-fenced.

Those who deal with AIDS and HIV were at least able to believe that funds were specially allocated to them and they did not have to scrape around for money. Unfortunately, as is the case with other units—for example, those dealing with alcohol abuse—they now find that ring fencing no longer exists and that they have to compete with other demands.

I am not an alarmist; I want more preventive work to be undertaken. I believe that we can deal with AIDS and HIV if we are prepared to put ourselves out, make the resources available and acknowledge what has to be done.

It is sad that the necessary time is not allocated to debate such matters in the House. A report as important as the Day report should be discussed in detail. I want to allow the Minister plenty of time to comment, but I make a few observations on the report's summary. The working party concluded:

"after adjustment for under-reporting, there will be between 2,015 and 2,720 new AIDS cases in England and Wales in 1995, and between 1,945 and 3,215 new AIDS cases in 1997."

It also gives the 1995 and 1997 planning projections for new AIDS cases among the main exposure categories. It continues:

"It is estimated that there were approximately 23,400 HIV infected individuals in England and Wales at the end of 1991 . . . The expected levelling off in the overall incidence of AIDS in 1996 and 1997 masks sharp underlying differences in the trends between the exposure categories. Whereas AIDS incidence in homosexual males may peak in 1993 and 1994, the incidence in those exposed heterosexually is expected to increase steadily."

I stress strongly that it is wrong for the Government, intentionally or otherwise, to lull people into a false sense of security. The ignorance about AIDS among the young is appalling. The young always believe that they are immune from the dangers about which their parents warn them. Whether we like it or not, young people are having sex much earlier than we did and they are not as careful as many of us believe that they should be.

In "The Health of the Nation", the Government rightly said that they wanted to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies, but the number is indicative of the fact that many young people do not take precautions when having sex. In some cases, their activities can result in sex, but, sadly, they can also result in HIV and AIDS.

When considering the statistics, it is important that we do not make moral judgments. Society may not be as we would wish it to be and children and young people may not behave as we behaved or as we would wish them to behave. There are various role models which we may wish young people did not have. Nevertheless, young people have sex earlier and take risks in doing so. That is why I was so angry on Monday when, because of the guillotine, the Government accepted a Lords amendment without debate in this House.

Some time ago I wrote to the Minister and I was pleased that he expressed his belief that sex education and related matters should be dealt with in schools. However, we have undermined much of the work that could have been done; we must reach young people.

I have gone into the matter as far as I can and I could talk for an hour if I dealt with all the material that I have. I do not suggest an epidemic—I am not an alarmist—but the figures that I have seen suggest to me that unless precautions are taken we shall land in great difficulty.

Before I finish, I shall raise one other matter. The Government have talked about reducing teenage pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and the instance of drug misuse over the next few years. We all hope that that happens, but we cannot allow ourselves, or other people, to get the impression that because the incidence has not been as bad as some people predicted, we can now relax and treat AIDS and HIV in the same way as we treat other diseases.

The age at which people are dying of AIDS shows that they are getting the disease very young. That is one of the most worrying aspects, whether those involved are boys or girls. As I have already said, we know that youth does not always listen and does not always want to be counselled. If one talks to young people, one finds that their ignorance about the transmission of AIDS is frightening, because they have not had the opportunity to be educated about it. I understand how many parents feel; they want the right to prevent their children from being, as it were, contaminated with that knowledge; they want the right to remove their children from the education. But the children, too, have rights to know the world in which they are growing up —a world that many of us, because of our age, will never enter.

The Government must take the subject seriously and reconsider ring fencing and other factors. Like my hon. Friend the Member for Islington, South and Finsbury, and one or two other hon. Members here, I am a member of the all-party group on AIDS. We receive much information and guidance and we are not scaremongering, but we are realists and we are anxious to ensure that the Government take the matter seriously. If the Government give the impression that things are getting better, the message will not get through to many people, especially the young, who still think that those of us who are trying to warn them are scaremongering. They do not think that anything will happen to them. Sadly, as we know, AIDS does happen to a minority of them.

11.2 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Mr. Tom Sackville): I thank the hon. Member for Eccles (Miss Lestor) for introducing a debate on this alarming and sad subject.

First, I shall look back a few years to remind her that, when we were first confronted with HIV in this country, in the early 1980s, we acted much more speedily than did some other countries. We were in the forefront of developments such as needle exchange, which have shown enormous benefits in reducing the spread of the disease among drug users, and we can be justifiably proud of that.

We embarked on what was then considered an advanced and controversial education campaign. Despite considerable criticism, to which the hon. Lady referred, we targeted the young heterosexual population, because we knew of the dangers of the spread of the disease. It may not be so apparent here as in some parts of the world, but it is here, and it is a growing danger.

We embarked on a considerable funding programme. The hon. Lady referred to money, so may I remind the House of the mainstream funds that have gone to health authorities for the treatment of HIV and AIDS in the past few years. The sum has grown from £25 million in 1987 —the first recorded figure that I have—to £181 million last year and £214 million in the current year. Those are very considerable funds when we consider that they form part of a hospital and community budget of £20,000 million. In terms of the public education campaign, to date we have spent £85 million. I doubt whether the Government have run a bigger public health campaign than that.

I am aware of the hon. Lady's concerns about more than one of the voluntary organisations which have been told that they will have their grants cut progressively in the years to come.

Section 64 funding in the current year is £1·92 million. That must be taken in the context of a section 64 budget of £17 million, so that funding represents about 10 per cent. of the entire voluntary organisation budget which is devoted to AIDs-related charities. The hon. Lady knows that we have to turn down requests for funding from hundreds of organisations concerned with mental health, cancer and many other areas. Therefore, the funding for AIDs-related organisations is very considerable. Those organisations include AIDs and Housing Project, ACET, Barnardo's, Black HIV-AIDs Network, Blackliners, Body Positive and Landmark.

I appreciate that we have said that some of the largest single grants will be cut. However, we are talking about levels of central Government funding for those organisations which some would say were out of proportion to other Government funding for voluntary organisations. However, that was a response in the early days to a new threat when it was very difficult to fund those organisations.

Some of those organisations are now quite mature. As I have said, there are many demands for funding for voluntary organisations and we have reached the conclusion that we have. However, that does not represent a diminution of our commitment to AIDs, and I hope that the figures that I have given will demonstrate that.

The hon. Lady referred to the George House Trust. If I may, I will write to her about that as the matter is of considerable concern to her and my area of the country. She also mentioned the figures for the Day report. Perhaps I can refer to some of our latest information on the basis of which we work.

It is reassuring that the projected figures for new AIDs cases have been borne out by events. Without being complacent, we have reason to have some confidence in the methods that we have used over the past few years to prevent the further spread of that dreadful disease.

The figures that we are working on are the fruit of 18 months' work by the expert group which has benefited from increasing amounts of information from surveillance networks. In particular, we were able to use data from the Government's programme of anonymous HIV surveys. The estimate on which we are now working is that there were between 19,628 and 28,400 HIV-infected adults in England and Wales at the end of 1991.

It has been suggested, and the hon. Lady refers to this, that that is good news and it has been used as an argument for reducing the commitment to AIDS. That is not necessarily our view. The figures are lower than might have been suggested at an earlier stage and we are clearly glad that we have evidence of the effects of behaviour change among homosexual men and drug misusers.

However, it must be emphasised that those figures still indicate a large reservoir of people who are not only likely to develop AIDS themselves, but may infect others. They also predict the number of people who are likely to require care. It must be remembered that nearly all of them are likely to be already infected with HIV. We were correct regarding the heterosexual spread of HIV as a real and growing threat and we proceed on that basis, even though, at present, the majority of cases of HIV infection are still transmitted through homosexual intercourse.

The hon. Lady mentioned the sexual behaviour of young people. I agree with her. We must accept that there is increased sexual activity at a much younger age than in recent years. We might regret that, but we must accept that it exists and that it poses a threat to health and to the spread of HIV.

We are committed to the provision of family planning advice and contraceptive services to what some people regard as very young teenagers whom we know to be sexually active. She referred to "The Health of the Nation". It contains one of the key targets for the reduction of under-16 pregnancies. That means some fairly controversial forays into family planning advice and contraceptive services for under-16s, despite all the taboos and legal uncertainties that surround it.

It is difficult, but we support and pay great tribute to pioneering organisations such as the Brooke advisory centre, whose priority it is to reach young people. I have opened innovative initiatives such as the youth advice shop in Accrington, of which the hon. Lady might be aware. It is run by Lancashire county council and others and it contains a family planning component. We must recognise that, in order to reach young people and try to reduce the dangers to them, we need to be rather subtle and make help accessible.

I am aware also of the controversy surrounding changes to the Education Bill, but I remind the hon. Lady and all those who predict dire consequences that one of the main changes is that it makes sex education compulsory for all schools. It is not open to a board of governors to say, "We are not going to offer sex education." That is very explicit for the first time. The hon. Lady regrets that parents will have the option to withdraw children. I predict

that very small numbers will be involved. We look to the Department for Education to give clear guidance on what is expected in terms of sex education programmes. There is no doubt that, if we do not somehow reach children —it is a truism that parents in this country are not particularly good at it—they will not get that basic education. The hon. Lady is right to highlight that matter.

I emphasise the theme of my remarks. There is no change of attitude. We recognise that the heterosexual population, as well as the traditional groups, are vulnerable to HIV. We will continue to target them. We will continue to spend large sums on them. Once again, I congratulate the hon. Lady on raising this important topic.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at thirteen minutes past Eleven o'clock.

House of Commons

Friday 23 July 1993

The House met at half-past Nine o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Points of Order

9.35 am

Mr. Tam Dalyell (Linlithgow): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order. The House will realise that there are petitions today, but I shall take a point of order from the Leader of the House.

Mr. Newton: You will be aware, Madam Speaker, that a careful check of the Division lists in *Hansard* for the first Division last night reveals only 316 names for the Ayes and 317 for the Noes. On that basis, of course, the Opposition amendment would have been rejected without your casting vote. It would be wrong to expect you to make any immediate comment on this, but I think that the whole House would hope that you will feel able to inquire into whatever mistake or misunderstanding may have occurred.

Mr. Dalyell *rose*——

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order. Let me deal with one point of order at a time. Is it on the same point of order?

Mr. Skinner: Mine is, Madam Speaker; yours is different, Tam.

In view of what the Leader of the House has had to say about last night's vote, is it not significant that this Government, who have lost the authority and confidence of the House of Commons, have not even got Whips and Tellers who are capable of counting? No wonder the country is up to its neck in debt.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. We should not use up a great deal of time on this matter because I can deal with it. The matter raised by the Leader of the House will no doubt be looked into, but if there was an error such as he describes, it does not affect the main Question that was put to the House last night. Of course, today's proceedings are not affected by it at all.

Mr. Tony Benn (Chesterfield): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. At the end of last night's vote I put to you article 1 of the Bill of Rights, which says:

"That the pretended power of suspending of laws or the execution of laws by regall authority without consent of Parlyament is illegall."

I am now able to put before you two items which indicate that that is in prospect. First, the Prime Minister said:

"The treaty in the Maastricht Bill—the European Communities (Amendment) Bill—is now law, as the House well understands. Royal Assent has been given . . . so the treaty will be ratified. Seventy-one separate votes in favour of the Bill should not be frustrated by one parliamentary motion expressing an opinion to the contrary."—[*Official Report*, 22 July 1993; Vol. 229, c. 526.]

The Prime Minister was determining which votes were valid and which votes were not, and he was doing it by the authority that he has as Prime Minister.

Secondly, and more significantly, the Government have indicated that if they lose today's vote there will be an election. Does the Prime Minister have the authority from the Queen? Has she said that there will be an election? [*Interruption.*] That is the issue. I am asking a straightforward question. If the Queen has given the Prime Minister the authority to dissolve Parliament, he should tell us so, as he would be using regal authority to destroy a Parliament that had reached a view with which he did not agree.

Madam Speaker: As the right hon. Gentleman and the House would have expected of me, I have given serious consideration to the point that was put to me last night. I am satisfied that today's motion is in conformity with section 7 of the European Communities (Amendment) Act and meets its requirement in the new situation following the Prime Minister's statement last night. By the same token, the amendment that stands in the name of the Leader of the Opposition is equally in order, and I have selected it.

On another point, may I remind the House that, as they are proceedings pursuant to an Act of Parliament, the debate today may continue until 4 o'clock.

Mr. Tam Dalyell (Linlithgow): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Under the rules of the House of Commons as they pertain on a Friday, have you had any request from the Foreign Secretary to make a statement on the significant compromise reached a few hours ago by the United Nations negotiators in Baghdad—[*Interruption.*] This might be a question of peace and war—on the negotiations that the United Nations is conducting, particularly with regard to the lifting of sanctions as part of that compromise?

Madam Speaker: Not so far, but there is a little time to go until 10 o'clock, so there is always hope.

Mr. William Cash (Stafford): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. With respect to the motion, there is presumably some difficulty in the fact that the treaty says that there will be a protocol on social policy but the Act of Parliament that we passed only last week expressly excluded the protocol on social policy. Does that create a difficulty for the motion?

Madam Speaker: No difficulty at all. The hon. Gentleman will have read the motion carefully and will understand what the debate is about. He will make up his own mind how he will vote at 4 o'clock.

PETITIONS

Sub-post Offices

9.42 am

Mr. Michael Clapham (Barnsley, West and Penistone): Rarely will there have been so many hon. Members present to hear a petition.

The petition comes from the residents of Elsecar. It is addressed to "The honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Parliament assembled." It says:

The humble petitioners of the sub-post office users in Elsecar, South Yorkshire . . . are against the removal by the Government of the right to receive pensions and benefit payments at local post offices.

Wherefore your petitioners pray that your honourable House request the Government to give people the right to choose to receive pensions and benefits payments at their local post office, recognising the benefits of this to individual and community.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Elsecar is a rural village in some ways typical, and in others not so typical, of the 16 others in my constituency. Any decision to remove from the sub-post office the opportunity to pay benefits over the counter would substantially affect its viability.

To lie upon the Table.

Mr. Robert Maclennan (Caithness and Sutherland): I have the honour to present a petition bearing the signatures of 4,895 residents of Caithness and Sutherland. —*[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. If hon. Members were quieter, we could hear the hon. Member for Caithness and Sutherland (Mr. Maclennan).

Mr. Maclennan: I have the honour to present a petition bearing the signatures of 4,895 residents of Caithness and Sutherland who express their

deep concern that the Government propose to privatise post offices and compulsorily transfer social security payments from post offices to banks, and we oppose these measures . . . as they threaten the very survival of rural post offices and deny the efficiency and convenience of the present system, especially in rural areas.

The petition goes on to state:

Wherefore your petitioners pray that your honourable House will do everything possible to impress on the Secretaries of State for Trade and Industry and for Social Security the need for an autonomous post office service in the public sector and to abandon plans for the compulsory transfer of social security payments to the banks.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

To lie upon the Table.

Donna Cooper

Mr. Richard Shepherd (Aldridge-Brownhills): I have the honour to present to the House a petition from the parents and family of Donna Cooper.

Donna was the innocent victim of a particularly mindless crime. She was killed by a stolen car driven recklessly by a person who had been released on bail the previous day. Her death at the tragically early age of 13 outraged the whole nation as well as her local community and helped to concentrate attention on the vital need to amend the law.

I must pay tribute to Donna's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Cooper, her brother and sister, her aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Hayward, and all their family and friends and those who have worked so enormously hard to raise the petition, which has been signed by 273,000 people.

I would also like to thank the Home Secretary for finding the time personally to receive from Mr. and Mrs. Cooper a petition raised by our local newspaper, the *Evening Mail*, containing more than 70,000 signatures. The petition reads:

Wherefore your Petitioners pray that your Honourable House urgently consider the need to increase the powers of the Courts given in the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992 as two years imprisonment (five if the injury is fatal) to better reflect the loss of a human life. Sentencing should be also punitive and exemplary.

To lie upon the Table.

Social Policy Protocol (Confidence Motion)

Madam Speaker: I have selected the amendment standing in the name of the Leader of the Opposition to today's main motion.

9.46 am

The Prime Minister (Mr. John Major): I beg to move,

That this House has confidence in the policy of Her Majesty's Government on the adoption of the Protocol on Social Policy.

After yesterday's motion, the Cabinet thought it right to bring this motion immediately before the House. I said yesterday to the House that European policy had created a division in British politics for 20 years. We have seen the effects of that vividly over recent months. If asked, most people in the country would say that the House has spent most of its time in the past year doing nothing but debate the European Communities treaty. It has, indeed, been fully debated, but the House has done a great deal more. In one parliamentary Session, it has passed a large number of reforming Bills—on education, asylum, housing and urban renewal, trade union reform, and personal pensions. One third of our manifesto at the last election will have been enacted by the end of this parliamentary Session, and that is much to the advantage of the British nation.

Most of that will have been masked from public gaze by the disputes over European policy. Not only has that legislation been passed, but, over the same period, we have moved clearly from recession to growth. It is now clear that growth prospects for the year are likely to exceed earlier forecasts.

Those are some of the realities of what has occurred over the past year. Britain is now moving back into recovery, ready for significant sustained growth with low inflation. At the general election, that was the prescription which we promised and it is now becoming clearer day by day that that is what is being delivered to the British nation.

Against that background, it is in our national interest that we keep up the pace of reform and the pace of recovery. Parliament must put this stalemate over Europe behind it. I am not prepared to let it poison the political atmosphere any longer. The boil must be lanced, and it must be lanced today. Therefore, I shall set out in the clearest possible terms the implication for today's debate.

We have before us a motion of confidence in the Government, with all the implications that flow from that. Lest there be any doubt in the mind of any hon. Member, the issue of confidence also extends to the Opposition's amendment. No hon. Member should be under any misapprehension about that, even though its terms are intended to entrap the unwary. It is precisely the amendment that was defeated yesterday.

At the conclusion of this debate, either the Government will have won the vote of confidence and we can proceed with our policy, subject to one outstanding court case, or we shall have lost and I shall seek a dissolution of Parliament.

Mr. Tony Benn (Chesterfield): Will the Prime Minister give way?

The Prime Minister: I shall give way to the right hon. Gentleman later. I want to make a little progress now.

This debate is about the Government's policy of rejecting the social chapter. I shall spell out the disadvantages so that no one can misunderstand me. Yesterday, the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) quoted from the social chapter. He made it sound innocuous, harmless and even benign. If he wants to keep his blinkers on, so be it—but let Conservative Members be in no doubt about the costs and the implications of the social chapter.

Measures that the Community has already brought forward, which abuse health and safety provisions, show us the scale of the costs likely to be involved in the social chapter's provisions. The working time directive orginally would have cost British industry £5 billion; by our efforts, that figure has been substantially reduced. The part-time directive orginally would have cost £1 billion; largely by our efforts, that directive has been stalled. The young workers directive would cost up to £150 million. Those are just three provisions, but they add up to more than £6 billion in potential costs. I could add to that llist. If the social chapter came into being, those costs would be added to for every single business in this country, with the inevitable effect on jobs.

Even the right hon. and learned Gentleman must realise that employers would have to meet those costs, and more, under the social chapter. There would be higher prices, lost jobs and less competitiveness. That is the policy which the right hon. and learned Gentleman espouses. He may wish to indulge himself by voting for the social chapter—he has the luxury of being able to strike attitudes—but we must deal in realities. He would not have to pay the price of his attitudes. The price would be paid by millions of men and women working hard to hold down jobs, bring up families and improve their working conditions.

At any time, the social chapter would be an unwarranted intrusion into British life; but now, just when recovery is beginning to emerge, it would put recovery at risk. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman does not want to take my word for it, perhaps he will take the word of the chairman of ICI—*[Interruption.]* Labour Members may choose to scoff and sneer at the chairman of ICI, but it is his company which provides jobs in their constituencies. It is the policy of Labour Members which would cost their constituents those jobs.

What the chairman of ICI had to say—perhaps the Opposition would care to listen to and reflect upon it—was:

"Continental Europe is currently in deep recession while the UK has the beginnings of an economic recovery . . . It is . . . asbsolutely vital that business does not have imposed upon it additional costs which are unnecessary and which, in turn, could hinder the recovery."

Those are not my words, but the words of one of the most senior business men in this country.

Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman want to hinder the recovery, or does he think that he knows more about British industry than Sir Denys Henderson, who runs ICI? Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman really want to impose the social chapter and hazard the recovery now coming through, especially the five consecutive monthly falls in unemployment? It is self-evident that that is exactly what he wishes to do. The most fatuous comment this House has heard for months was his assertion yesterday that the social chapter would create jobs, not cost them. Only in the unemployment offices would it create jobs.

Mr. Tony Marlow (Northampton, North): What does my right hon. Friend say in response to the argument put forward by many respectable business men that if we ratify this wretched treaty but we do not have the social chapter, things will be done through the social chapter by the other 11 countries which, through other aspects of the treaty, will then be imposed on the United Kingdom? If we are not there, we cannot control and restrain them.

The Prime Minister: I would say what many business men would have said to my hon. Friend had he asked them —that he is talking nonsense. The business men of this country have made it absolutely clear that they support ratification of the Maastricht treaty without the social chapter. I fail to understand why my hon. Friend wishes to impose extra costs on companies in his constituency of Northampton, North and put his constituents out of work. I hope that he can justify that to them.

I repeat that the Government cannot afford to, and will not, throw away the recovery. The social chapter is a risk which we will not take.

Mr. Benn: In making this debate a vote of confidence, the Prime Minister and other Ministers have said that if the Government lose there will be a general election. I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman a straightforward question: has he asked the Queen to grant a dissolution? Has she agreed to grant a dissolution? Has the right hon. Gentleman considered the possibility that—as has happened in the past—she might say, "It is only a new Parliament. There are other leaders who might take it on"? She might refuse a dissolution.

The Prime Minister: I have made it perfectly clear that if we lose the Division today I will seek a dissolution of Parliament. If the Government cannot carry their business, a dissolution of Parliament would undoubtedly be granted. The fact is that yesterday a disparate group of Members, voting for different interests on the same matter, chose to defeat the Government on a matter for which there is a genuine majority in the House. I repeat that the Government regard this as an issue of confidence and we will seek the dissolution of Parliament if we are defeated today.

Mr. A. J. Beith (Berwick-upon-Tweed): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Is it in order for the Prime Minister, during proceedings in this House, to say that a dissolution would undoubtedly be granted, thereby appearing to put words in the mouth of the sovereign?

Madam Speaker: It is for all hon. Members and Ministers to make their own comments, not for the Speaker of this House to interpret them or comment upon them.

The Prime Minister: It is interesting to know in reality how unready the Liberal Democrates are for an election ——*[Interruption.]*

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. I shall take a point of order.

Mr. Peter Shore (Bethnal Green and Stepney): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. It is perfectly clear that the Prime Minister's speech, and his whole case, is based upon what he considers to be the evils that are contained in the social chapter—a document which was issued in 1989 and was referred to in the reply to yesterday's debate. From the researches of my hon. Friend the Member for Newham, South (Mr. Spearing), it emerged yesterday in a written answer that he received from a Minister that the social charter has never been presented or published by Her Majesty's Government in Britain. Is it not the case that that charter, which is at the heart of this debate, has not been published by the Government, is not on the Table of the House, and is not in the Vote Office, so how can we proceed sensibly to consider this matter? Is it not the case that this whole debate is being conducted on hearsay and prejudice without the proper documentation being before the House?

Madam Speaker: We are proceeding today under an Act of Parliament that has already passed through this House.

Mr. Frank Cook (Stockton, North): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. You will recall that I spent nearly four years in the Whips Office—[HON. MEMBERS: "Oh."] During that time, I was instructed not to apply any overt duress—*[Laughter.]* I will rephrase that, for the benefit of right hon. and hon. Members who are unable to follow the narrative. I was advised not to apply pressure or duress overtly in order to persuade my right hon. and hon. Friends to vote one way or another. I tried to obey that advice. Is not the Prime Minister's reference to the prospect of a general election creating improper pressure on the many Conservative Members whose seats are in jeopardy?

Madam Speaker: That is barely a point of order for me. I can tell the hon. Gentleman that I, too, was in the Whips Office, in support of a Government who did not have a majority—and I know all about duress.

The Prime Minister: The House is full of former Whips.

At this moment, Britain is uniquely placed in regard to the rest of Europe—a "paradise for investors", as M. Delors so kindly put it. There is no doubt that Britain—with low inflation, low interest rates, competitive labour costs and competitive interest rates—has the leading edge in the marketplace in Europe. The Government have no intention of throwing away those hard-won advantages, as the social chapter would compel us to do.

The obsession that some Opposition Members have with the social chapter is bizarre. They want more regulation and more social costs just as the rest of Europe is seeking to draw back from extra social costs. France is curbing spending on health and pensions. Holland is freezing social security benefits. Germany is cutting back unemployment assistance and job creation schemes. They are doing so because they realise that Europe must keep all its costs down to compete in the world.

Yesterday, the right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke about competitiveness in Europe, but Europe must compete with the United States and Japan as well. All across Europe people know that Europe is losing competitiveness at present. Twenty years ago, the unemployment rate across Europe was 60 per cent. of that in the United States. Today, it is 60 per cent. above the United States. That is largely because of the extra costs that we have placed on our businesses, running their competitiveness and damaging their employment prospects.

The Opposition may seek to make gestures and price people out of work, but the Government's job is to put them back in work—and that is the policy which we shall follow.

Mr. Alex Salmond (Banff and Buchan): The Prime Minister is making another knocking speech against the social chapter. The reality is that he believes that he can politically survive today only if he threatens his entire party with self-destruction in a general election campaign. Will the right hon. Gentleman tell the House how often and how long such a tactic can be successfully employed?

The Prime Minister: The hon. Gentleman, with his curious voting pattern on Europe, represents a part of the United Kingdom which has done remarkably well out of inward investment because of our membership of the European Community—a membership which he would have done well to support in the Lobbies last night with the Government. The hon. Gentleman's constituents will have noted how he voted.

Mr. Seamus Mallon (Newry and Armagh): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. History shows that down the years sordid deals on the Floor of the House have cost the lives of countless people in the north of Ireland. Does not the Prime Minister have a duty today to tell the House what deal he did with the nine Ulster Unionists to buy their votes yesterday, contrary to their manifesto? Will you, Madam Speaker, also ask the Prime Minister to rule that the definition of an honest man is one who, once he has been bought, stays bought?

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman knows that those matters are not for me but for debate.

The Prime Minister: I will clear up the matter for the hon. Gentleman so that he is left in no doubt. Nothing was asked for, nothing was offered, and nothing was given. So perhaps the hon. Gentleman would care to withdraw his remark. He might also bear in mind that unemployment in the part of the United Kingdom that he represents is very high, as he never ceases to remind the House. He, too, would make it higher, by the way that he cast his vote in the Divisions that we have had.

Mr. Hugh Dykes (Harrow, East): I am grateful to my right hon. Friend for giving way—particularly, given his latter remarks, as I am wearing the Anglo-Irish tie. Further to his comments yesterday, which he has just repeated, does he agree that so severe has the recession become in the other European countries that, although no specific proposals for the social chapter have yet been made, when they are published in due course we shall find that they are milder than the social action programme that the Government already accept under the social dimension? May I therefore ask my right hon. Friend what all the fuss is about?

The Prime Minister: I will tell my hon. Friend what all the fuss is about. Once we adhere to the social protocol, it will be there for good—not just for the brief period in which our partners in Europe may be wary about bringing matters forward.

Mr. William Cash (Stafford): Given that the motion deals specifically with the adoption of the protocol on social policy, will my right hon. Friend tell me how we shall be able to go ahead with it when it is expressly excluded by the Act of Parliament that was passed last week but is included in the treaty that my right hon. Friend signed?

The Prime Minister: I think that my hon. Friend, despite his close study of the matter, has perhaps misunderstood the domestic legislation that we have been examining. If he cares to read it more carefully—perhaps he could take some time to do so before we vote this afternoon—he will understand the whole matter a little better.

The Government were elected just over a year ago with the largest popular vote in British history. It was a vote for policies for economic recovery, which we are now getting, for private enterprise, which we will sustain, and for individual freedom, which we are extending.

Mr. John Hume (Foyle) *rose*——

The Prime Minister: If the hon. Gentleman will forgive me, I have generously given way, and I wish to make some progress.

The social chapter would put much of that at risk. What the electors did not vote for at the last election was the right hon. and learned Gentleman's policies: increased inflation, corporatism and state intervention, a reverse of trade union reform, and craven compliance and abject surrender in the face of every regulation coming from Brussels. The right hon. and learned Gentleman and his colleagues are only too ready to advance socialism through Europe, never ready to stand up to battle for British ideas and British ideas in Europe.

One whiff of a new regulation, a new burden or a new cost from Europe and the right hon. and learned Gentleman yelps that he wants it too. No doubt as a small boy he was avid for measles and desperate for chicken pox as well. What is more, he says, without these new burdens Britain will become a sweatshop economy. It would be a great help if, during the recess, the right hon. and learned Gentleman would go out into industry and meet some of the people who run it.

What would the social chapter do to much of other parts of legislation? Gone, reluctantly and sadly in the minds of Opposition Members, are the days when the trade unions held such sway in this country. They held it to ransom month after month, year after year. Now all they hold is the right hon. and learned Gentleman to ransom, issue by issue—not the Leader of the Opposition, but the trade unions' glove puppet when it comes to policy. The social chapter would put much of that in reverse gear. The last thing we want is a Government committed to putting union bosses back in the boardroom, and I cannot believe that the House will vote for that.

Many countries in the European Community are now going into recession, and that is where the obsession with extra regulation would put us back as well, just as we have emerged from it. I cannot understand why the right hon. and learned Gentleman wants us to adopt the social chapter when other countries are beginning to realise its costs and burdens. As the president——

Mr. Hume *rose*——

The Prime Minister: I have given way sufficiently.

As the president of the CBI said in *The Times* yesterday —*[Interruption.]* I know that the Opposition do not like these quotes from people who understand business but they are going to get them. He said:

[The Prime Minister]

"A Commons vote tonight leading to inclusion of the social chapter in the ratified Maastricht treaty would set back the cause of common sense and competitiveness in Europe by sevaral years."

The right hon. and learned Gentleman will shortly be the first Labour leader to speak to the CBI; perhaps before he goes he should start listening to the CBI, too.

Other countries around the world are beginning to realise the effect of excessive social costs. The chairmen of our leading banks yesterday may it perfectly clear that their concern—*[Interruption.]* The Opposition do not care. I am talking about the people who run industry and commerce, but the Opposition do not care. They do not mind how many people are unemployed if they can salve their consciences. The chairmen made it clear that people outside, European business men, are

"concerned about the costs and over-rigid labour and social benefit structures in their own countries, and see the social chapter as adding to this problem."

Only Opposition Members fail to be able to see that.

The choice because the House today could not be clearer. The Government have opened up new opportunities for people with low inflation and for union members to have more say in their affairs, more opportunities for home owners and more opportunities for business to compete abroad. By contrast, the Opposition offer policies of opportunism, not opportunity, at every level.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman said last year:

"I do not think we should oppose the Maastricht treaty",

yet that is exactly what he did last night. He claims to be an ardent European. He said:

"I have always believed that Britain's future lies in Europe, and that we must take a confident and leading role in the European Community."

So what has the ardent European done in the last year? He voted against Second Reading of the European Communities (Amendment) Bill. He voted against Maastricht in the paving debate; he voted against Maastricht last night. What did he do on Second Reading of the Single European Act, this ardent European? He abstained. What did he do on Second Reading of the Maastricht Bill, this ardent European? He abstained. On Third Reading, the ardent European abstained. Mr. Valiant-for-Abstention—the ardent European. Perhaps, out of sheer habit, he will abstain when we come to the vote this afternoon. Some European, and some principles! As Dr. Johnson said of a man with allegedly good principles, "He does not wear them out in practice"; and neither does the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He wears his principles lightly so that he may discard them whenever convenient.

This country cannot afford to let this stalemate on European policy continue. It is against the interests of government in this country to do so. This House must decide today whether it is prepared to sustain the Government in office or encourage me to seek a dissolution. We did not lightly bring this motion forward, but the matter could not have been left any longer. It has to be decided, and the only way to decide it is to reject the social chapter. If this country were to accept it, it would mean an end to recovery, a return to corporatism, and an end to competitiveness. That is not the way forward for this country, and I hope that the House will decisively reject it.

10.16 am

Mr. John Smith (Monklands, East): I beg to move, to leave out from 'That" to the end of the Question, and to add instead thereof:

'in the opinion of this House, Her Majesty's Government should not deposit the Articles of Ratification of the Treaty of European Union with the Government of the Italian Republic until such time as it has given notification to the European Community that it intends to adopt the Agreement attached to the Protocol on Social Policy.'.

Last night, the Prime Minister suffered a humiliating and crushing defeat. It was a defeat not only on a crucial plank of his European policy but on the single issue which is taken as the flagship of his Administration.

With no hint of modesty, and clearly no inkling—not even a clue—of the problems to come, the Prime Minister advertised his visit to Maastricht as game, set and match. Nineteen months later, after endless footfaults, double faults and mishits, he was struggling with a tie-break. Today, like some petulant tennis prima donna, he is threatening to take his racquet away. Perhaps, after his next negotiating triumph in Europe, the Prime Minister would be better advised to use cricketing metaphor—but, then again, perhaps not. After all, he was clean bowled yesterday and he has been forced to follow on today.

Today, in this debate and in this crucial vote, is the Prime Minister relying on the merits of his opt-out strategy, the force of his arguments and on the strength of his case? No, I fear not. He tried all that yesterday and look where it got him. The very centre of his case yesterday was that Britain had to opt in to Europe. He told us how crucial it was to be on the inside track, shaping events, defending Britain's interests, involved and influential in the councils of decision. In his portentous way, the Prime Minister warned us yesterday:

"If we wilfully throw away our capacity to defend our interests and promote our policies . . . this country will pay a dear price for that folly in the years to come."—[*Official Report*, 22 July 1993; Vol. 229, c. 522.]

He was in his "Britain at the heart of Europe" mode, but he appeared throughout it all, as he has today, to be totally unaware of the fundamental contradiction that is right at the heart of his own argument.

The more the Prime Minister argued for Britain to be involved with real influence in all aspects of the European Community, the more he exposed the sheer absurdity of an opt out from the social protocol, which would give this country no influence and no power over what he claimed to be matters of great concern to the Community and to this country. The Prime Minister's version of being at the heart of Europe, apparently, is to be required to leave the room when the Community considers crucial social policy decisions. The triumph of the ace negotiator is an empty chair for Britain in the Council of Ministers. The right hon. Gentleman, just as appears to be the case today, appeared to be totally incapable of comprehending the disordered logic of his own case, which simply amounts to the bizarre claim that in order to opt in, Britain, somehow, has to opt out.

Nor has the Prime Minister been able to explain the pertinent questions that were asked from the Opposition side of the House yesterday about why, if the social chapter is such a disaster for this country, that penetrating piece of wisdom has not penetrated the mind of Chancellor Kohl, Mr. Balladur, whom the Prime Minister will be meeting on Monday, and Mr. Lubbers, or the mind of

members of any other European Community Governments with whom the Prime Minister seeks to have fraternal relations.

Mr. Hume: I thank the right hon. and learned Gentleman for giving way, unlike the Prime Minister who obviously does not want to answer questions that he thinks are going to be about Northern Ireland. I had hoped that I could put my question to the Prime Minister, so perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman will answer for him.

Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman agree that there is a very serious contradiction in the position of this country, which is one of the major contributors to the European Community budget and which will be paying for this costly social chapter that the Prime Minister talked about, when ordinary working people will not be allowed to benefit from the social chapter and when the Prime Minister will not be allowed to sit round the table when the budget for the social chapter is being distributed? It is illogical.

Mr. Smith: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman. He has highlighted something that is becoming increasingly understood by the people of this country, as we now focus properly on the social protocol aspect of the debate. The people of this country do not understand why they have a Government who want to deny to them the social rights, the social opportunities and the social advantages which the whole Community wants for its citizens.

Mr. David Shaw (Dover): Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman give way?

Mr. Smith: No.

Furthermore, many sensible employers in this country understand that it would be very wise to have a level playing field of social responsibility which would stop companies and countries trying to drive each other down in order to get a fleeting competitive advantage. The whole of the European Community—parties and Governments—is in favour of the social chapter, except for two: the Prime Minister and his party and Mr. Le Pen and his party. I am bound to say that I am more proud of the company that I keep than of the company that the Prime Minister keeps.

We know from the terms of the Government's motion today that the Prime Minister has abandoned his flawed arguments. He has been backed against the wall and forced, in order to survive, to threaten his own party with electoral suicide.

Mr. Phillip Oppenheim (Amber Valley): Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman give way?

Mr. Smith: I will certainly give way to one of the possible candidates for electoral suicide.

Mr. Oppenheim: The right hon. and learned Gentleman has said the same thing in the last three elections and he lost each time, but I thank him for his courtesy, if that is the word, in giving way. If labour market regulation is so good for workers, can he explain how it is that in Spain, which has some of the toughest employment laws in Europe and all the benefits of a socialist Government, there is 20 per cent. unemployment?

Mr. Smith: If Conservative economic policies for this country are so wise, I could ask the hon. Gentleman why it is that we have millions of unemployed people here. [HON. MEMBERS: "Answer."] Quiet. It is time that some members of the Cabinet went on their holidays. They might come back a little calmer and a little quieter. They should not allow the prospect of electoral suicide to upset them in the way that, apparently, it is doing, but they sit there worrying about electoral suicide. [HON. MEMBERS: "Answer."] The simple answer is that all other parties in Europe understand that economic progress and social progress go together. That is understood on the left in Europe and on the right in Europe. It is also understood in the centre of Europe. The only place where it is not comprehended is here, by these people who are temporarily in charge of this country.

It appears not to have occurred to the Prime Minister that his tactic of employing a quasi motion of confidence in Her Majesty's Government is not a sign of confidence but a display of weakness. The Prime Minister lost the argument in a House in which he has a clear overall majority on the most important aspect of his legislative programme—one which, moreover, he has stamped with his own personal design and authority. As a result of his failure, he has been forced to make a humiliating threat to his own party: that unless Conservative Members come into the Government Lobby today he will press the self-destruct button of a general election, which both he and they know would result in a massive defeat for this Government and in the loss of their seats.

I noticed that one of the rebels said on radio or television this morning or yesterday that a general election would result in the loss of possibly one third of the Conservative seats in this House of Commons—hardly a sign of confidence. It is hardly a symbol of authority to go to your own party and say, "If I can't drag you into the Lobby, I'll give your electors a chance to get rid of you." That is this man of confidence, this triumphant hero of the negotiating table, this self-confident leader of the Conservative party. Former leaders of the Conservative party will be turning in their graves when they think of what is being done in the name of the Conservative party today.

Mr. Gyles Brandreth (City of Chester): As a connoisseur of knock-about, I congratulate the right hon. and learned Gentleman, though knock-about is not very prime ministerial. *[Interruption.]* I invite the right hon. and learned Gentleman to come to my constituency, where I should like him to see whether he can find one group of business people who support the position that he takes. Why does he show such contempt for business people in my constituency? Will he come to my constituency and meet the business community? Not one of them agrees with him. They enjoy his knock-about, but they do not agree with his policies.

Mr. Smith: I should be happy to go to the hon. Gentleman's constituency during a general election, when the hon. Gentleman would have to face the business people in his constituency. I hope that he would also consult the working people in his constituency—the employees as well as the managing directors.

The Prime Minister gave us a list of industrialists and bankers. I am not astonished that the chairmen of banks signed a letter that the Prime Minister sent round to them. Bankers are not noted for refusing to sign letters from Prime Ministers when they are asked if they will kindly add their signature to help the Prime Minister out in a debate

[Mr. Smith]

in the House of Commons. He might do better to rely on the strength of his arguments than on the fleeting support of some commercial banks.

We noticed throughout the debate constant references to managing directors, senior executives and the heads of employers' organisations. Why is no thought given to the millions of working people in this country and throughout the Community? The Conservative party no longer wants to represent people who work for a living. It no longer wants to represent working people. It is becoming the redoubt of the privileged and the elite—the people who, as wages fall for the poorest, are constantly increasing their wages, pensions, perks and benefits.

Sir Donald Thompson (Calder Valley): I thank the right hon. and learned Gentleman for giving way. Perhaps during the general election in four years' time he will come to my constituency, which has been on the list for Labour gain in the last four elections. For almost the past 20 years, the right hon. and learned Gentleman and his hon. Friends have promised to win the next election. Ordinary people in my constituency do not want them and will not have it.

Mr. Smith: I think that we should put the matter speedily to a test. It is within the power of every Conservative Member to join us in the Lobby today to ensure that a general election is called. After all, if the Government believe that they have the right policies and the support of the people, they have nothing to fear from a general election. The hon. Gentleman appears to have forgotten that they would be able to come back with the prospect not of three or four years in power, although that must be rather uncertain in the present situation, but with five years in power. Why do not they seize the advantage that they are being offered by the Opposition? What is troubling the Conservative party?

Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend, East): If the Maastricht treaty goes through, does the right hon. and learned Gentleman think that there will be many issues to talk about in general elections?

Mr. Smith: I think there will be quite a number of issues to discuss. If the hon. Gentleman asks his constituents, he will find that many of them would like to talk to him about the imposition of VAT on heating bills.

Miss Emma Nicholson (Torridge and Devon, West): I worked on the social charter in Brussels on behalf of the House as a member of the Select Committee on Employment. Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman agree that significant social benefits on health and safety flow from the Single European Act, which many other EC national states, such as Greece, have not implemented? Does not he believe, in all honesty, that it would be better properly to implement such measures, which will protect children, women and disabled people, than to pile Peleon on Ossa and make the structure of the European Community's social policy so top heavy that it will bring everything down?

Mr. Smith: When the hon. Lady was taking part in these discussions in Europe she must have had daily contact with the other 11 nation states that take part in the deliberations of the Community. She must have met their Members of Parliament and leaders. She will know, as we all know in the House, that every one of them wants the social protocol to be included in the treaty. None of them appears to have the fears and worries that are expressed by the Conservative party.

It is interesting that the Conservative party has become so blinkered on this issue that it cannot comprehend that there is any other point of view; but there is and it sometimes comes from the Conservative Benches. The hon. Member for Harrow, East (Mr. Dykes) asked the Prime Minister today, "What is all the fuss about?" That view is held in the Conservative party. It is held by the right hon. Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup (Sir E. Heath). Speaking in one of our debates, he said:

"When it comes to the social chapter, I would ask my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and the Government to move with extreme caution. I do not accept the figures that have been given by the Government or, in particular, by the Secretary of State for Employment on the consequences of the social chapter, and nor does the majority of people in the Community." [*Official Report*, 20 May 1993; Vol. 225, c. 405.]

If the Prime Minister and his colleagues cannot even persuade a former Conservative Prime Minister not only of the strength of their argument but of the veracity of statistics, it is an extremely revealing insight into modern Conservative Government.

The Prime Minister must have contact with other leaders when he goes to these jolly gatherings of the European People's party. What was it that made Chancellor Kohl so disordered and confused that he has ended up being a socialist? He does not look much like a socialist to me. When Mr. Balladur comes to see the Prime Minister on Monday, will he say, "You did well, John, keeping Britain out of the social chapter"? Of course he will not. Will he say to the Prime Minister, "Good morning, comrade"? The right-wing Government of France will not withdraw from the social protocol of the European Community. The Government can issue a statement after Mr. Balladur's visit on Monday to clear the matter up. Chancellor Kohl told the German trade union conference that he would fight for the social chapter being kept in the European treaty. I wonder how he managed to do that.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Kenneth Clarke) *rose——[Interruption.]*

Madam Speaker: Order. The House will come to order.

Mr. Mark Fisher (Stoke-on-Trent, Central): This is an assassination.

Madam Speaker: Mr. Fisher—order.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: The right hon. and learned Gentleman knows that there are 17 million unemployed people in Europe. The Prime Minister reminded us that employment in Europe used to be 60 per cent. less than in the United States; it is now 60 per cent. higher. My hon. Friend the Member for Amber Valley (Mr. Oppenheim) reminded us that unemployment in Spain is 20 per cent. German employment is rising beyond our own. When my right hon. Friend goes to the Copenhagen summit, and when we go to Tokyo, people from Europe express concern about what they call the structural employment that has developed in Europe in the last 10 years.

If the right hon. and learned Gentleman does not think that everybody else in Europe is acutely aware of the heavy and excessive non-wage social costs that are being imposed on labour in the Community, he is very much mistaken.

He would be in a minority of one in invoking all the stuff that he is now invoking and threatening to put more costs on employment if ever there were a Labour Government in this country.

Mr. Smith: I think that I can say this to the right hon. and learned Gentleman: his speech was a little more effective than the Prime Minister's. [HON. MEMBERS: "Answer".] I will answer the right hon. and learned Gentleman very directly, but before I do let us reflect on what result he wants in the Lobby this afternoon. I think that I am indulging in the considerable art of generosity in letting all the aspirants make their speeches now.

The Chancellor is right to say that the people of Europe are concerned about the state of their economies. Who could be anything but concerned when employment is at its current level? However, other countries in the European Community do not see the social protocol as a reason for that employment. Apart from everything else, the issue of pay is not a part of the social protocol, as I said in yesterday's debate.

The Prime Minister's case is that other countries in Europe are seeking to follow the British Conservative party's fearless way forward. I see that the Secretary of State for Employment is nodding—no doubt he will give that message to the European People's party in his little office in Smith square—*[Interruption.]* I notice that the Secretary of State does not like to hear such references.

If the Government were winning supporters for their view, why did the communiqué at the Edinburgh summit affirm that the Community would proceed with all aspects of the social chapter? The Prime Minister and his colleagues sought to argue against it, but the whole of the rest of the Community reaffirmed its commitment to the treaty's social provisions as recently as the Edinburgh summit.

Mrs. Anglea Browning (Tiverton): Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman give way?

Mr. Smith: I shall give way to the hon. Lady. Conservative Members want me to make progress, but their hon. Friends keep interrupting.

Mrs. Browning: I am listening with interest to what the right hon. and learned Gentleman has to say. He seems to be speaking for particular groups of people—our European partners and the politicians who represent various countries and policies. When will he speak for the people of this country?

Mr. Smith: I shall be delighted to speak to and for the people of this country in the next general election. We could all speak and make our case in the election campaign which may come. I keep being diverted from my case by irrelevant interruptions from Conservative Members. It was not I who tabled the motion of confidence; it was the Prime Minister.

The question that troubles more than the Prime Minister's rebels—it might even occur to some Cabinet Members who are sitting looking at me—is how the Prime Minister managed to get himself into this mess. After all, he must have known—as they must have known—that the House of Commons could not indefinitely be denied the opportunity to vote on whether the social chapter should be part of the treaty. The Prime Minister tried to duck and weave, to postpone and evade throughout the lengthy deliberations on the Bill—*[Interruption.]*

Mr. David Shaw *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Smith: As the House knows, the Prime Minister was finally cornered when the Government had to accept new clause 74 of the Bill, which became section 7 of the Act under which we are debating the motion. That was an amendment presciently described by my hon. Friend the Member for Hamilton (Mr. Robertson) as the ticking time bomb.

When the amendment was accepted by the Foreign Secretary on behalf of the Government, it was discounted in the usual dismissive tones of the Tory Whips and apologists—those brilliant managers of events. It was believed that with a bit more arm-twisting and a few more tearful encounters in the Whips Office, it would be all right on the night; but it was not. The ticking time bomb blew up, not only wiping the smug smiles off the faces of the Tory Whips, but destroying the Prime Minister's credibility and authority.

When it came to the crunch, the Prime Minister could not command the support of his own party. Yesterday we saw, as so often before, a Government prepared to do anything and say anything to get themselves out of their latest self-constructed humiliation. Yesterday, Government policy on the exchange rate mechanism changed between the Prime Minister's speech and the closing speech of the Secretary of State for Employment, for no other reason than to entice a Conservative Member of Parliament into the Lobby. I suppose one could say that at least that was done in the open. Who knows what shady deals were stitched up of which we do not yet know?

All those actions came from a Prime Minister who yesterday and today has had the gall to talk about cynical alliances. I sometimes think that when the Prime Minister selects a weapon, it is the boomerang which he finds most convenient.

What we witnessed yesterday and are participating in today is just the latest in the series of crisis after crisis which is the defining characteristic of this Administration. The Government are destroying our coal industry, causing chaos in schools, threatening our railway network and proposing to tax millions of families on the heating of their homes in order to pay for the feckless incompetence of the Government's economic policies. They are the very Government who threaten the public services on which millions of our fellow citizens depend. What is more, they constantly undermine our democracy by the constant arrogation of power unto themselves.

The Government have betrayed pledge after pledge and bungled policy after policy; they are now in disarray and defeat. Today, I hope that the House will vote for the Labour amendment which will give the British people the same rights and opportunities as are available throughout the rest of the European Community. By courtesy of the Prime Minister, we can do more than that. The House can express its lack of confidence in a Government who have no confidence and deserve none. I invite the House to do so.

10.47 am

Mr. Tom King (Bridgwater): I congratulate the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) on an extremely witty and entertaining speech. The House has had the privilege of hearing a distinguished

[Mr. Tom King]

advocate displaying his skills. It does not matter what the subject is, the right hon. and learned Gentleman has only to be given a brief and then, with a few jokes and the training which he has practised in many courts in the land, he can keep the jury amused and try not to let its members come too close to the argument.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman had an unparalleled advantage. There are many of us in the House who, having made our speech and sat down, then think of all the things that we wanted to say. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had the enviable advantage of being able to return the next day to make all the comments that he wished he had made the day before. As a result, he made a much more amusing speech today than he did yesterday. However, the big gap in his lawyer's brief which shone through yesterday and today was the unfortunate way in which, in seeking to appeal to the so-called employees, the workers, he brought out the worst elements among Opposition Members as they displayed their contempt for employers.

Looking at all the Opposition Members, I know that all of them would run to a company that said that it was hoping to bring another 100 jobs into their constituencies. Are not those Opposition Members the very people who, together with employers, lobby Ministers to try to get extra grants and establish new enterprises in their constituencies? Yet those same Opposition Members are here today lampooning the leaders of British industry and the people who bring the jobs. Without good employers, there is no employment and there are no employees.

To say that there is a competition or a war taking place between employers and employees is the old language of 20 and 30 years ago—the language surrounding the old class war. It is to those old ideas that the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East tries to appeal as he stands on top of the heaving mass of the Labour party—such an attempt does him no credit.

The most telling phrase in my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's excellent speech was when he simply encouraged the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East to visit industry and to see industry for himself. I plead guilty to having worked all my life in industry before I came to the House. I do not make my next point to the discredit of lawyers, because there are probably one or two on the Government Benches at the moment. It is an honourable profession. However, the right hon. and learned Gentleman's speech reeked of the fact that he had a brief in his hand, that he was reading it and that he did not really understand it. The most unedifying episode yesterday was when he quoted the director-general of UNICE, whom the French, rather charmingly, would call a fonctionnaire. He tried to pray him in aid against all the leaders and active employers in Europe.

We are hopeful—I believe now confident—that we are seeing a return of economic growth in this country. However, it is noticeable that some hon. Members are now behaving as if that growth is guaranteed and as if we can be certain that it will continue. Every hon. Member knows that the fight to get to that position has been tough and that the pain has been very great. We shall try to continue that growth against the trend in France and against the trend in Germany, which is in the opposite direction. Those are two of our main markets. We should never forget that six of the eight top export markets for Britain are in the European Community and that the rest of the European Community is going into economic retreat. The present situation is fragile and anyone who takes risks with the chance of economic growth betrays their constituents.

Even Mr. Delors, to his credit, has now recognised that Europe faces a crisis of uncompetitiveness. As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister brought out clearly, Europe used to be competitive with America, but we are now in the opposite position of being uncompetitive compared with the largest modern economy in the western world.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton (Macclesfield): Does my right hon. Friend agree that we now have a Prime Minister who is more devoted to manufacturing industry than any Prime Minister has been in recent times? Is my right hon. Friend aware that our right hon. Friend intends to introduce a deregulation Bill in the next Session of Parliament which will help to improve our international competitiveness?

Mr. King: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for making two extremely important points. He and I share an interest in one particular manufacturing industry which we both represent in the House. I share his views on the matter.

Ten years ago, I was Secretary of State for Employment and I went to the Social Affairs Council. Europe then faced a crisis of rising unemployment. I shall remind the House who the other members of that Council were; many of the names will be familiar to hon. Members. There was Mr. Pierre Bérégovoy of France, socialist. There was Mr. Gianni De Michelis of Italy, socialist. There was Mr. Ruairi Quinn of Ireland, socialist. We had the German Minister of Labour, who was a trade unionist. We had Christian Democrats and myself, a Conservative Minister. When I first went to the Social Affairs Council, all the issues about which the House is now talking were on the table. There was paternity law, the Vredeling directive and the working hours directive. Initially my colleagues, certainly the socialist Ministers, were in favour of those proposals, but, as we discussed the matter further and as unemployment increased in their countries and across Europe, we all recognised—this was the view that we as Conservatives already took—that we simply could not afford to add extra costs to employers and that if we did, we would, in the words of the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East, betray the working people of Europe. It is no good making tub-thumping speeches as though employees will not have their interests best protected by worthy and responsible employers.

After I had listened to the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East yesterday, I left the Chamber. I had listened to him reading his brief about what was supposed to be the view of people in European industry. I advise him to leave now because he will not like the next bit when I tell him something about industry. I went to a meeting to discuss investment in this country. I talked to a Japanese and I talked to a British company that has investment in France where, sadly, with the fall in the economy and with the sharp recession, employers find that every redundancy costs them £25,000. Many might say that that is socially sensible and desirable. Many might think how wonderful it is that everyone who loses a job gets that amount. However, an employer starting a new business and wondering whether he can afford to take on

an extra employee will know that he is putting his head into that noose. How will that encourage growth in employment?

Mrs. Edwina Currie (Derbyshire, South): Is my right hon. Friend aware that it is so difficult to make individuals redundant in France that, by contrast, people often have to close down the entire company, thus making unemployed people whom they would not otherwise wish to make unemployed? The net result is higher unemployment than we have in this country and unemployment that is rising rapidly.

Mr. King: In that one sentence, my hon. Friend has shown that she knows considerably more about employment problems in Europe than does the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East. What she has said is precisely correct. Sadly, in one case about which I heard yesterday, that is precisely what happened. The company has gone bankrupt since it cannot afford to keep the people it would like to keep because of the huge costs of redundancy for the people it is necessary to ask to leave to slim down the business. The reality is that the social charter would be a disaster at this time for our country. That is why in the interests not of employers, but of jobs and employment in this country, I strongly support the position of my right hon. Friend and the Government.

I shall address one word to those of my right hon. and hon. Friends who have serious reservations about the issue. They have made their point very clear in these debates. Some of them, tragically, made their views known in the Lobbies last night. That situation is now past. I listened to my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, South-West (Mr. Budgen) on the radio this morning, as other hon. Members may have done. The choice now is not the option of stopping Maastricht. The choice is clear, however much the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East may avoid coming directly to the point. I hope that the hon. Member for Hamilton (Mr. Robertson) will deal with this when he winds up. Were, by any awful chance, the Government to lose the vote today, were Her Majesty to grant a dissolution and were, by some even more awful mischance, the Labour party to be elected, I take it that we could assume that Labour would then speed to the ratification of the Maastricht treaty with the social chapter.

Mr. George Robertson (Hamilton) *indicated assent.*

Mr. King: The hon. Gentleman kindly nods his head. That shows clearly that there are now two choices before the House. The choice is either the Maastricht treaty with the social chapter or the Maastricht treaty without the social chapter. I emphasise the point again because in the noise, not all hon. Members may have heard it. I say again, in case any of my hon. Friends think that there is one last squeeze of the lemon in this situation, that the only choice is to vote on the amendment with the Government and on the main question with the Government. That is the only way in which we can protect our constituents and those in jobs, and that is the best chance for the economic recovery to go forward. That gives the best chance for good government and future stability for our country.

Mr. Tam Dalyell (Linlithgow): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is nearly 11 o'clock—under the rules governing our proceedings on a Friday, the point at which I must ask you, as I asked you at 9.35 am, whether the Foreign Secretary has requested to make a statement on the important and sensitive negotiations that were concluded yesterday in Baghdad by Dr. Rolf Ekeus on behalf of the United Nations, which resulted in a compromise, and on whether such compromise would include any alleviation of sanctions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): I have received no request from a Minister to make a statement on anything.

11 am

Mr. Paddy Ashdown (Yeovil): It is always interesting to follow the right hon. Member for Bridgwater (Mr. King), although I must say that I found the right hon. Gentleman's comments on bankruptcy somewhat odd coming from the mouth of someone who was for a long time a member of a Government who have presided over the highest level of bankruptcies that this nation has seen in the past half century. I also wonder whether the right hon. Gentleman has taken the trouble to read the social chapter, as most of his arguments about why we should not adopt it were completely irrelevant to its terms.

Ostensibly, we are here today to debate the social chapter. My party's position on the social chapter has been clear. It is the subject of a manifesto commitment. That position remains as I described it to the House yesterday, and I have no particular desire to repeat it today. The Government's attempt to build the social chapter up into a great socialist engine that will roll over the British economy and British jobs may convince Conservative Members but it will not convince anyone else.

Mr. Graham Riddick (Colne Valley) *rose——*

Mr. Ashdown: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will allow me to make some progress first.

It is important that Britain should be aware of the kind of industrial base that we want to build—an industrial base that will produce quality goods in world markets, based on high investment, high value added and on a work force that is valued. That is the place for Europe and it is the place for Britain. The Government seem to want Britain to turn into a low-cost economy. I can tell them only that, if that happens, we shall be creating not a sweatshop economy—I do not go along with that assertion—but an economy that has to compete not with the best in the world but with other low-cost economies such as those emerging in eastern Europe and the far east. Those other low-cost economies will be far more effective than ours, and the result will be economic decline. That is not what I seek and it is not what is sought in the social chapter. Britain should value its work force; we should be engaged in the production of quality goods through a quality work force.

The hon. Member for Harrow, East (Mr. Dykes) was entirely right: the social chapter is no more than a series of broad aspirations. It represents little advance on the social chapter of the treaty of Rome as amended by the Single European Act under the premiership of Baroness Thatcher.

If we vote against the social chapter, we shall be excluding ourselves from the shaping of a European institution. The Prime Minister's arguments yesterday about Britain needing to be at the heart of Europe are belied by his requirement that we leave a European institution. To see what happens to European institutions

[Mr. Ashdown]

that are shaped without British influence, the House need look no further than the common agricultural policy. We chose to be out of the CAP; it was shaped without us. Today, we pay the price for that. That is exactly what will happen with the social chapter.

I see that the Prime Minister has left once again, so I shall say this to the Foreign Secretary. The Foreign Secretary made it clear on the "Today" programme this morning—to be fair, he has made it clear on every occasion—that last night's vote was not, as the Prime Minister sought to claim yesterday, about ratification. The right hon. Gentleman said quite clearly that it was "about the social chapter". I quote his words precisely. He and the Prime Minister know beyond peradventure that, right from the start, the Liberal Democrats have said privately, as we have said publicly, that, although the Government may always count on our votes if ratification is at risk, they can never count on our votes in support of the social chapter opt-out.

In the light of those public statements, our manifesto commitment and private confirmation of that position given months ago, right at the start of the process, for the Prime Minister to pretend otherwise is a discreditable misrepresentation of what he knows to be the truth.

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Douglas Hurd): I think not. The right hon. Gentleman is not tackling the point that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister put to him. We understand that, following the right hon. Gentleman's fierce criticisms of the social chapter at the end of 1991, his views have undergone a sea change and he now supports it. Therefore, by his lights—which we think were mistaken—he was justified in voting for the Labour amendment yesterday. But when that amendment was defeated, the question was not whether the social chapter should be included——

Mr. Ashdown: Yes it was.

Mr. Hurd: No. The question then became whether we should be able to proceed to ratification. That was the essence of the second vote and, by his conduct in that vote, the right hon. Gentleman showed that his aim was neither the inclusion of the social chapter nor ratification but simply to embarrass the Government.

Mr. Ashdown: God forbid that I should ever seek to embarrass the Government. The Foreign Secretary is wrong, and he knows that he is wrong. Let me make it clear to him. I asked the Minister who was present during my speech to tell me what we were voting for in the first and second votes last night. I asked whether we were voting on the social chapter, as the Government were trying to persuade their rebels we were, or for ratification. Needless to say, the Minister completely failed to answer. Why? Because the Government's game throughout has been to send two different messages, on this question as on so much else. This goes to the heart of the fraudulence and weakness of their position. The Government sought to tell their own rebels that yesterday's debate was about the social chapter, while portraying it to us as about ratification. If it was about ratification, what are we doing discussing the social chapter today? It was not about ratification. The ratification of the Maastricht treaty was never at risk last night. What was at risk last night was our inclusion in the social chapter and the rights that it would provide for British citizens.

Mr. James Wallace (Orkney and Shetland): Does my right hon. Gentleman agree that the real test that should be applied to the Foreign Secretary's intervention is this: if, by two votes the other way, the Labour amendment had been carried last night and the substantive motion had been amended, would the Government have supported that motion and proceeded to implement it?

Mr. Ashdown: My hon. Friend asks whether, had the votes gone the other way, ratification would have been damaged. Of course it would not. We know that that is not the real reason why we are here this morning. The real reason is that the Prime Minister's strategy has totally failed. The Prime Minister has failed to provide a lead to his party and to the country. He has been more concerned to behave towards his party as a Government Whip than towards his nation as its Prime Minister and leader. That has been the Prime Minister's fatal mistake. In trying to send two different messages, the right hon. Gentleman has totally failed to portray Europe in all its positive aspects, which is what would have been necessary to enable him to carry the majority for Maastricht that exists in the House. He said one thing to his European partners, while pretending something totally different on his return to the House.

Time and again, the Prime Minister has ducked the issue and avoided the challenge. The issue of the social chapter need not have arisen now; he could have faced it months ago or weeks ago. But the Prime Minister delayed and delayed and has brought the matter before us at the very last moment. The only way that he can now get his way and get the treaty through is by staking his personal authority and the Government's survival. There you are, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is what we now have. The triumph of the Prime Minister's return from Maastricht with the opt out turned into a crisis of his own authority. That is the ball and chain which started off as game, set and match. The Prime Minister's problem is that he will not provide a lead or say where he wants to go. He will not give the nation or his own party the lead that is necessary.

Mr. Riddick: I am extremely grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for giving way. The serious point—*[Interruption.]* The hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) should not throw stones if he is living in a glass house. I hope that his driving lessons are going well.

I have a serious point for the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown) which I do not believe the Opposition Benches have addressed. Why is the right hon. Member for Yeovil so ready to reject the very serious objections to the social chapter by the CBI, the engineering employers and all the other employers? That is a very serious point. Why does the right hon. Gentleman reject those objections?

Mr. Ashdown: The answer to the hon. Gentleman's question is that I believe them to be wrong in this matter. It is as simple as that.

Let me explain this to the hon. Member for Colne Valley (Mr. Riddick). Throughout Europe, this issue is not seen in the terms in which the Government have persuaded some members of industry to see it. It is not seen as a threat to jobs. If it is such a threat to jobs, why is it that this

country over the past four years, without any of those social provisions, experienced the highest unemployment in the European Community? Comments from the Conservative party about unemployment come ill when the Government have presided over the largest rise in unemployment that we have ever seen.

Mr. Michael Colvin (Romsey and Waterside): Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Ashdown: I will give way to the hon. Gentleman, but this will be the last time that I will give way until I have made some progress.

Mr. Colvin: Which is the biggest threat to Westland —the social chapter or the 50 per cent. cut in defence expenditure advocated by the right hon. Gentleman's party?

Mr. Ashdown: As someone who has worked in Westland, who knows the company and lives among it, I can tell the hon. Gentleman that Westland has nothing to fear from the social chapter because Westland, as a good employer, already far exceeds the terms of the social chapter. That is one of the reasons why that firm and its products have been such a success.

We now see revealed the truth of this matter. The purpose of the opt out was, of course, nothing to do with Britain and everything to do with the divisions in the Conservative party. That is the truth which is now revealed. The Prime Minister returned from Europe with a piece of paper which he hoped would provide peace in his time in a party riven by civil war. However, the Prime Minister has learnt that appeasing those who oppose him only encourages them further. He now has a party which is so riven by civil war, so infected by its own internal enmities, that frankly it can no longer provide the effective united Government which this country needs.

Therefore, we are asked today to give the Government our confidence. We are asked to give them confidence when they have so comprehensively failed to provide leadership, not just to the country, but also to Europe in respect of the crucial issue of Bosnia. We are asked to give confidence to a Government who yesterday, from the mouth of the Prime Minister, said that they were not prepared to take action to prevent Sarajevo falling into the hands of the Serbs.

I dare say that what is happening in Bosnia today will have more effect on the shape of Europe than the entire Maastricht treaty which we have been negotiating for the past six months. The Government have totally failed to provide that leadership. We are asked to give confidence to a Government who have betrayed their election promises less than a year after they made them. We are asked to give confidence to a Government who have sought to close down the coal industry.

In addition, we are asked to give confidence to a Government who have been revealed as indulging in duplicity and deceit on a grand scale on the issue of Matrix Churchill. We are asked to give confidence to a Government over whom hangs the odour of decay and, I am bound to say, of sleaze. We are asked to give confidence to a Government who have damaged not only themselves and their own reputation, but the reputation of politics and the institution of our democracy.

Let the Prime Minister be under no illusions. When he forces his colleagues into the Division Lobby this afternoon to vote for his motion and for him, they will not be expressing confidence in him; they will be expressing no confidence in their capacity to hold their seats under his leadership. At the end of the day, that is the fact of this afternoon's vote and that is the fact which will return and, in the end, do for him.

11.15 am

Sir Peter Emery (Honiton): It is intriguing that the support for the Liberal Democrats seems to come more from the extreme members of the Labour party than from anyone else——

Mr. Terry Lewis (Worsley) *rose——*

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Sir Peter Emery: No, just sit down—*[Interruption.]*

Mr. Frank Cook (Stockton, North): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. May I ask you to rule on a Chairman of the Select Committee on Procedure who commenced his address to the House by speaking to the wall opposite and who then turned round, and spoke directly across the Floor of the House, neglecting the fact that you are presiding over these proceedings from the Chair——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I need no help from the hon. Gentleman or from any hon. Member in respect of whom to call and how they address the Chair.

Sir Peter Emery: As you will know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not speak very often in the House. I speak only when there is someting that has to be said. What we have to say today is that the Government Benches absolutely and completely support the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister's Government and the Prime Minister's policies. That has to be said and clearly understood.

As it is perhaps the right thing to do according to the traditions of this House, I will refer to the speech made by the previous speaker, the leader of the Liberal Democratic party, the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown). The right hon. Gentleman suggested a criticism on Bosnia. I ask him directly across the Floor of the House now whether he is suggesting that we should today put troops into Bosnia to be shot at by all three sides and come back in British body bags. Is that what the right hon. Gentleman is suggesting?

Mr. Ashdown: The right hon. Gentleman may have overlooked the fact that he already has troops in Bosnia to be shot at by all three sides. They are being shot at by all three sides and, as the weeks and months pass, he will see that they will be in an increasingly dangerous position. I have said, and I continue to believe, that what we should have done and what we should now do, is put sufficient forces into Bosnia to make them capable of doing the job which I believe they should be there to do. They would be much safer if that were the case.

Sir Peter Emery: That means that the right hon. Gentleman would put British troops in to shoot at Serbs, Croats or anyone else who is behaving in a way of which the right hon. Gentleman does not approve. That is what he is really saying and the country should understand that properly.

[Sir Peter Emery]

In the same way, we need to understand from the speech made by the right hon. Member for Yeovil that he believes that the Westland aircraft company in his constituency would benefit from the social chapter. He referred to his experience with that company. However, I must tell him that that is not what the management says today. The right hon. Gentleman is out of date, as he always is, with regard to what is happening in the country as a whole.

The right hon. Member said that the social chapter does not seek economic decline. Of course that is right. However, the economic decline comes along because people are looking further than the immediate effect of the social chapter. It is not their wish for economic decline; it is because of some of the social structures that would have to be imposed on industry that that economic decline would come about.

We find it very strange that the leader of the Liberal Democrats suggests that he is still in favour of Maastricht when he had the simple opportunity last night to vote for a motion which would have ensured that Maastricht would go forward and be signed. He cannot in any way defend the situation that he tries to put forward in the debate today.

Mr. Riddick: Does my right hon. Friend agree that one bonus that came out of yesterday's events is that the Union has been strengthened? The Ulster Unionists actually voted with the Conservatives on those two votes yesterday and will do so again. Is it not time that we stopped pandering to Dublin? Is it not time that we stopped pandering to the Social Democratic and Labour party, which, of course, always votes against us in the House? Is not that a real bonus for the Union as a whole?

Sir Peter Emery: I do not need to go further than make it absolutely clear that the Procedure Committee, under my chairmanship, has recommended for some time that Northern Ireland should have a Select Committee dealing with its affairs.

What is such a shame about today's debate is the knockabout speech from the Leader of the Opposition. He is able to make a much better speech than that which he made today. He treated the House to nothing but a series of jokes that were prepared last night while burning the midnight oil. They do not cure the problems that the House is dealing with—the social chapter and the effect on the economy.

I never expected that today's debate on the confidence motion would actually have to be brought by the action of some of my own colleagues. That is a depressing and despondent factor. I find it very strange I have seen some people on my side over the past months negotiating nearly in public with the Opposition Deputy Chief Whip in order to defeat the Government. That is something which I never expected to see from Conservative Members. That has to be recorded absolutely.

Mr. David Alton (Liverpool, Mossley Hill): Will the right hon. Gentleman give way.

Sir Peter Emery: I have given way to the Liberal Democrats once, so the hon. Gentleman can let me get on. What we have to see absolutely clearly in the House, and which cannot be repeated enough during today's debate, is that there are only two options that—

Mr. Lewis: Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Sir Peter Emery: If the hon. Gentleman would like to sit down and let me finish the sentence, I might think about it.

What is clear beyond peradventure is that there can be one of only two outcomes: Maastricht without the social chapter or Maastricht with the social chapter. There is no alternative. My hon. Friends must understand that. If they cannot see that today's debate has only those two options, they cannot see anything about the problems that the House has to deal with.

Mr. Lewis: Has the right hon. Gentleman finished his sentence?

Sir Peter Emery: I give way to the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Lewis: It was a bit remiss of the right hon. Gentleman to link my hon. Friend the Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) and myself with the Liberal Democrats.

However, the serious matter is that the right hon. Gentleman has raised the matter of the Select Committee for Northern Ireland. As a distinguished Member and Chairman of the Procedure Committee, will the right hon. Gentleman tell the House where he obtained that information?

Sir Peter Emery: I have only repeated what is known fact which has been on the record on more than one occasion. The Procedure Committee has recommended a Select Committee for Northern Ireland.

Mr. Lewis: Has it made a decision?

Sir Peter Emery: That is not what I said. The hon. Gentleman must listen. I have said only that that is indeed what we have recommended.

I now turn to one aspect of the social chapter that has not been considered, and that is the effect on small industries. In my constituency, the vast majority of employment is provided by companies with fewer than 20 employees. It is those people who would be most affected by the regulations that would come from the social chapter. It is those smaller industries, which in time become big industries, which would most oppose the regulations in order to go forward in their own way.

It is interesting to record that the Leader of the Opposition said that no thought was given to working people. How wrong he was in that statement. It is in order to create jobs for working people that we are concerned with not having the social chapter, which works against the creation of jobs. It is to ensure that more jobs, not fewer, are available for the benefit of working people.

It is not, after all, just the industrialists. They, strangely enough, are the people who help to create jobs. They are the people who are likely to be able to provide employment. They are the people who are saying that the social chapter will not allow them to do what they want in creating expansion.

Therefore, it is also for working people to realise that the social chapter, although it might provide—let us be quite clear—some extra conditions in the long term for the benefit of people at work, will certainly not go further than

the regulations that we already have. In most aspects, we are well ahead of most countries in Europe, and we see European countries backing off madly from their initial agreement to the social chapter. Let us make certain that we do not have an extra millstone or burden around the neck of small businesses and small industry.

As an aside, I was interested to hear one of my colleagues last night say that all this would not have happened and that it would have been all right if we could have had a referendum. I thought that that issue was dead. I thought that both Houses of Parliament had buried it some time ago. In my constituency, we have really had a referendum. At the election, there was a candidate who stood with only one policy, and that was that Maastricht should be defeated. I am delighted to tell the House that he not only lost his deposit but only just defeated the raving loony green giant candidate.

Mr. Nick Harvey (North Devon): Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Sir Peter Emery: Other hon. Members want to speak, but I will give way to the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Harvey: Did not the right hon. Gentleman go around his constituency at the election telling people that he was opposed to a federal Europe? Did he not tell the listeners of Devon Air only this week that he is in favour of the Maastricht treaty precisely because it will create a federal Europe?

Sir Peter Emery: No, I did not. One has only to look at me to know that I am not in favour of a federal Europe, and the hon. Gentleman knows that as well as anybody else. *[Laughter.]* I am interesting, but many hon. Members want to speak.

The criticism of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister by the leader of the Liberal Democrats and the leader of the Labour party is unjust. We have seen firm decisions and firm decision making. We have seen a Prime Minister who has stood all the criticism that was made when we had to get inflation down. We must think of the criticism at the time that that policy should be abandoned —that policy which is now the launching pad for our growing economy at this moment at the end of recession. If there ever was a quick, sound and sensible decision, it was that which was made yesterday—when we did not obtain what was wanted—that we should discuss this motion today to get Maastricht settled and to go forward. This is a matter of sound, sensible and firm government from the Prime Minister, whom I am delighted to be able to support.

Today, it is necessary to ensure that we have a resounding vote in support of the Prime Minister's motion and a resounding defeat of the Labour party amendment. The Conservative party will then be able to leave for the summer recess with its tail up, in the knowledge that it is beginning to—*[Laughter.]* The Opposition may not like that. That is not what they want, of course. They do not want to see economic recovery that will bring success to this country, because that will lead to a success for the Conservative party.

We are set on a policy of success for the country—a success which will reflect properly on the success of the policy that the Prime Minister and the Government have pursued. I am proud to support it.

11.30 am

Mr. Tony Benn (Chesterfield): When the speech of the Prime Minister and that of the right hon. Member for Honiton (Sir P. Emery) are read and considered for the study of history, they will rank with some of the greatest speeches ever made in the House.

Sir Peter Emery: Thank you for that.

Mr. Benn: For example, when a Bill was introduced to abolish the practice of sending boys up chimneys in the 19th century, exactly the same speeches as those from the right hon. Gentleman were made. It was claimed that the Bill would destroy employment for young boys, who were doing a very good job going up chimneys.

When Samuel Plimsoll, who was a Member of Parliament, introduced legislation to put an end to the coffin ships by introducing the Plimsoll line, the then Prime Minister could have quoted "The Shipping Gazette", which described Samuel Plimsoll as a terrorist. That was the word used by the employers about any suggestion that social provision should be introduced to try to prevent thousands of sailors from dying in unsafe ships.

One could argue that the social chapter began with the Lloyd George Budget, which introduced national insurance. That was seen as a direct threat to employers, and right-wing Conservatives said that they would not stick the stamps on their domestic servants' cards because that practice threatened the women who worked for them.

I am looking forward to studying with great care the speeches that have been made on this issue, because they will rank with some of the most reactionary statements ever made.

Although I am not here to talk about the merits of the matter, it never seems to have occurred to the Prime Minister that if people are paid better wages, they buy goods from other people and that creates jobs.

Sir Peter Emery: Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Benn: No, I will not give way. The right hon. Gentleman bumbled on so ineffectively that he must allow me to develop my argument.

One man's wage increase is another man's job. That is what improved conditions would provide.

Mr. Hurd *rose*——

Mr. Benn: If the Foreign Secretary is about to intervene, I look forward to another radical intervention in the best 18th century style.

Mr. Hurd: I am not sure how far the right hon. Gentleman would carry his argument about chimney sweeps. Does he, for example, feel that it is all part of the righteous march of social progress to have a working time directive that would prevent boys from delivering newspapers in the morning? Would he regard that as an inexorable part of his objective?

Mr. Benn: The eight-hour day was introduced as a result of a campaign by the Trade Union Congress 100 years ago. By his casual intervention, the right hon. Gentleman has demonstrated that he is still living in the 19th century.

The TUC objective was eight hours for our work, eight hours for our sleep and eight hours for our recreation. Nowadays, it is thought that trade unionists must not,

[Mr. Benn]

under any circumstances, have any role in deciding working conditions. We are told that we should listen to Sir Denys Henderson and all the employers of Europe telling us what to do. That is the most extraordinary example of the class war, but I will not go into it now because I am considering another issue today.

The issue before us is that if the House approves the motion, the Maastricht treaty will be ratified—for all I know, over the weekend. That will be achieved by telling certain Conservatives and others such as the leader of the Irish, the right hon. and devoted Member for Lagan Valley (Mr. Molyneaux), that if they do not go along with that, the Prime Minister will go to the Queen and destroy Parliament. There will then be an election.

I ask myself whether that is a credible threat. The Prime Minister boasted that he received the biggest popular vote of any general election. I do not know whether he is right, but I presume that he would not have said it if his officials had not given him the figures.

The Government are 15 months old. Does anyone really believe that the Queen would say to the Prime Minister that he could destroy Parliament because of a difference over the social chapter? Does anyone believe that? It is not a credible threat.

Mrs. Currie: Yes, it is.

Mr. Benn: No, it is not. I shall cite some helpful examples in a moment because I have had a bit of experience of a Prime Minister who threatened to resign. Harold Wilson did just that, and I shall tell the House exactly what happens when a Prime Minister is so foolish as to threaten.

If the pro-federalists are right, we are discussing how we will be governed in Europe for hundreds of years to come. That will be decided on the question whether there will be an election on some marginal improvement in social conditions. I do not believe that the social chapter amounts to very much. The hon. Member for Harrow, East (Mr. Dykes) made that clear.

The Prime Minister is threatening the destruction of an elected Parliament—and I must now describe that right hon. Gentleman as a Euro rebel because he is rebelling against the vote of the House last night; the Euro rebel sits at No. 10—and threatens the destruction of his party to stop the social chapter getting through. The consequence will be that the European union will come into effect.

I do not want to offend anyone in my speech, and the point I want to concentrate on is whether the means adopted represents the right way to decide how Europe should develop. There are people who are passionately in favour of the Maastricht treaty and I respect their view. Some think that it represents a defence against socialism. Other colleagues in the Labour party believe that it might advance socialism. Some believe that the result will be a federal, centralised Europe, while others believe that subsidiarity will flow from it.

There are many different interpretations of the social chapter. Some are in favour of it; some are against it—all for different reasons. Some people do not like foreigners. I am a European. I was born a European and I will die a European. I do like foreigners. I could hardly do anything else. My wife is an American and my son has married a woman who is half Jewish and half Bengali. I have two little part Bengali grandchildren, so I find it difficult to take what one might call the "Wolverhampton" view that foreigners start at Dover and that some have already got a bit too close for comfort.

If I were a Frenchman, a Belgian or a German, I would be just as passionately opposed to the Maastricht treaty because it strips all of us, not just the people of this country, of the right to sack the people who make the laws. That is what it is all about. Why should Jacques Delors listen to a word that is said to him by anyone in Europe when he cannot be removed in a general election? That is the key issue.

I am a democrat. I have always seen this issue as a democratic issue, not a nationalist one. Having discussed for two years how Europe should be governed, is it not now clear that, today, we are discussing how Britain should be governed? I want to discuss the Maastricht treaty in terms of the light it has thrown on the way in which the British constitution works before we ratify that treaty.

What is the relationship between the people, Parliament and the prerogative? Those are the three ingredients in our constitution. People will be aware that the Queen in Parliament is sovereign. That is the jargon that we are still expected to accept. Let us examine what role Parliament and Government believe that the people should have. The answer is absolutely none.

At the time of the general election, the Maastricht treaty had not been published in English, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green and Stepney (Mr. Shore) has told me that the social chapter has never been made widely available. There is a view—I am afraid that it is shared by those on my Front Bench, which I greatly regret—that the people have no right whatever to have anything to do with deciding whether we are governed in a new way under the European union.

I have asked many Ministers, including, quite properly, the Foreign Secretary, about the right of the people to decide. "Oh no," he said, "it is for Parliament to decide". Parliament did decide last night against the Government; otherwise we would not be having today's debate. The House knew full well that was at stake. Conservative Members who voted against the Government last night knew exactly what they were doing. But what has happened? When Parliament does decide, the Prime Minister pulls out his final weapon, the prerogative of dissolution. Not only have the people and Parliament been kept out of the decision-making process, but now the Queen has been wheeled out. I intend to say something about the Queen because she is part of our constitution. When people read today's *Hansard*, they will find that the jocular exchanges between Front-Bench speakers are not as interesting as those parts of the debate that explain to future generations how Britain went into a union.

Mr. Hurd: The right hon. Gentleman is surely making the speech that he would have made if the House had come to a resolution last night and the Government had, in some way, decided to invoke the prerogative to overrule that or go against it. That is the thesis which he contests. But, of course, what happened last night was quite different. The House did not come to any conclusion.

Mr. Benn: Of course the House came to a decision. That was why the Cabinet met at 7 o'clock last night, to

consider what would happen when the Government were defeated. Earlier this morning I quoted what the Prime Minister said in yesterday's debate. He said:

"The treaty in the Maastricht Bill—the European Communities (Amendment) Bill—is now law, as the House well understands. Royal Assent has been given to the Act, so the treaty will be ratified."—

There is no question about what section 7 says—

"Seventy-one separate votes in favour of the Bill should not be frustrated by one parliamentary motion expressing an opinion to the contrary."—[*Official Report*, 22 July 1993; Vol. 229, c. 526.]

The Prime Minister made it absolutely clear that if it all went wrong he would simply ratify. After the vote last night, in the traditional statement after a Government defeat, the Prime Minister announced a vote of confidence, which meant, "I will go to the Queen and ask the Queen to destroy the Parliament."

I am genuinely trying to illuminate rather than exacerbate the argument so that people reading *Hansard* may know how we got into this position. The answer is simple. The Maastricht treaty was signed under the royal prerogative. The Government decided to keep secret the treaty's provisions, which could have been distributed to every household, as they were in Denmark, during the election.

The Whips operate through the royal prerogative of patronage. My hon. Friends who were in the Whips Office know that there are Labour ways of twisting arms. In most Whips Offices it is clear, I understand—it never happened to me—that the prospect of promotion to the Front Bench is inhibited if one is not always in the Government Lobby. That is because of the royal prerogative of patronage. Older Members—again, not me—who are waiting for peerages are made to know that peerages are not so readily available to those who decline to support the Government.

Patronage is a cancer in our democratic society, and everybody knows it. Having got the Bill through the House of Commons, the Government sent it to the House of Lords, and everybody got there by the royal prerogative; one cannot be made a peer without letters patent. Then they brought in peers from foreign hideouts. Did anybody honestly think that a House made up like that would be in favour of elections or in favour of the social chapter? I believe that yesterday the Lords voted in much the same way as they voted on the chimney boys 100 years ago. They were not prepared to give their estate servants better conditions.

Mrs. Currie: Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Benn: I am developing an argument and I should like to finish it. I shall give way to the hon. Lady in a moment with such pleasure that she will be suprised.

Another person whose authority comes from the royal prerogative is Lord Rees-Mogg, who has never been elected by anybody. He is a Conservative peer. He has decided to go to the judges. How did they get there? They got there by the royal prerogative. Lord Rees-Mogg rang me up, and I hope that I am not breaking any confidences when I say that I have doubts about what he told me. He said, "I, Lord Rees-Mogg, am protecting Parliament from the prerogative." I hope that his call was not secret. If it was, I should apologise, but I doubt whether I will.

As I have said, after yesterday's vote the Prime Minister made the massive statement, "We are going to ratify." How do we ratify? We ratify by the royal prerogative. The Prime Minister has said, "If you don't do what we say we will dissolve Parliament by the royal prerogative." I shall complete my next sentence, and then the hon. Member for Derbyshire, South (Mrs. Currie) can come in and muddy the waters and I shall do the best I can to clear them up.

This whole story has revealed not only the nature of the European union but the fundamentally undemocratic nature of the way that this country is governed by a Crown, a Prime Minister with Crown powers, a House that depends on Crown powers and on the patronage of those with Crown powers, and the threat of elections. If the hon. Lady understands that, I shall be happy to let her intervene.

Mrs. Currie: I am grateful to the right hon. Gentleman. As he knows, all treaties are signed and ratified by the royal prerogative. What does he think makes this treaty so different? The Ponsonby rules mean, and have done for the whole of this century, that treaties are not ratified until they are approved by the House. Many of the 70 votes that we have had on this have already done that, and today's vote will do the same.

If the right hon. Gentleman is so alarmed and concerned about privilege, how come he accepted the great honour of membership of Her Majesty's Privy Council and exercises the additional honour that that gives him in the House of being called in debate before the rest of us?

Mr. Benn: The hon. Lady might have considered that, as I am the longest serving Opposition Member, I may have caught the Speaker's eye. One of my grandchildren who saw "Jurassic Park" said to me, "What do you call a dinosaur with one eye?—Doyathinkhesaurus". That is the question that every hon. Member must consider when he looks towards the Chair. I asked to be excused from taking the Privy Councillor's oath, but when it was explained to me that if I did not I could not perform the function of Postmaster-General, I capitulated, as we all did.

When I took the oath at the beginning of this Parliament, I said, "As a dedicated republican, I solemnly swear . . .". My hon. Friend the Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) said, "I solemnly swear that I will bear true and faithful allegiance to the Queen when she pays her income tax." There are some concessions that we have to make, and everybody should know that.

Let us examine the final prerogative of dissolution. The Prime Minister was very careful not to say that the Queen had agreed. Perhaps the Foreign Secretary has had later news from "Buck Pal" than I have. The Prime Minister said that the Cabinet would decide to seek it. In 1969, when Harold Wilson was Prime Minister and "In Place of Strife" got into some difficulties, he announced that he would be off, like the present Prime Minister, to dissolve Parliament. There was some discussion in the parliamentary Labour party as to whether that was the final word. Douglas Houghton, who was the chairman of the parliamentary Labour party, said, "If Harold goes off to the palace, I will follow him in a taxi to say that we have another candidate." That was Jim Callaghan. When the news reached Harold that Douglas Houghton would be on his way, Harold decided not to go.

If the Prime Minister went to resign, what would the Queen say? She would say, "My dear Prime Minister, I read your speech with great interest. You had the greatest popular vote in the whole of history 14 months ago. Isn't there somebody who could take on the responsibilities that you regard as so burdensome? What about that nice man

[Mr. Benn]

at No. 11? Wouldn't he be the man to take it on?" Many Conservatives, faced with suicide, would be in favour of the man from No. 11, not because they would prefer him, but because their future would depend on his forming a Government.

I shall give another example of dissolution because I have long experience of these matters. In January 1974, the whole shadow Cabinet was invited to lunch with the Iranian ambassador. That was before the Shah fell, so it was quite respectable, or so we were assured. I found myself sitting next to Sir Michael Adeane, the Queen's private secretary. This was during the miners' strike when nobody knew quite what was going to happen. I said to him, "You tell me what's going to happen. If the Prime Minister"—that was the right hon. Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup (Sir E. Heath)—"asks for a dissolution, does the Queen have to grant it?" Sir Michael Adeane, who, like all palace officials, was very naive, said, "That is an interesting question. We have been discussing it all morning at the palace." So I went home and began writing my election address because I knew that, if the palace was expecting it, the election was coming.

Therefore, I tell those who are doubtful about the treaty not to assume that there will necessarily be an election if they vote against the Government this afternoon. The Government could make another change. They could say, "We have thought about it again." After all, the Prime Minister is always thinking about things again. They could say that they would ratify with the social chapter or that they would have a referendum. They could decide not to ratify at all because Sir Denys Henderson has told them that that would be a pit of despair into which we would all fall. It does not follow that there will be an election.

The real question is the one to which I have referred when I have addressed the Speaker, twice now: what role does Parliament have in the scenario containing the royal prerogative? The answer is that we are just spectators. We have no role. If we vote against the Government, as we did last night—let us not forget that the Government have an overall majority—tomorrow the pistol will be at the head of those who disagree.

I will tell the House what I think, and I think it with great regret. I think that we are the witnesses of the death of democracy in Britain. We are witnessing that death because the House has lost the will to assert its authority as a legislative chamber. There are many advantages to being a Member of Parliament. One gets on "Newsnight" every now and again and one is treated with great respect at public dinners and so on. However, we do not want to exercise the power that we were elected to exercise. That applies to all parties.

Once we destroy democracy in Britain, we shall pave the way for the federal Europe because, if there is no effective democracy in Britain, Europe will say, "Look at the House of Commons! It didn't seem to care very much, so we'll run Britain." Then we shall be back to the Holy Roman Empire and all that.

I say that with regret because I am a passionate believer in the House. I may be one of the last few people who think that coming here is the greatest honour that one can have. Being in the House is a greater honour than a peerage, and I have proved that. When we get here, we must speak our mind—even if we upset the Front Bench or the Whips—without, I hope, discourtesy to anyone and, when we come to vote, we vote for what we think is right. That is my conviction. I believe that a House of Commons that did not have within it enough people to do that would become the handmaiden of the Prime Minister of the day and would be even more easily rolled over by the Commissioners and the central bankers.

People may think it strange that I have referred several times in the past few days to the 17th century and the Bill of Rights, but it is because the prerogative is now rampant again. We thought that we had dealt with that then, but it has come back because of Maastricht. Every law to which I adhered when I was on the Council of Ministers—I adhered to many of them—was by the royal prerogative. The royal prerogative takes precedence again.

I think that the House is dying. I know that that may seem a strange thing to say, but if we ratify that will be another nail in our coffin because, whatever we decide to do, even if we decided to defy a Government next time round, it would not be effective because the power would have passed to others.

That is my opinion. I put it forward, with respect, to the House. I presume that party loyalty is so strong that the Government will get away with it and carry their bloodstained banner into the ratification chamber and will then say that Parliament had agreed with them. Parliament did not agree with them. Last night, without the threat of dissolution, Parliament turned them down and the Government will reverse that decision by improper pressure deriving from an undemocratic constitution—the use of the Queen to get their way over an elected House. That is a terrible tragedy for the Parliament in which we serve.

11.53 am

Mr. Paul Channon (Southend, West): No one would deny that the speech of the right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) was both entertaining and perceptive. I, for one, would not argue with him about dissolution, although he used the precedent of January 1974 when, as he pointed out, there was a dissolution. He went home and wrote his election address and the Labour party went on to win the election. His theory that the Queen will not grant dissolution might be conceivable, but it is highly improbable. I would not advise my hon. Friends to bank on it, although it gave me some moments of pleasure when I thought of that possibility.

At the end of his speech, the right hon. Gentleman, quite understandably and rightly, turned it into an attack on the Maastricht treaty as a whole and we all know that he is among the most distinguished of those right hon. Members who are opposed to it. Yes, many people oppose it, but the House knows perfectly well that in reality there is a majority in favour of the treaty. That was clearly shown on both Second and Third Readings of the Bill and on many other occasions during its passage through the House.

The right hon. Member for Chesterfield is very much a democrat and I should have thought that he would accept the will of the House of Commons——

Mr. Ian Taylor (Esher): And the House of Lords.

Mr. Channon: I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman will pay so much attention to the House of Lords, but that is his prerogative. Of course, he must not

say that Lord Rees-Mogg is a Conservative Peer—he sits on the Cross Benches. I used to know Lord Rees-Mogg when he was a Conservative. Indeed, I appointed him chairman of the Arts Council. I thought that he was rather good. That is a royal prerogative—*[Interruption.]* The right hon. Member for Chesterfield and I must not make too much fuss about patronage. He has already had to make rather a lame defence of the privileges of a Privy Councillor. He was right about that, but not about much else.

It is clear that both Houses of Parliament are in favour of the Maastricht treaty. There was a question over whether or not Parliament was in favour of the social protocol. We experienced the most extraordinary events last night. The Government won the first vote either on Madam Speaker's casting vote or by a majority of one, depending on which mathematician counts the figures. In any event, the Labour party's amendment, which said that the Government

"should not deposit the Articles of Ratification of the Treaty of European Union . . . until . . . it intends to adopt the Protocol on Social Policy"

was defeated. The House then voted down the Government's motion, which merely asked:

"That this House, in compliance with requirements of section 7 of the European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993, notes the policy of Her Majesty's Government on the adoption of the Protocol on Social Policy."

Everyone knows that section 7 provides that until some resolution has been adopted, the Government cannot ratify the treaty. With respect to the Liberal Democrats and their leader, the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown), who spoke earlier, it was wrong for him to imply that that motion had nothing to do with ratification—it had everything to do with ratification. He knew that if he voted against that motion the Government could not ratify the treaty. The Liberal Democrats keep telling us that they are keen on Maastricht and also on the social chapter. However, the reality of their position last night was that they prevented the Government from ratifying the treaty. The Liberal Democrats know that and they knew it last night. With respect to the right hon. Gentleman, it was disingenuous of him to pretend otherwise.

Mr. Alton: Surely the right hon. Gentleman accepts that the Liberal Democrats have always supported the concept of the Maastricht treaty and that only the problem of linkage has prevented us from voting in the Lobby with him. By linking yesterday's vote to the social chapter—which the hon. Gentleman knows we have consistently supported—and by linking today's vote to the question of confidence, makes it untenable and impossible for Liberal Democrats to vote with the right hon. Gentleman. If there were a motion before the House today merely dealing with the issue of ratification, he knows that my party would be voting with his.

Mr. Channon: With respect to the hon. Gentleman, that is not the exact position, as my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary pointed out during an intervention. The question whether we should adopt the social protocol was disposed of when the Labour amendment was defeated. The House was then asked to decide, one way or another, on the simple motion:

"That this House . . . notes the policy of Her Majesty's Government on the adoption of the Protocol on Social Policy."

The Liberal Democrats voted against that, as they are entitled to do. It was their decision. However, they are not entitled to say that they are going all out to ratify the Maastricht treaty, because when they had the opportunity to achieve that major objective last night, for narrow party reasons they chose to vote down the Government's motion.

The House faces two issues this morning. The first relates to the merits of the case for the social chapter and the second to the political realities facing the House and, in particular, the Conservative party. I sometimes wish that our old friend Lord Archer were back in this House. He would find it difficult to write a thriller more amazing than the events of the last few months. Who could have imagined that we would have seen last night those Euro-sceptics who are most against ratification of the treaty join, in a way, the Labour party, in voting for an amendment to incorporate the social protocol that nearly all of them are against? I must be careful, because that is not true of them all. It is only fair to point out that one or two hon. Friends who are distinguished members of the group that opposes ratification do not think that the social chapter matters very much. I believe that I am right in saying that most of them are very much against the adoption of the social protocol. I therefore find it extraordinary that they voted in the way that they did.

As to the merits of the case, I choose to accept what was said yesterday by my right hon. Friends on the Front Bench, and in particular in the winding-up speech by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Employment, who demonstrated exactly what the social chapter would entail for the people of this country. On the merits of the case, we are on strong ground.

But let us assume for a moment that the social chapter does not matter very much. The right hon. Member for Chesterfield and some of my hon. Friends—including my hon. Friend the Member for Harrow, East (Mr. Dykes)—said that the social chapter does not matter too much and would not make much difference. If the Government's motion is passed this afternoon, the Government will survive and presumably they will ratify the treaty without the social chapter.

The consequences if the House does not support the Government this afternoon were best summed up by my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, South-West (Mr. Budgen) on television last night. He said that the dilemma that he faced was either Maastricht being ratified by a Conservative Government without the social chapter, or a general election that, in his view—and I hope that he is wrong—would bring a Conservative defeat and the return of a Labour Government who would ratify the treaty anyway, with the social chapter. Where is the merit in that for those of my hon. Friends who are against both ratification and the social chapter? That would be the worst conceivable result.

My own view is that the Maastricht treaty is not very exciting. I am not mad keen on what is proposed, but it is not as bad as all that. I take the same view of the treaty as my hon. Friend the Member for Harrow, East takes on the social chapter. So although the treaty is not as bad as all that, it is not something to make us throw our hats over the moon with pleasure.

I remember that when my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister brought the treaty back to the House, it was thought on these Benches that he had achieved a great triumph. I have been known to tease my hon. Friend the

[Mr. Channon]

Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) by pointing out that on that occasion, so impressed was he by my right hon. Friend's arguments that he supported the Government. He may since have regretted doing so, because he has taken quite a different line ever since.

I accept, of course, that we have moved on from there. I admire my hon. Friends' campaign against the Bill. They are a small group, but they have fought an historic campaign which will go down in the history books. It was a remarkable way of proceeding. I am not sure that if I had been one of their number, I would have approved of voting against procedural motions and generally messing up Government business, but who knows? I do not criticise my hon. Friends for that. There is no doubt that they exposed the issues in a fashion for which the House should in some ways be grateful.

Now we come down to the basics. On what course do we want to set the country after this afternoon? That is in the hands of some of my hon. Friends in the Chamber this morning, and in the hands of others who are outside now but who I am sure will be present later.

Dr. Robert Spink (Castle Point): Does my right hon. Friend agree that the campaign run by the Tory rebels was cynical? They voted for something in which none of them believes.

Mr. Channon: I do not entirely agree. To be fair to my hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East, he has always said the social chapter does not matter. He might even be mildly in favour of it, but I think I am right in saying that he is not strongly opposed to it. That is true of a number of my hon. Friends, but my hon. Friend the Member for Castle Point (Dr. Spink) is probably right to say that the majority are against it.

Mr. Cash: I think that some of my hon. Friends misunderstood the motion, which was not about the social chapter but about the protocol on social policy. I regret to say that my hon. Friend the Member for Castle Point (Dr. Spink) did not know the difference between the two.

Mr. Channon: I hope and believe that I know the difference. I have the motion in front of me. However, I do not want to bandy words with my hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr. Cash).

Mr. Frank Cook: Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Channon: As the hon. Gentleman is an expert from the Whips Office, I give way to him.

Mr. Frank Cook: I must tell the House that I am not an expert—to be an "ex" is to be a has-been and to be a "spurt" is to be a drip under pressure. I admit to neither of those propensities. Far be it from me to try to staunch the spiritual haemorrhage that is taking place in internecine fashion among the Conservatives but, if it is so treacherous for a Tory to vote for an amendment for motives other than those apparent from the Order Paper, is it not just as treacherous for the Government to seek the support of a party in exchange for an undeclared advantage that it might get at some future date?

Mr. Channon: I certainly have not used the word "treacherous". The hon. Gentleman is referring to the fact that the Ulster Unionists voted with us last night. It is up to them to say why they did so. I think that, if I were an Ulster Unionist, I should be appalled by the idea of the proposals by the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, North (Mr. McNamara) coming into effect. I should be inclined to vote with any party that was likely to stop it happening. That strikes me as nothing more than common sense. The Ulster Unionists must speak for themselves, but it seems a reasonable and understandable point of view.

I do not want to detain the House too long. We have come back to basics. If the motion is not carried today, and in spite of what the right hon. Member for Chesterfield said, it is highly probable—if not virtually certain—that Parliament will be dissolved. Do my right hon. and hon. Friends believe that that is desirable at the moment? On what course do we want to set the country?

The Conservatives won an extraordinarily large victory last year although it was not rewarded by as many seats as we might have expected. *[Interruption.]* The economy is beginning to improve. Prospects are beginning——

Dame Jill Knight (Birmingham, Edgbaston): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Is it in order for a member of the Opposition from a sedentary position repeatedly to accuse my right hon. Friend of lying?

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): I did not hear any such thing, but if the hon. Member involved said it, I am sure that he will want to withdraw it.

Mr. Ronnie Campbell (Blyth Valley): I did not say that the right hon. Gentleman was a liar; I said that the Government told lies during the election.

Mr. Channon: I do not want to fight the last election again. I do not think that I told a single lie during the campaign. I see no point in fighting the battles of the last election again. Indeed, I hope that we shall not have to fight those of the next election too soon.

As the economy improves, and as people realise that conditions in this country are getting better, in stark contrast to those in most of the rest of the European Community—*[Interruption.]* Rightly or wrongly, I happen to believe that the economy is improving. I believe that the figures bear me out. We shall discover who is right in a few months' time.

Sir Teddy Taylor: Does my right hon. Friend not think that Britain has perhaps benefited hugely from the immediate impact of our withdrawal from the exchange rate mechanism whereas other countries in Europe are still suffering in terms of jobs and expenditure?

Mr. Channon: I am extremely glad that my hon. Friend has mentioned the ERM. He mentions it often to me in private, and I am glad that he has mentioned it in public. Perhaps unusually, I have always been against the ERM. I was against it when I was a member of the Government and I am delighted that we came out. I hope that we shall not rejoin, and certainly not for a considerable time.

This Government's fate now rests in the hands of some of my hon. Friends. I put it to them that in the long-term interests of the country it would be a disaster if they were to set us on the course of a general election, whose outcome would be uncertain, at a time when conditions are improving and when, in a few years' time, we shall be able to show the people of this country the prosperity that

we have created. By then, our reforms will have had a chance to work. The battle of Maastricht is, I believe, now over——

Mr. Thomas Graham (Renfrew, West and Inverclyde): Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Channon: No, I shall not give way as I am coming to the end of my speech.

The battle of Maastricht is now over. I hope that my hon. Friends will consider carefully the course of action that they intend to take this afternoon. I believe that the national interest requires there to be a Conservative Government for the next few years in order that we can put straight some of the many difficulties that face this country.

Mr. David Shaw: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The assisted area status map has now been published and is available in the Vote Office. May we have a statement from the Government in which the excellent news for Dover and Deal, that they have been granted assisted area status, can be——

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): Order. That has nothing whatsoever to do with the debate. No doubt the Minister will have heard what has been said.

12.10 pm

Mrs. Margaret Ewing (Moray): I shall begin by using what I believe is a Yorkshire phrase—that there is nowt queerer than folk. I suspect that many people outside Parliament say that there is nowt queerer than the parliamentary procedure that we observe here.

It seems to me that the pantomime season has started early. People outside the House of Commons are rapidly losing confidence and faith not only in a faded Prime Minister but in Parliament and a failed Government. This system is seen by the people outside as farcical. We are far too removed from the reality of everyday life for the people whom we are supposed to represent. They have seen unholy alliances, backwards and forwards, through this Chamber. We see people theoretically voting in one direction when, in fact, they are voting in a different direction. The whole system is a shambles and is bringing politics and politicians into disrepute.

The right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) made an interesting speech on the constitution. I know that he will wish to listen to the few remarks that I want to make on constitutional matters. Twice this week, the right hon. Gentleman invoked the Bill of Rights, article 1 and article 9. The Bill of Rights is not applicable to the Scottish people or to the Scottish nation. We had our own Claim of Right in 1688, which spelt out clearly the sovereignty of the Scottish people. It is a tradition in our constitutional law, which stretches back many centuries before that. The Declaration of Arbroath of 1320 contains a clear definition of the sovereignty of the people.

Mr. Benn: The hon. Lady knows that I am only half English. My mother is a Scot. I share entirely the importance that she attaches to the Declaration of Arbroath and the Claim of Right. The hon. Lady will also know that the sovereignty of the people was asserted during the English Revolution and that it was reversed only in 1688. I should regret having to go back to the Bill of Rights. I have never believed that democracy began in Britain when William and Mary arrived. It was a coup d'état by a corrupt Establishment that wanted to get rid of the Catholics. The hon. Lady will therefore excuse me if, as we live in medieval times, I turn to medieval safeguards——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. That was a long intervention.

Mrs. Ewing: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but it was a very interesting intervention, in the sense that the right hon. Gentleman and I both claim that the important aspect of constitutional law must be the sovereignty of the people themselves. It is not parliamentary sovereignty. It is the right of the people themselves to declare where they wish to go in terms of Europe and in terms of the development of any political institution.

We do not even need to go as far back as the Declaration of Arbroath. All we need to do is to consider points made by previous Members of Parliament.

"The House of Commons allows itself to be led but does not like to be driven and is apt to turn on those who attempt to drive it."

That was said by the third Viscount Palmerston in a letter to William Gladstone in 1861, indicating that this House of Commons must assert itself if its Members are to represent the views of the people who send them to this Chamber. Public opinion sets bounds on every Government and is the real sovereign in every free Government and every free country.

Those are the issues which are important in this debate, and it is from that viewpoint that my party and my colleagues approach today's decision. We will, of course, vote against the Govenrment, because we have no confidence in them, but not solely because of their mishandling of the issue of Europe, which is a very important issue. I believe in the European ideal. I want to see Europe developed, but I do not believe that the way in which the Government have handled the European debate has enhanced the reputation of themselves or of Europe among our people.

We believe that there should have been a referendum. The Government could have prevented this shambolic mess if they had based their attitude on the right of people to speak on the issue. A referendum could have been held in which people were asked, "Do you want Maastricht, with or without the social chapter?" The people could have decided that. We tabled an amendment to that effect, but, unfortunately, collusion between the two Front Benches meant that the idea of a referendum was not carried.

We saw the spectacle last week of the backwoodsmen and backwoodswomen coming in to deny our people the right to speak on Maastricht and the social chapter. In any democracy, the will of the people is paramount, not the survival of politicians, many of whom reached their expiry date long ago. This is not about saving the skins of politicians but about the will of the people.

I believe that the Government were wrong constantly to postpone a decision on the social chapter. They prolonged the agony for people and for everyone in the country. Maastricht and Europe are not perfect, but we want to enhance and improve them. We shall do so only if people have a right to make their decision about how they want such developments to go ahead.

Many people would welcome the opportunity of a referendum on Europe, which might improve the standard of debate, because they would then address the issues of the Maastricht treaty and the European Community,

[Mrs. Ewing]

whether it be an enlarged Community or a Community as exists at the moment. They would address the issues that are likely to affect not only their lives and our children's lives but those of many generations hence. The development of Europe is very important and I believe that we should have an enhanced debate.

Mr. Dalyell: The hon. Lady and I have not always seen eye to eye on referendums, but does she accept that referendums often turn out to be about what they do not purport to be about, and that many other issues are introduced into them? Would not a referendum in Scotland be about a lot of other things?

Mrs. Ewing: Perhaps the difficulty is that there is no proviso within the constitution for regular referendums. In other countries where referendums are held on specific subjects, people address the issues and it was partly our fault that referendums in, for example, the 1970s became mixed up with other issues. Had the Labour Government not been as unpopular as they were in 1979, not only would the people of Scotland have said yes, as they did to the referendum, but they might have overcome the hurdle of the 40 per cent. rule—that most invidious rule which was imposed to try to ensure that the people of Scotland did not have a Scottish Parliament. All of us who are interested in Europe would wish to conduct a referendum on the subject, because we would have an enhanced, enlightened debate throughout the length and breadth of the United Kingdom which would allow people to cast their votes appropriately.

I understand that the Cabinet has given the Prime Minister full approval to depart to the palace should either vote go against him this afternoon. The prospect of a general election does not frighten the Scottish national party or the Welsh national party. We should be delighted to go to the country. I believe that people wish to see a change, not only of Government, but of the system of government. In Scotland, we have an opportunity not to continue with the farce, but to build a better system of government by holding out the prospect of self-determination for the people of Scotland, allowing them to participate as equals in the European Community.

12.20 pm

Mr. Richard Shepherd (Aldridge-Brownhills): I agree with the hon. Member for Moray (Mrs. Ewing) on a number of issues. We are all conscious that we are here because of the people, and that the Chamber's authority derives from the people. Therefore, it is beholden on Governments and Opposition to be mindful that, when they come together on a great policy, they should not be satisfied with the tests that they set to that great policy, but should ensure that they have canvassed the views of the nation on it. The corruption in the apple that has diminished. Parliament is that, for too many years, the Government and the Opposition have been satisfied to seek merely acquiescence, not consent.

The old, old principles brought the House together and formed its authority. Those principles have been diminished by our casualness. In the great debate over Maastricht, the single most powerful argument raised across the country was that it was boring. By trying to stuff our ears with the idea that something so fundamental to the concept of democracy—the very essence of democracy—was boring, we perhaps lost the central intent behind our reason for being here.

The Opposition Front-Bench team marched to support the Government on their policy. That policy was not debated in an election, whereby the people of this country could have expressed their view on the transference of their powers—the base of the authority through which we are here—to unelected bureaucrats and unaccountable Ministers in the European Council of Ministers. It was a profound and absolute matter, but we dismissed it as boring. The great commentators took that line. The House took that line, my colleagues busied themselves outside and took that line. However, as a result of that line being taken, today we see a Government before us who are shaking because there may be an election and they have lost the confidence of the House. There is no threat in that. If we believe in the people, we must believe in their judgment. The Prime Minister is right to hold out to the nation the prospect of being able to judge on those issues.

We cannot continue as we have been acting—that applies to all parties. We have refreshment only from the authority of the people, but we deny that because we believe that we can take away that authority and give it into the hands of others who are not accountable to the people. That is why the House is in the greatest danger apparently over the technicalities of a social protocol which touch on a piece of social legislation. For 200 years, the business of the House has been to improve and correct social legislation. Any Government who have the confidence of the people may introduce measures to achieve that end. The right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) reminded us of some of the ways in which the House has moved to accomplish those ends.

Can a motion dealing with legislation that effects the well-being of our people bring the Government to their knees so that they have to table a confidence motion? Of course not—the motion is not, in essence, about that. The debate and the sustenance of the so-called rebellion among Conservative Members has come about—as Labour Members know—because the people of this country are deeply uncertain and uneasy about something that they do not understand and which politicians have not been prepared to explain. It lies in our hands to explain it, and we can do so simply.

It is often been said in the House, "My goodness, the issues affecting a general election are of themselves so complex." They touch on the exchange rate mechanism, on monetary policy and on myriad aspects of public life. Yet the electorate can return an answer, and so it can with Maastricht. If we ask the people, we have to explain to them why it is so important to expunge some of the very reasons for the existence of this House—not our vanity, but their powers to reject or to endorse the great issues of our day, and the shape of the social and political fabric of this nation. The Government eschewed it. The Opposition eschewed it. In the end, this House eschewed it.

I was in the House of Lords when the question was put to an undemocratic and unaccountable Chamber, "Should we have a referendum?" If I had turned off the electricity for three minutes, three quarters of the Lords would not be here today. On that check and balance within our constitution rested our freedom and our right.

The Government still have a chance. They should honour those who brought them to office. Those who have risen through the Whips Office, those who have been the

servants of central office and those who have come to control a great and dignified party are the servants of that party. They are not at the moment well fitted for that when they discharge their responsibilities in this manner. That is true across the House. We have become so puffed up with the importance of this Chamber in relation to the people outside. We will change our ways and we will master our approach to the electorate because we are the servants of the electorate.

The motion, as I have said, is not about social policy. Behind it is the survival of a Government. More importantly, no one will ever reconcile me to the vote for Maastricht without the request that the people consent to the transference of their powers. I shall vote for the Government. I shall do so for the reasons that I have adduced, and the House well understands those reasons. However, the House must know that people like me will attest to this: this Government will be a fine Government. They will be a Government one day who are worthy of this party and worthy of this country.

12.26 pm

Mr. Tam Dalyell (Linlithgow): When the hon. Member for Aldridge-Brownhills (Mr. Shepherd) speaks, the House has come to listen, not least when he speaks with such passion. When he says that we cannot go on as a House of Commons as we have been doing, many agree.

As many of my colleagues wish to have their say, I shall restrict myself to one question, albeit a long and rather convoluted question, which I hope will be addressed when the Minister winds up. It is this. Is it not important that we are on the inside track? Ministers have constantly lectured us about the importance of being in on the decision-making and in the inside track or, as my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) said in a memorable speech, "in the room." I am baffled about why, having been lectured endlessly over many hours about the importance of being inside Europe, in the decision-making and in the room, we shall be asked to leave the room when social policy is discussed. I have not heard any answer given by any Minister that addresses the question why that principle should not apply to the social chapter.

I tell the Minister that I am a passionate and unreconstructed pro-European. The Opposition Whips were very sweet about that. The Opposition Whips are very charming people of great civilisation, humanity and delicacy. However, they were not wholly enchanted when, quite frequently, I—rightly or wrongly—voted in the Government Lobby during the passage of Maastricht. Along with the Labour party conference and various other people, I want the Maastricht Bill. So I ask the House not to question my impeccable European credentials. But one inevitably asks why on earth we cannot have the same approach to the social chapter.

Some of us believe that the social chapter is an integral part of that to which we have signed up. People have been asked, "Are you prepared to put Maastricht at risk?" Yes, I am prepared—and other impeccable Europeans like my hon. Friend the Member for Durham, North (Mr. Radice) are prepared—to put Maastricht at risk if we cannot get what we regard as an integral part of the treaty. The social chapter is extremely important to us. It really is.

The Foreign Office has documents from a man called Robin Das, who is based in Moehlin and has written giving numerous cuttings of advertisements in the Swiss and French press, which say, "Come to Britain and you will find cheaper labour." That is a very humiliating advertisement for our country. I do not like being humiliated in that way. The Foreign Office has copies of those advertisements, but there has been no proper reply about what we should say when faced with such humiliation. What is the Government's thinking on this matter? Is it that we shall repeat time and again the advantage that Cambuslang secured? I am very much in favour of employment in Cambuslang, as my hon. Friends the Members for Glasgow, Rutherglen (Mr. McAvoy) and for Paisley, South (Mr. McMaster) know, but the circumstances of the factory in question moving from Dijon to Cambuslang cannot be repeated very happily if we are to be on the inside track of decision making in the Community.

What is the Government's policy? What will happen when we are asked to leave the room on the social chapter? And what do they think that that will do for our influence inside the Community? The truth is that if, over the months and years, we do not agree to the social chapter, many of the criticisms of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green and Stepney (Mr. Shore) and other honourable critics of the Community will be proved to be very near the bone. Either we are in the Community fully and influential or we are out of it. That is what those on the Government Front Bench have repeatedly said.

Mr. Graham: My hon. Friend will remember that, 20 years ago when the pro-Europeans were campaigning vigorously for us to stay in Europe, one of the arguments that they used most often to encourage people to vote for Europe is that it would improve social conditions. At the time, I was working at Rolls-Royce in Hillington. It was argued that staying in Europe would mean better holidays, better pay and conditions and so on. If the Government get their way, many of the folk who voted to stay in Europe at that time will have been conned.

Mr. Dalyell: My hon. Friend puts his finger on it. Our arguments, at endless meetings, up and down the country, in favour of membership of the Community may turn out to have been fraudulent if we do not secure the social chapter. My hon. Friend asks a legitimate question. People will say, "You persuaded us on the basis of a social chapter and better working conditions and on the basis of employment. If that is to be taken away, how do the arguments with which you persuaded us hold water?" What is an embarrassed pro-European supposed to say to those whom one has persuaded to support one's position on Europe when one cannot produce the goods—the social chapter? I hope that that question will be addressed in the Minister's reply.

Mr. Max Madden (Bradford, West): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You will know that there was considerable speculation that a statement was to be made in the House at 11 am on the assisted areas. That has—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I have already dealt with a similar point of order.

Mr. Madden: The point that I wish to make is that the matter has now been dealt with by means of a parliamentary written answer. Many areas, including my own, have lost assisted area status. That will make our efforts to attract jobs and to rebuild our economies very

[Mr. Madden]

much more difficult. Have you had any request from the Government for a statement to be made on Monday so that hon. Members can ask the Minister why those grave decisions have been taken, as they will make it much harder for us to rebuild the local communities in cities like mine?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: At the present time, there has been no such request from the Government.

12.35 pm

Mrs. Edwina Currie (Derbyshire, South): I shall support the Government in the Lobby this afternoon as I have supported them on all the 74 votes that we have had so far on the European Communities (Amendment) Bill and associated legislation. I am proud to be able to do that.

If I understood my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary correctly when I heard him on Radio 4 this morning, the Maastricht treaty will be ratified. The Act of Parliament that enables that to happen has received Royal Assent. I hope that we will today ensure that we obtain the Government's motion on the social chapter and the social protocol which will complete that process.

We face two questions. The first is whether that process will be completed with or without the social chapter. I must say to the House, and I have said this elsewhere and on radio and on television, that I do not share quite the frantic panic about the social chapter in all its ramifications that some of my right hon. and hon. Friends feel.

If I may indulge in a little wishful thinking, I wish that we had felt able to say that the part of the original social chapter that refers to health and safety legislation was not only welcome in this country, but was largely already enacted in this country. We have a proud and substantial record of putting health and safety legislation on to the statute book and of ensuring that it is adhered to and kept, in the interests of all our constituents. We should be proud of that record and we should have been able to say that we were content in respect of that part of the social chapter.

I want to put on the record today a point that I have made on numerous occasions to Ministers. I would dearly like to see better rights for part-time workers, most of whom are women. I would particularly like to see it made compulsory, at some stage in this country, that women who work in part-time jobs should have pension rights and that their employers should contribute towards those pensions.

I fully accept that that cannot be achieved overnight and that it might have to be phased in. However, the net result of the present system is that millions of part-time workers in this country, including women who work part time for many years, may reach the end of their working lives after 20, 30 or 40 years working part time and not be entitled to a pension. When they retire, they may well find that their entitlement to a state pension, based on their husband's contributions, does not fulfil their expectations. Indeed, if they are divorced, separated or abandoned women, they will receive no pension whatsoever. They are then a charge on the state and the social security system. That is costing this country a great deal of money.

Dr. Spink: Will my hon. Friend acknowledge that Britain has the best health and safety and occupational pensions records in Europe? That can be extended to women without the social chapter. We also have the best social policies in Europe for creating jobs. Therefore, we do not need the social chapter.

Mrs. Currie: I entirely agree with my hon. Friend and I will continue to argue that women should have pensions, that they should pay into pensions and that we should abandon the married women's reduced national insurance contributions. If we women want equality, we will jolly well have to pay for it. I hope that my right hon. and hon. Friends can take that point on board at some stage. We should have made that response to at least part of the proposals on the social chapter.

The point on which we in this country rightly dig in our heels is one of the most fundamental—how to encourage or discourage employment. It is a question not just for this country but for the whole of Europe. Indeed, it is a question for the whole of western society. We so long to give social benefits to the people who return us to Parliament, and we genuinely so long to share with them —most of us—the benefits of having a wealthy, prosperous and secure society that we can sometimes be blinded to the fact that we have to compete with the rest of the world, which does not always take on board the social costs which some hon. Members regard as essential.

Mr. Oppenheim: If my hon. Friend believes in equality between men and women, does she think that women should draw their pensions at 65, as men do?

Mrs. Currie: Yes, women should draw their pensions at 65, as men do. However, I do not think that we should introduce that overnight, because that would be very unfair indeed on people who are expecting to retire shortly.

Mr. Graham: Will the hon. Lady give way?

Mrs. Currie: No, I will not give way again on this matter. We will have many opportunities to debate the rights of women in this country, and I invite the active support of male hon. Members when we do so.

The part that we should be concerned about and the part that our right hon. and hon. Friends fought hard about at Maastricht, and the part that our colleagues in the Community should have set on one side—which should be a matter of subsidiarity and a matter for each country to decide for itself what it can afford and what it cannot afford—is the relationship between trade unions, Government and management and to what extent collective bargaining should be written into the law of the land.

We have thought our way through that matter in this country. I am not in the least surprised that the views expressed by UNICE, the European employers' organisations, have been somewhat equivocal and contradictory. Part of the social chapter would write into law that if UNICE and the European Trades Union Congress came to an agreement, the Commission and the Council of Ministers would have to consider that agreement, and it would be writ large on the face of 340 million people throughout the Community.

UNICE represents a lot of people, but it does not represent most employers and most employees in the European Community. It certainly does not represent

most of them or even many of them in my constituency. The European TUC represents barely 20 per cent. of the work force. What about the other 80 per cent? When I hear Opposition Members talking about working people, I wonder which working people they are talking about. They are talking about the National Association of Local Government Officers, the National Union of Public Employees and the Transport and General Workers' Union. They are not talking about the ordinary working people in my constituency who choose not to belong to trade unions, and they are not talking about the ordinary working people in my constituency who do not have jobs, who wish to have jobs and who want to keep trade union collective bargaining out of interfering with any possibility of their obtaining jobs.

Mr. Dykes: My hon. Friend's point is interesting and valid. Once again, the Labour party is sidling up to union barons, preparing to hand over power to them, and concentrating on the small number of powerful trade unions who do not represent anybody. Does my hon. Friend agree that we must be careful when we assert the prospect of making agreements which can be legally binding, because exactly the same provision appears in section 3B of the Single European Act? It includes a provision for making legally binding agreements between unions and employers if they so wish without the official institutions being involved.

Mrs. Currie: I think that I understand my hon. Friend's point that if a union and a company make an agreement it should be possible for that agreement to be enforced. Most of us would regard it as axiomatic that, if two groups make an agreement, in normal circumstances it is not for the House to interfere with the enforcement of it. I take that point on board. My hon. Friend knows that I am extremely wary of any suggestion that negotiations between national and international bodies which are deeply unrepresentative of the bulk of the people of this community should be enforced on the rest of the community. It seems a recipe for disaster.

Mr. Derek Enright (Hemsworth) *rose*——

Mr. Currie: No.

Mr. Enright: What part of the social protocol says that?

Mrs. Currie: I speak from my experience of such things, for more than 10 years, in my constituency of South Derbyshire.

Mr. Allan Rogers (Rhondda): The hon. lady is misleading the House.

Mrs. Currie: Allan, will you shut up and listen for a minute?

Mr. Rogers *rose*——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I am trying to listen and finding it very difficult to do so.

Mr. Rogers: Will the hon. Lady give way?

Mrs. Currie: No. I will not give way.

Mr. Rogers: But the hon. Lady referred to me.

Mrs. Currie: I will give way in a moment.

I speak from the vantage point of having represented my South Derbyshire constituency for 10 years. I have always taken the view that if we push up the cost of employing people we should not be surprised if we find it more difficult to employ them. We would then have to explain to our constituents why unemployment is high and rising.

We should accept and recognise the view of many international businesses that they wish to employ people at the highest possible levels of training and investment. We have one of the greatest companies in the world in my constituency, Toyota, and I am very proud that we have it. Many other people in my constituency, however, do not work for Toyota and are never likely to. They are not well qualified and will never have the opportunity to rise to that level. Nevertheless, their employment also matters. What also matters to the companies who wish to take them on is whether they can do so on the basis of the costs that they can afford.

The unemployment rate in my constituency is only 6·6 per cent. and falling. It is not only Toyota that is responsible for that; it is the wise and sensible application of policies of employment throughout the constituency by businesses of every kind, from businesses that employ 1,000 people to businesses that employ two people, to those that employ full-time workers, or self-employed people, and those that employ part-time workers. I want to see those workers as well protected as they possibly can be, but first of all I want to see them employed. That is what the social chapter will destroy.

Mr. Graham: I am grateful to the hon. Lady for giving way. Can she tell me why the Government abolished the wage councils, which effectively withdrew protection from 2·5 million part-time, female workers? I did not hear the hon. Lady raise her voice at that time to fight for women in part-time work.

Mrs. Currie: As I said to my constituents at the time, and I will continue to do so, I believe the greatest social benefit is having a job.

It is for individuals to decide. In my constituency, we have a large number of small businesses; many of them are brand new. Between 1987 and 1992, we have had 11,000 new businesses registered for VAT. Most of those businesses have survived. Most are small businesses, run by ordinary men and women. It is not for the Government to tell them what they should pay their workers.

Dr. John Reid (Motherwell, North) *rose*——

Miss Joan Lestor (Eccles) *rose*——

Mrs. Currie: I am flattered, but the answer is no. Sit down. I am anxious not to detain the House much longer because I know that other hon. Members want to speak.

I said at the beginning of my speech that the treaty will be ratified and that there are only two questions to be decided today. One is whether it will be ratified with or without the social chapter, and I have made my views clear about that. The motion that we have to debate relates to section 7 of the European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993, which says that a motion on the social chapter has to be put down by a Minister of the Government.

The other question is: which Government will put down the motion? If this motion is defeated, there will be a general election. Whatever my Derbyshire colleague, the right hon. scion of an aristocratic and noble family, the right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) may say, there will be a general election.

[Mrs. Currie]

The only remaining question is which Government will put down the motion to ensure ratification. That matter is entirely in the hands of the House. I shall be proud to go into the Lobby with my right hon. and hon. Friends, and I hope that the motion gets the very big positive majority that it deserves.

12.49 pm

Mr. Stuart Bell (Middlesbrough): This is a parliamentary occasion, and in debates on such occasions we move quickly from the sublime to the ridiculous. My right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) and the hon. Member for Aldridge-Brownhills (Mr. Shepherd) made sublime speeches. We then heard the ridiculous speech by the hon. Member for Derbyshire, South (Mrs. Currie). She made one significant point when she praised the Government's social record and said that it was in line with the social chapter. We have consistently said that there is nothing in the social chapter that is not already on the statute book.

We have spoken about the protection of workers, their rights in the workplace, information and modest proposals to extend social provision. Those are all part of the social dimension about which we heard a great deal yesterday from the Government. The hon. Member for Derbyshire, South aspires to the European Parliament. When she is exposed to the variety of ideas in Europe, she will change her views about workers.

Europe has no future without a social dimension. People cannot be turned into robots. A social dimension must be applied to those who invest their lives in gainful employment. The hon. Member for Esher (Mr. Taylor) understands that, and that is evident from his employee share option schemes. The only people who do not understand that are the Government. The right hon. Member for Bridgwater (Mr. King) explained the reason for that when he spoke about squeezing lemons, which were squeezed from the day the Maastricht treaty was signed.

When the Prime Minister opted out, as he thought, of the social chapter, and when he sought to opt out of the development of a European currency, he was trying to squeeze Tory lemons—those who were anti-European and did not believe in the futher developments of Europe. Then the Prime Minister tried to assuage them. At that time, the Government had a majority of 100 and the Prime Minister latched on to the social chapter. He said, "I will opt out of the social chapter and offer that to the Tory lemons and they will come into line." They did not come into line then, they did not do so last night, and they have not done so today.

As my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield said, last night's vote was the clear view of the House that without the social chapter there should not be a Maastricht treaty. Today's motion is linked to last night's vote. That is a corrupt misuse of parliamentary procedures, and it is the sort of corruption about which the hon. Member for Aldridge-Brownhills spoke.

In parliamentary terms, it would have been appropriate for the Government to accept last night's vote and ask for a straight vote of confidence today and not one linked to the social chapter. That corruption worries the hon. Member for Aldridge-Brownhills, and it worries the rest of us, because from the time that the Maastricht treaty was signed we have been living from one game, set and match sound bite to another.

The Government have shown a clear lack of direction in their handling of the treaty. The first question was whether the royal prerogative should have been used, because the treaty could have been signed and ratified under that prerogative. The Government forgot about the royal prerogative until they ran into difficulties. The Government then brought in the Attorney-General, who said that the treaty could be ratified under the royal prerogative and that the Bill did not matter. When we came to section 7, the Foreign Secretary said that it did not matter, and it could be left.

Then the matter got to the courts and the Government gave in again and said that the High Court could go ahead with the judicial review. They did not even stand up for the privileges of the House before a court of law, never mind standing up in the House on what the position should have been and over the honesty of their position. The Prime Minister knows full well, as he knew when he signed the Maastrict treaty, that the social chapter is no more than a simple extension of the social dimension.

We have heard about Edouard Balladur, who is coming on Monday—my right hon. and learned Friend the Leader of the Opposition made great play of that. However, there is no way that a French right-wing Government will walk away from the social chapter, because they understand the need for the social dimension, and they understand that that dimension is significant for the future of Europe.

The right hon. Member for Honiton (Sir P. Emery) spoke of small businesses. Time and again, we are told that regulations come from Brussels. However, most of them are the result of 13 years of Tory government. Through their laws, they have introduced masses of regulations. Not long ago, I was at a dinner with the President of the Board of Trade, who said that of the 7,000 regulations on the books, half had been cut immediately because they were duplicates. But the Government had introduced them in the first place.

My hon. Friends tried to intervene in the speech of the hon. Member for Derbyshire, South, when she was speaking of how Toyota came to her constituency. She did not mention the fact that that was brought about by Labour-controlled Derbyshire county council. Brussels is blamed for regulations when they actually come from the Government.

Mrs. Currie: It might help the hon. Gentleman to know that, when Toyota was having a good look at a number of sites, on of the questions that was put to me in great puzzlement by one of its advisers was, "How come, of all the sites that we are looking at, only one has a Conservative Member of Parliament?" My answer was, "Because my constituents have their heads screwed on."

Mr. Bell: The hon. Lady will take her flippancy to the European Parliament, and I hope that it enjoys it more than we do. Nissan came to Wearside, which is represented entirely by Labour Members of Parliament, and I presume that the same point could be made of Nissan as she has made of Toyota.

Dr. Norman A. Godman (Greenock and Port Glasgow): Senior managers of multinationals that have invested in my constituency have told me over and over again that they are perfectly willing to pay reasonable wages and offer

decent terms and conditions of employment in return for highly skilled labour. IBM has a plant in my constituency which has survived much better than IBM plants elsewhere because of the fine skills of its work force. For those inward investors, the social chapter presents no problems because they are willing to offer decent terms and conditions of employment.

Mr. Bell: My hon. Friend is right.

What does an employer want? We have heard a great deal about the CBI and about ICI. My hon. Friend the Member for Stockton, North (Mr. Cook), who is not in the Chamber at the moment, made one point clear yesterday. ICI is an international company. When Sir John Harvey-Jones took the decision some years ago to expand into Europe, he did not feel that the European obligations for a social dimension were too great. He said, "This is the future market and we're getting into it." We saw the prospects of ICI investing here diminishing as a result.

Every employer wants his work force to have the best possible conditions, for the simple reason that if conditions are good and the workplace is homogenous, they will be better workers and will have better productivity rates.

The Government talk about productivity and of how the social chapter will attack Britain's productivity. However, we know from figures from the Department of Trade and Industry that in the OECD league of productivity, which covers the European states, we are 18th out of 24. Our productivity without the social chapter is well behind that of Germany and France. There are criticisms of Europe and the 17 million unemployed, but we must realise that as we do not even have the social chapter in Europe it cannot be creating such massive unemployment.

We all know the real reason for that high unemployment—and the right hon. Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup (Sir E. Heath) knows it better than most: it is the policy of the Bundesbank. However, when it suits the Government, they move the blame from the Bundesbank to the social chapter.

Dr. Reid: I agree with much of what my hon. Friend says. I only wish that every employer was committed to better conditions for his employees. My experience is that that is not always the case.

Can my hon. Friend clarify a point made by the hon. Member for Derbyshire, South (Mrs. Currie) about part-time female workers who do not have the luxury of being employed by Nissan or Toyota? As I understood the hon. Lady's argument—which was not entirely clear to me—the first half was an absolute commitment to increasing the right of part-time female workers to better pensions, including increased employers' contributions. The second half was an absolute commitment to push down all labour costs. How can those two aims be reconciled?

Mr. Bell: The hon. Member for Derbyshire, South is not a lawyer, but she will understand the term "mutually exclusive". When she relates her speech to what the Government are saying, she will realise that they are mutually exclusive and she may well find herself looking even more towards a seat in the European Parliament.

Mr. Anthony Coombs (Wyre Forest): The hon. Gentleman rightly speaks about regulation. Of course, the Government are having to deregulate to reduce the number of unnecessary regulations that impact on industry's competitiveness. The acid test is whether regulations impact upon both competitiveness and cost. The cost figures produced by Eurostat for 1990—the latest available—show that indirect costs in the United Kingdom, excluding direct pay, are, as a proportion of labour costs, the second lowest in the Community. They are about 12·7 per cent., next to Denmark's 2·9 per cent. —but that country has other impediments on wages. The figures for France and Italy are as high as 31 per cent. and 29 per cent. respectively, which is one reason why their economies are so sclerotic and uncompetitive.

Mr. Bell: Those economies are not as uncompetitive as our economy. The OECD table published by the DTI's competitiveness unit shows that. The figures are an embarrassment to the Government. However, I shall leave the matter there as I know that other hon. Members wish to speak.

Mr. Oliver Heald (Hertfordshire, North): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Bell: No. I want to end my speech as quickly as possible.

It was said of the great Italian statesman Mr. Cavour that he was a reed of iron. The Prime Minister is certainly a reed, but we do not see any iron. Instead, we see a Prime Minister who, for the first time in 14 years of Conservative government, has no steady line. The great difficulty that he has with Europe is that on the one hand he wants to be a free trader and he believes that Europe should be a free trade area, but on the other he believes in the Foreign Office line that we should be part of the European Community. He has never been able to resolve that difficulty in his own mind. He cannot decide whether he wants to be in the free trade business or genuinely wants Europe to develop in a cohesive way. Until he gets rid of that dichotomy in his thinking, he will never be at peace with himself.

I have to tell the right hon. Gentleman that Europe, as an issue for the Conservative party, will not go away. Maastricht is not the end; it may only be the beginning. As we saw last night, the Prime Minister has lost his majority.

I quote Shakespeare:

"If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly".

It is time that the Prime Minister took the Maastricht question and his handling of the economy to the British people, one year after the event. Those who believe in our democracy and that Parliament and our people are sovereign will vote for that conclusion today. If they do not, we will have three to four years of a lingering, running down and indecisive Tory Government looking for a change of leadership.

The question was asked why the Prime Minister would seek a dissolution. He was clever to bring his whole Cabinet together after last night's vote, to get their agreement, so that if the Queen were to ask, "Who else could form a Government?" the right hon. Gentleman could reply, "None of us. They all agree with me. They are all behind me."

Dr. Godman: They are all in it together.

Mr. Bell: Yes, they are. There is no little bus from the Chief Whip, as there was in the time of a Labour Government, because the Chief Whip is in the same pot as the Prime Minister.

Courage and conviction must be shown in the House this afternoon by Conservative Members, such as the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Cash), whom I am glad to see in his place, who have gone down a particular road according to their principles and consciences so that this country may have a fresh, clean start. That is what the British public want.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Assisted Areas Order 1993 has been laid today, three sitting days before the recess. Can you confirm that the remaining 37 days allowed for objections to be lodged before the order comes before Parliament will be available when the House resumes, and that a prayer for consideration by the House may be tabled at any time during the 40 days allowed? Will that still be permitted, despite the shoddy way in which that order has been laid, towards the end of the Session? My constituency is excluded from the order, so that makes it an important issue for me. Can you confirm that debate of that important order, which could mean the loss of jobs for Bradford, will not be prevented?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I understand that such an opportunity will be available.

1.8 pm

Sir Giles Shaw (Pudsey): I find myself following the somewhat convoluted views of the hon. Member for Middlesbrough (Mr. Bell), but today a vote of confidence has clearly been laid. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has shown courage, confidence and commitment in ensuring that the issue is resolved in the way that the House would want—and in the way for which the House has voted time and again. We should proceed to put the matter right in the fastest possible time.

I must comment on the moving speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Aldridge-Brownhills (Mr. Shepherd), who has left the Chamber. He always brings deep conviction to his views. I am glad that, although he has considerable reservations about what is afoot, he will be supporting my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister in the Lobby.

We are grateful to have such an exponent of the royal prerogative and of the rules of precedence as the right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn). I am glad that he was able to make his point in his own inimitable way. The right hon. Gentleman has a rather twisted view of the role of the royal prerogative, but he is entitled to that view because he no doubt reflects the twisted spire of Chesterfield in everything that he does. He certainly produced some extremely effective thoughts.

One reason for this debate is to deal with the practicalities of resolving the Maastricht question, which failed to reach a resolution last night, and another is that we should always examine European developments in considerable depth and with considerable anxiety. I am not one of those who are hell bent on joining everything that the Community or Brussels happens to offer—far from it. It is healthy to exhibit a degree of scepticism towards the rate at which the influence of Brussels has pervaded so much of this country's activities.

One of the Maastricht treaty's major contributions was the fact that it offered the prospect of reversing that thrust and that concentration of power for the first time. The commitment that powers should be devolved from the centre and then absorbed into the national political system of each member state has for the moment been put on hold. If ratification of the treaty brings the possibility of true subsidiarity, we shall for the first time be shifting back the pendulum of power to where the House rightly believes it should lie. That is one of the cardinal advantages of what my right hon. Friend and his colleagues negotiated at Maastricht.

The time that has elapsed since those negotiations has passed in vigorous exposé and discussion—and, yes, boredom and tedium—of what is in the treaty, how it affects the United Kingdom and which clauses are acceptable and which are not. We cannot say that the House has failed to examine the issue or that we have taken no notice of it. The treaty has absorbed the totality of this place for probably far too long. Our constituents are worried not about the boredom of not knowing what the heck the Maastricht saga is all about but about more important issues that affect them directly. They are worried about unemployment, law and order, schools and housing.

I do not want to get involved in the fine detail of the opt out, unlike the hon. Member for Middlesbrough who holds his brief well. However, it is distortion to believe that the United Kingdom offers cheap labour and that we gather investment only because we have low labour costs. The opposite is true. Nissan has come to Wearside and, by gosh, I am glad that it has. Toyota has come to Derbyshire, which I am sure deserves it. The fact that Japanese investment in this country is greater than in any other European nation state has nothing to do with labour rates and everything to do with the fact that the United Kingdom is a committed partner in the Community.

The Japanese have been able to work on the fact that we have a manufacturing culture that can provide high levels of skill and the greatest competitiveness in terms of cost of any outside plant that the Japanese have located anywhere in the world. I have had the privilege of visiting Honda in Japan. Nissan, Toyota and Honda regard the United Kingdom as a centre of excellence in terms of quality of production and competitive pricing. If we lose that advantage, we shall lose the jobs that have been brought to this country by investors such as the Japanese. In this fragile state of economic development, we must be careful not to lose those competitive international initiatives.

There is some doubt—let us put it no more strongly than that—about whether the implementation of the social chapter would tilt the balance against us in terms of cost. There is no future for British manufacturing industry unless profits generate investment to enable competitive products to be produced and unless costs are contained in an economy that does not inflate by virtue of having additional costs placed on it from extraneous sources.

We already have most of the social and employment benefits, as my hon. Friend the Member for Derbyshire, South (Mrs. Currie) said. We do not, however, necessarily have the same latitude as other countries to absorb further costs in relation to the prices of goods and services that we must export.

Mr. Dalyell: The hon. Gentleman talks about Britain being a committed partner. He has serious negotiating

experience in the European Community. How can we be seen as a committed partner if we are asked to leave the proverbial room when vital issues are being discussed? What the heck would our European partners think of us for having opted out from crucial discussions? The hon. Gentleman knows what happens with people who, unlike us, have been brought up in adversarial and hemispherical politics—they will take it ill if we opt out of an important aspect. The hon. Gentleman must know that from his experience.

Sir Giles Shaw: I do not think that they would see it like that. I think that they would say that the United Kingdom has, rather rarely, stood up for its own particular interests—just like the French, the Dutch, the Danes and the Italians.

I shall give the hon. Gentleman an example. I well remember negotiating in the Industry Council, on which I was the United Kingdom Government's representative for a time, on shipbuilding, a matter of huge importance to a number of Opposition Members and to me. I was astonished at the negotiating tactics of other countries. The Italians sent two Ministers, because one Minister from the coalition Government would not trust another Minister in the same coalition Government, so the Minister with responsibility for marine matters and the Minister for industry both arrived at the negotiating table. They had lots of devious thoughts when it came to the negotiation and implementation of European policy. There is no straight road through European negotiations. It is full of twists and curves. The G-factor is always there.

The other important fact about the current European situation is that we are suffering as a result of the far too easy implementation of European Community directives that have been developed in Brussels. We have an automatic system—almost unique in the Community—of implementing all the European Community directives and bringing them within our basic United Kingdom law almost overnight. Thus we get ourselves hooked on implementing directives in a way that other nation states within the Community certainly do not.

Let us consider the absurdity of the drinking water directive and the urban waste water treatment directive. If we go to Italy, Greece, Portugal or Spain, we see that not one of them has implemented those directives as fully as we have. Unless we can grapple with that problem and eliminate this insidious process, which weakens our capacity to run our own economy and industrial system in the way that we want, we shall be at a severe disadvantage.

As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said, the way to eliminate the problem is to make sure that we get right into the European Community and become a committed partner. Then we shall be able to influence the way that the Community develops. Originally, it was a free trade area. First, there was the Coal and Steel Community. Then we passed the Single European Act. Since then the single market has been established. We are removing barriers to trade.

We have an enormous capacity for trade within the Community. All that we have gained, but what we have not yet gained is a sufficient grip on Brussels. We cannot yet prevent it from generating legal material that, willy-nilly, we have to absorb, as a consequence of which we find that we are in real technical difficulties.

We have two issues to settle today. First, the Government deserve for a very long time to come the confidence of the House in what they seek to do. Secondly, the Maastricht treaty must be ratified, once and for all. Who knows? When we are right on the inside of the European track we may find that, once again, we have saved ourselves by our exertions and Europe, perhaps, by our example.

1.18 pm

Mr. George Howarth (Knowsley, North): The hon. Member for Pudsey (Sir G. Shaw) referred to the time when he negotiated on behalf of this country's shipbuilding industry with other members of the European Community. The most important point that needs to be made is that, however obscure and difficult the negotiations may have been, the other members of the European Community still have shipbuilding industries. I represent a Merseyside constituency. Therefore, I am bound to say that our shipbuilding industry has been entirely devastated since that time. The hon. Gentleman's time as a negotiator could not, therefore, have been terribly successful.

I wish to make two points and I shall try to be brief because many hon. Members wish to speak. The first results from a conversation that I had last Saturday with a constituent who is a former Conservative voter and a former member of the Conservative party. He stopped me in the shopping precinct in Prescot and asked, "What is going on with the Government?" I said, "We will have to wait and see, but they are in some difficulty, as you well know." He said, "What mystifies me, George, is that I was brought up to believe in certain things, which made me a Conservative. I was brought up to believe that we have the best police force in the world and that when somebody had committed an offence the police arrested them and put them in prison until such time as they were charged or whatever. Unfortunately, it seems that once we arrest criminals we cannot hold them. I believed that we have the finest system of justice in this country and that when somebody was convicted they were guilty of the offence, but unfortunately it seems that as many innocent people are locked up in prison as guilty people. I was also brought up to believe in the Bank of England and the importance of our currency. We are all aware of what has happened under the exchange rate mechanism. Finally, I cannot understand why the Government are prepared to pay for the social chapter for other EC countries but are not prepared to extend its benefits, modest though they are, to our citizens."

I am pleased to say that that former Conservative party member intends to vote Labour at the next election. Unfortunately, if the boundary commissioner has his way, it will not be in my constituency. The point that he was making is serious and there is an old-fashioned expression to describe it—patriotism. What mystifies people of his generation, who lived through the second world war and the period between the wars, is the Government's abandonment of the old-fashioned concept of patriotism—not flag waving and jingoism, but the belief that a United Kingdom Government would try to represent the interests of their own people over and above those of others. They find the Government's abandonment of that principle offensive.

Several hon. Members, most movingly the hon. Member for Aldridge-Brownhills (Mr. Shepherd), referred to the mystification of the Maastricht treaty—the

[Mr. George Howarth]

obscurity of what we are arguing about and a parliamentary process that at times has left hon. Members bewildered, let alone people outside.

That leads to a cynicism—and perhaps in some ways a justified cynicism—among people outside the House, and the Government are feeling the backlash of that cynicism. The Christchurch by-election will be held in an about a week's time. It is common knowledge that there is no prospect of the Government's winning one of the safest Conservative seats. Confronted with such a backlash, it is time that the Government stood back and took stock of where they have gone wrong.

During the Maastricht process, I have sometimes been in the minority in my party. I did not abstain on Second Reading and, on amendments, I have consistently voted against the treaty. But cynicism has been displayed, both last night and in the cheap trick that the Prime Minister has tried to play on the British public and in the House today. People do not say that those who are against the Maastricht treaty are heroes and those who support it are fools or charlatans. People say that the House has not managed to explain to those outside precisely where it is moving, and why.

I believe that the most valid argument—the time for which has now passed—was that there should have been a referendum. Other hon. Members have made the argument clearly during the debate. If we do not trust people to make decisions on such issues, they are entitled to feel that the Government and, to some extent, the House are being cynical in the way in which they are using —or abusing—the powers vested in them.

I am glad to see that my brief comments have attracted the attention of the Prime Minister, who has returned to the Chamber, particularly as I am just about to mention his role in the process. There is no point in pretending other than that the chances are that the Government will survive the confidence motion. But that will not mark the end of the Prime Minister's or the Government's problems. The abandonment of partiotism, and the cynicism engendered in the British public, will be there to haunt the Government. Whether the Government last six months, one year, two years or even three years, that backlash will wreak terrible revenge on them when they finally have the courage to face the electorate.

1.27 pm

Mr. William Cash (Stafford): We have had a long and protracted debate. I must admit that it has gone on for many months—in my case it has gone on for about six years. In the past, I have tried to explain why I thought that we were being taken into a federal Europe. I first detected that possibility back in 1986, and decided that I would try to set out my stall on the subject. I was told that in those days the former Foreign Secretary, now Lord Howe, used to say that I was telling terror stories to frighten little children. We have come a long way since then.

I am, and will always be, deeply opposed to the principles that underlie the Maastricht treaty. Yesterday, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister—I am more than glad to see him sitting on the Front Bench today—said that we must not be sidelined. I fear that the opt outs, both in respect of economic and monetary union, and the social chapter, place us in an incredibly difficult position. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary requested me to write a paper for the Conservative manifesto committee some time ago. I said then that I thought that we should repudiate economic and monetary union because otherwise we would be stuck on the outside of the system which was developing as Europe became more closely integrated.

The problem is that the opt outs will not solve the problem for which they were designed. We will be drawn in by gravitational pull. If and when it is ratified, the Maastricht treaty will not actually be the Maastricht treaty, but a part of the treaty on European union taken collectively. Therefore, we shall be bound within the legal structure.

When, under section 2 of the European Communities (Amendment) Act, we make a separate decision, so it is said, about whether we go down the route of a single currency later, we shall face a stark choice. Shall we or shall we not remain in the European Community? The Maastricht treaty and the other treaties will all be taken collectively into one and that will present a problem for us.

If we try to renegotiate the arrangements that have been made over the past two years, the problem that we have set ourselves is this. By giving in on the Maastricht proposals —giving in to threats, I believe, and I do not think that appeasement is the right way to go in these matters—I fear that we shall not be able to unravel the arrangements, as the Government would wish to a certain extent, precisely because the unanimity of all the member states is needed to achieve the changes that are required and, as I understand it, are promised between now and 1996.

At least six of the member states are tied in by the fact that they are in the Community for the money that they get out of it. Nobody can doubt that the federalism that I predicted many years ago has now become a form of religious hysteria for some member states, to the point at which I cannot believe that they will all agree to unravel the arrangements on our terms. I see us, therefore, being locked into the legal structure with deleterious results for the United Kingdom.

That is not to say that I am, in any sense other than the way I have described, against the European Community as it has developed so far, although I believe that we should reform the Single European Act to give a better crack of the whip to the British. We do especially badly out of many arrangements. That unfairness led me to vote against the coal pit closure programme. I knew that the Germans got £9 billion of European Community state aids, whereas we get £160 million authorised state aids.

Sir Jim Spicer (Dorset, West): I am surprised that my hon. Friend has at no point taken into account what will happen when we have the accession of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Austria. One of the great successes of Maastricht was to move forward to that new membership. Each and every one of those new members will be a supporter of this country. They will not only be contributors; their thinking about how the Community should develop is exactly along our lines.

Mr. Cash: I understand my hon. Friend's point. What is more, I am delighted to know that other member states are coming into the arrangements with us. The question is, what arrangements? My concern is that the proposals

under the Maastricht treaty, which apply to the whole of Europe, will damage Europe as a whole and the United Kingdom in particular.

I give an example by reference to the protocol on social policy and the social chapter. It is my firm belief that we should have resisted it, as we resisted economic and monetary union. We should not hand over the rights of our voters to the decisions of unelected bankers. In the same way, by allowing the other 11 member states to go ahead, the provisions of the social chapter, such as the 48-hour working time directive, will come in through the back door. Precisely because we agreed to articles 2 and 3 of the treaty changing the directives, when it comes to interpretation, the courts will say where there are doubts, "You agreed to social protection, you agreed to social cohesion and you agreed to economic cohesion." There will, therefore, be a substantial argument against us, even when we get to court, on the 48-hour working time directive. The decision will be taken on the basis of the Maastricht treaty arrangements which work so much against us because we conceded changes in the objectives set out in the early articles of the treaty.

I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Dorset, West (Sir J. Spicer) about the need to bring other member states in, but we must look at what is happening not only in relation to the vast number of member states that will eventually be involved and the new institutional arrangements with which it will be so difficult to cope, but in relation to the fact that the Community needs to be able to compete with the Association of South-East Asian Nations, with the countries of the Pacific basin and with Mexico. Why is Jaguar, for example, considering going to Mexico? The answer is that it knows that it will have a competitive advantage. I very much hope that the company does not move from Coventry. It cannot have very much faith in our arguments about the social chapter if it proposes to go to Mexico. We also know about the recent problems concerning British Airways and social dumping.

I fear that, under the arrangements, it will be impossible for Europe as a whole to compete with other countries in the world. The Germans in particular are worried that we shall be saddled with costs that will make us uncompetitive. That is the problem which I foresee. Why are the Germans taking up 85 per cent. of all the investment in eastern Europe? They are doing so because those countries are outside the European Community. I believe that that is one of the reasons why there is reluctance to accept those eastern European countries into the Community for the time being.

Mr. Patrick Nicholls (Teignbridge): My hon. Friend will know that I have more sympathy with his views than people may sometimes suspect. Surely the powerful and eloquent case that he is making is not a case against the Maastricht treaty but a case against being in Europe in the first place. My hon. Friend may recall that, in a debate last year, I said to him that, logically, his case was a case for the thoroughly unfeasible option of coming out of Europe. My hon. Friend said on that occasion——

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. Interventions are supposed to be short. The hon. Gentleman has made one comment, and that is sufficient.

Mr. Cash: I am sorry to say that my hon. Friend did not reach the point that he intended to make, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I cannot remember the speech that I made on the occasion in question, I shall not be able to reply to his intervention. Would it be in order if I allowed my hon. Friend to get to his point so that I can do him the courtesy of a reply?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. It is not the fault of the occupant of the Chair if the hon. Gentleman was not paying attention to the first question.

Mr. Cash: There is a huge problem as to whether or not we can exert an influence within the European Community, as evidenced by the fact that, when the former Chancellor of the Exchequer went to Copenhagen to try to convince the rest of the Community that there were fault lines in the exchange rate mechanism—which was supposed to reflect the fact that we were at the heart of Europe and could influence what went on—the other member states turned round and told us to go away. They said, "We do not believe a word that you are saying. We will go ahead with our own agenda." Similarly, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary came to the House and told us that we would not be recognising Croatia. But Herr Genscher thought and believed that here was an opportunity for the greatest foreign affairs victory for the German nation since 1945, so the screws were put on. Although we were supposedly at the heart of Europe, we found ourselves agreeing to recognise Croatia. Many would say that that gave rise to the problems now facing Bosnia-Herzegovina.

I am not saying that we should come out of the Community. We want to stay in the Community, because it has benefits for us. I hope that, sooner or later, we shall be able to sort out the question of our deficit with it of £8 billion a year. We must not, however, find that, by entering into new arrangements, we end up depleting our influence rather than increasing it. The real difficulty with which we are faced is that we have entered a system with institutional arrangements that give other countries too much power and too many controls over us. Yes, we must stay in the European Community and we must say in the single market. That is why I am so concerned about the treaty.

The difficulty arose from the fact that we did not veto the matter in the first place. However, from what has been said today, I now know that if we are to have a general election on this point, the Labour party and the Liberal Democrats, in coalition or together if they were to win such a general election, would be 10 times worse than my objections and, believe me, I took this decision on my own terms.

If there had been even the slightest suggestion at any point in these proceedings that the Labour party was prepared to ditch this rotten treaty, I would have had a lot more respect for the Labour party. But it never was prepared to do that and it never will be. I will not in any way resile from my objections to the treaty. However, I am damned if I will have the Opposition running the affairs of this country within the Maastricht arrangements.

1.40 pm

Mr. George Galloway (Glasgow, Hillhead): I intend to be brief and to confine my remarks to a relatively narrow section of the debate. However, notwithstanding the rather uncharacteristic ire of the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Cash), it would be churlish of me to follow him

[Mr. George Galloway]

without paying tribute to the indefatigable pursuit that he and his fellows have made over these long months of what they thought was right for this House and this country.

As other hon. Members have said, the hon. Member for Stafford has written himself into the history books of this country as a skilful and dedicated parliamentarian. As this is the last opportunity during this Maastricht business for me to do so, I wanted to pay that tribute to the hon. Gentleman's efforts and dedication.

I want to confine my remarks to the issue of what deal was done prior to last night's vote and in relation to the vote that will take place at 4 pm today. In his opening remarks in relation to the Ulster Unionist party, the Prime Minister said that nothing was asked for and nothing was given. The Prime Minister must know that that possibility has no resonance. It is not believed anywhere important in this or other lands. It is not believed in the north of Ireland where the minority population at least must wait with some trepidation to see what was asked for or what was given.

Dame Jill Knight: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Galloway: I hope that the hon. Lady will forgive me if I do not give way; I have only just begun.

That possibility is not believed in Dublin, a fraternal capital and a Government close to us with whom we have warm relations and share membership of the European Community. It is not believed in other capitals of the European Community, and it is not believed in Washington, that is for sure.

When I saw the nine grim-faced men emerge from their office last evening, and heard through the process of osmosis that occurs in this House that they had decided after all to try to save the Government's bacon, I and other hon. Members speculated about what the terms of the deal could possibly be.

Dame Jill Knight: The hon. Gentleman may not have been in his place when, from the Government Front Bench, it was said perfectly clearly that no deal was made, and the immediate reaction of the Ulster Unionists was to nod vigorously.

Mr. Galloway: As a less honourable lady once said in a less honourable place than this, "They would say that, wouldn't they?"

The point that I was making was that nobody believed that statement, notwithstanding the gusto with which it was made. Without being told what deal was done, one can only speculate what deal could possibly have been done. One must surely disregard the wilder speculations.

One of my colleagues jokingly said that perhaps the B Specials are back. Perhaps a British expeditionary force has been launched into Donegal to recover it for the Northern Ireland statelet. Perhaps we are going back to one man, two votes in certain Northern Ireland elections. Perhaps we are going back to institutionalised discrimination in housing and jobs—although discrimination still exists in respect of jobs. Not so long ago it was institutionalised in the rules, regulations and constitution of the Northern Ireland statelet. Is that the discussion that took place with the nine grim-faced men who, as they entered the Chamber, looked as though they had walked off the set of the "Jurassic Park" of British politics, the Northern Ireland political system?

Mr. David Nicholson (Taunton): Does the hon. Gentleman realise that the tone of his remarks about our colleagues from Northern Ireland only confirms the deep suspicion that they now have of the Labour party?

Mr. Galloway: I now refer to that point. I turned to the BBC this morning for elucidation of what deal might have been done. I was glad to hear the hon. Member for Upper Bann (Mr. Trimble), who is the intellectual of that bunch of grim-faced men, say, "No deal was done as such"—he repeated that thrice—"but what we made"—I wrote it down—"was a small investment for the future." I do not know who the hon. Gentleman's stockbroker is, but that investment struck me as being on a par with a little flutter on Polly Peck just a week or two before Mr. Nadir flew the coop.

Just what dividend did the hon. Gentleman expect? What must we expect as a dividend from that small investment that the hon. Gentleman's party made? That is always supposing, of course, that the Government keep their side of the bargain, as members of the Scottish National party found when they did a deal—"Dear Ian; Dear Margaret; yours sincerely, Ian; yours ever, Margaret." Such deals are not always kept. As the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume) said, that which is bought on Thursday can be sold on Monday.

Exactly what dividend or gain is expected by the nine gentlemen who tried to save the Government's bacon last evening? Not only the House but people in the north of Ireland, in the Republic of Ireland, in Europe, in the United States of America and across the civilised world, where people have an interest in what happens in the Six Counties, deserve to know. The Government shamelessly exploited those hon. Members' fears and those of the community that they represent about developments in the Labour party's and others' thinking.

Mr. Hurd *rose*——

Mr. Galloway: The Foreign Secretary seems to be trying to elucidate further. I am glad to give way to him.

Mr. Hurd: The hon. Gentleman knows as well as any hon. Member the power and mischief of rumour, but he has spent the past 10 minutes embroidering on speculation. He has produced no evidence to refute the statement made by the Prime Minister and corroborated by the Unionists. I am sure that he is aware of the danger and damage that could be done, particularly in Ireland, by this kind of speculation. Would he please produce some evidence to support his remarks before he proceeds with his analysis?

Mr. Galloway: As the deal was only done in the later hours of last night, I am——

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. Robert Atkins): No deal was done.

Mr. Galloway: I do not believe that; that is the burden of my remarks. Nobody else believes it either. As the deal was done only late last night, and as the Prime Minister made his remarks this morning, time will tell just what deal has been done.

In the final stages of last night's debate, the Secretary of State for Employment said, with his usual flourish, that his party was the Conservative and Unionist party. In the past few weeks, the Government have been determined—according to the hon. Member for Upper Bann, it has only been evident in the past few weeks—to reaffirm and strengthen their commitment to the Unionist cause. Is anyone seriously being asked to believe that that policy and the words of last night were not uttered to keep the Unionist Members on side?

It is exactly that capitulation to the powers of veto of those nine gentlemen and the people they represent that has landed us with the dreadful decades and centuries-long problem of Ireland.

I am not in any sense making light of the fears of the Unionist population, but I heard Ministers shamelessly describe a discussion document written by the Opposition spokesman on Ireland as being akin to a plan devised by the devil. Conservative Members are aware, however, that the idea of joint sovereignty has occupied intellectual thinking time in the backrooms of Governments of both parties for many years. They are aware that the perfectly respectable, fraternal Government of the Republic of Ireland also believe that that idea might be worth pursuing. Conservative Members know that it is an idea whose time may well have to come. For the Government to exploit that idea shamelessly in order to dragoon the nine grim-faced gentlemen into their Lobby does them just as much discredit as the arm twisting and other attempts of duress, by one means or another, to dragoon the parliamentary majority for the Maastricht Bill.

The Government know that we are close to a time when we will all have to think about ways in which to get out of the desperate, dreadful and miserable decades-long running sore that is the history of Britain and Ireland. We should be encouraging responsible, respectable democratic politicians to talk to other such politicians to try to find a way out of that problem, because the alternative means that our sons and daughters and their sons and daughters will be sitting in the House talking about the blood and tears that continue to flow in Ireland. That is the story of Ireland.

I believe that when the history of this period comes to be written, not only will the honourable and noble campaign led by the hon. Member for Stafford be of great interest to the historians, but the squalid shabby way in which the Government tried to escape from the consequences of their actions will be just as luminous.

1.53 pm

Dame Jill Knight (Birmingham, Edgbaston): I wish to distance myself as far as possible from the remarks made by the hon. Member for Glasgow, Hillhead (Mr. Galloway). Given the clear statement that has been made by my right hon. Friends and which has been corroborated by a number of Unionist Members, it is utterly disgraceful for the hon. Gentleman to pursue his argument.

New Members have to select the special interest subjects that they will follow. Obviously, it is impossible to become involved in all the subjects that the business of the House encompasses, so we select subjects based on our constituencies. Members with country constituencies will have an interest in agricultural matters, while those with coastal constituencies will be interested in retirement homes, shipping, fishing and so on.

In Birmingham, a part of which I have been proud to represent for 27 years, our main interest is industry. It is our life blood, and it is crucial to our constituents. It is also crucial to the rest of the country, because when Birmingham does well, Britain does well, and when Birmingham suffers, the country suffers. It follows that the opinions, advice and experience of industrial bodies such as the CBI and chambers of industry and commerce are to me a mixture of the tablets of stone, "Erskine May" and the seven pillars of wisdom.

The people in those organisations can create for my constituents jobs, security, opportunities and prosperity, and I listen with great care to everything that they say. Their advice on the social policy protocol is clear and unequivocal. They do not want it at any price because they know that it will push up costs, destroy jobs and be a bureaucratic nightmare. It will deny employers and employees their right to basic, free negotiations with each other. They do not want—and I believe that our people do not want—direction from Brussels.

Mr. David Winnick (Walsall, North): Will the hon. Lady give way?

Dame Jill Knight: No, I will not give way to that hon. Gentleman. I shall give way to the hon. Member for Stockton, North (Mr. Cook) if he wishes to intervene.

I have detected all along that Joe Public is perfectly happy to be part of the European club. He approves of being a member of a Community which eases trade between its member states, which eases travel and banking facilities, and which is a power and a strength for peace and a voice in the world. Joe Public becomes upset when he thinks that we may reach a point at which we are bullied by Brussels, and I understand that feeling.

Some months ago there was a great prawn crisp row because people believed that prawn crisps were to be snatched from their mouths by the vicious interference of Brussels. People wrote to me in great distress because they had been told that Brussels would not allow us to continue to use double-decker buses. That fear was just as fallacious as the one about prawn crisps, but we have gone from crisps to buses to other topics. Such issues, rather than not being a member of the Community, are what worry people.

The hon. Member for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell) spoke fluently about not agreeing with being told to leave the room. We want to be able to say that Britain does not agree with some parts of Brussels diktats. We do not approve of being told by Brussels that we must do what she says when those instructions exceed the power and wisdom of the House. We want to keep for ourselves the power to pass our own laws. There is nothing wrong with that.

Labour Members fail to understand that, although we are a member of the club and proud to be so, and although we wish to remain so, there will always be some things that come out of Brussels to which we object. I objected strongly to some of the rules and diktats on butchers shops and some Labour Members joined me in my objections. Many small butchers shops closed as a result of directions from Brussels.

Mr. Geoffrey Dickens (Littleborough and Saddleworth): The English sausage.

Dame Jill Knight: As always, my hon. Friend has put his finger on an important point. Some hon. Members fail to understand that, while we want to be part of Europe, that does not mean that we have to follow it in everything that it says.

Mr. Bowen Wells (Hertford and Stortford): My hon. Friend is absolutely right, particularly in relation to the social charter. Surely the way in which we employ and pay people and the way that their pensions and other conditions are calculated are bound up with our traditions and cultures. Therefore, it is right that they should be a matter not for Europe and for Brussels but for contractual negotiation between employers and employees within the countries of Europe.

Dame Jill Knight: I am grateful to my hon. Friend because that is exactly the point that I am making. The hon. Member for Linlithgow felt that we should not ask to leave the room. The whole point is that there are sectors —my hon. Friend has just listed some—in which we want to be able to keep our own counsel and do what we think is right for our own people.

Let us be clear that employers are fully in favour of genuine workplace health and safety measures, of initiatives to improve the way in which the single market works—for example, recognition of equivalent vocational qualifications—and of fair and level working conditions. All of those are already catered for in the treaty of Rome and the Single European Act. There is no need for the social chapter.

Good employee involvement cannot be brought about by direction from Brussels. Good employer involvement is for the good employer to organise with his good employees and that is something which every sensible employer seeks. One cannot run a successful business if the people one employs are unhappy and feel that they have been treated wrongly and unfairly.

Dr. Godman: Am I acceptable to the hon. Lady?

Dame Jill Knight: Yes, the hon. Gentleman is acceptable.

Hon. Members: Favouritism.

Dr. Godman: I assure the House that the hon. Lady and I are not even hon. Friends, although she gave way to me with characteristic good grace.

I say, thank God for Brussels, where the health and safety of fishermen and offshore oil and gas industry employees is concerned, not forgetting that dreadful occurence that overtook Piper Alpha when constituents of mine were consumed in those flames. Brussels, with its health and safety legislation by way of directives is improving matters for those offshore workers.

Mr. Hurd: Rubbish.

Dr. Godman: The right hon. Gentleman may say rubbish, but——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Dame Jill Knight: But that is all happening without the social chapter. Every sensible employer must seek good relations, good health and safety and all the other important factors that we all want. All of the really great employers—Cadburys, Marks and Spencer, Westland—understand that very well and look after employees in the way that they think best. They will not look after them any better because someone in an office in Brussels tells them to do so. We have been saved from all that bureaucracy by the way in which my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has dealt with the social protocol.

The Labour party makes me so angry. Many things about it worry me, but its hypocrisy worries me most of all. It mouths pious platitudes about law and order, but then votes against every measure that would improve them. It tries to make enormous political capital out of unemployment, but intends to vote for something that will increase unemployment.

I salute the integrity of hon. Friends who have fought their fight, but they have lost the battle. However keenly they feel, they are democrats at heart and they know that the House has voted in favour of the Maastricht treaty and that, over many months, the House has repeatedly endorsed the Government's view on it. There is no point in calling for a referendum, because we had a referendum on whether Britain should join Europe. We cannot have referendums at every point as that policy develops. That would be utterly ridiculous.

I shall have enormous pleasure not only in voting with the Government in the Lobby tonight, but in cheering when they win.

2.6 pm

Mr. Ken Livingstone (Brent, East): Many factors have come together to create a very unpleasant few hours for the Conservative party, which we are all delighted to watch. Nothing that has happened today will solve the Government's long-term problem. The very fact that the Prime Minister has had to threaten an election to bring his own party into line is a sign of weakness, not of strength. The bitterness that will linger in his party will fester and grow.

I do not know where the Prime Minister developed that style of leadership. It certainly was not there at the beginning of his political career on Lambeth council, which I watched. That council was decisively led by Bernard Perkins, who took up clear positions and persuaded his party to follow him. There was nothing in the Prime Minister's early tutorship that would have led him to believe that he should say one thing to one wing of his party and something else to the other wing, and then hope to muddle through. That was not what he learnt in his first elective office. If Bernard Perkins were here today, he would feel some shame at the spineless way in which the Conservative party is being led.

Almost the entire debate on Maastricht, which has stretched on for almost two years, has been conducted completely dishonestly. The Conservative party is telling the British people that it involves a small set of changes of no great importance. It says that we will not necessarily have to join a single currency, yet the treaty is about currency union. Even the idea of having an opt-out clause on the central points of the treaty raised the question why, if we want to reserve the right to opt out of currency union and the central bank, do we bother to go through all this pain? I do not have the slightest doubt that this is a strategy of slowly, slowly catchee monkey. The Prime Minister has tried to lead his party into accepting the treaty by saying that it is not really much of a treaty. That has not worked. People throughout the country are genuinely confused. We are told that the treaty is not

about a united states of Europe; it is just a small number of economic changes dragged down by the incubus of the social chapter.

The truth is that the treaty is a major step towards the creation of a united states of Europe. Before it is even ratified by all the 12 members, there are the opening rounds of the debate about the next stage. It is building for the intergovernmental conference in 1996, at which all our European partners will debate a common defence strategy, a common defence force, and a common foreign policy. Whatever Conservative Members may tell their constituents, they know that we are moving stage by stage towards a united states of Europe and are deceiving the people of Britain by pretending otherwise.

I am prepared to debate the creation of a democratic, socially progressive Europe, because that would be a step forward—but we are not being told about that. The Prime Minister has problems because many of the Conservative rebels who have made life so difficult for the Government over the past 18 months are fighting to prevent that happening because they are nationalists. They love the concept of this nation and its rules and Parliament, and they do not want them to go.

Many Conservative Members do not display the same integrity. They tell their constituency associations that the treaty is of far less significance and importance. That is the reason for the mess and why the Prime Minister must come to the House and threaten a dissolution, to drag reluctant Conservative Members through a Division, knowing that they are lying to themselves as they walk through the Lobby doors.

Mr. Patrick Cormack (Staffordshire, South): If the treaty is so desperately bad, why would the hon. Gentleman vote for a more full-blooded version of it?

Mr. Livingstone: The hon. Gentleman may be unaware of my position. I oppose the treaty because it gives power to bankers. I oppose giving English bankers any power. I am broadly opposed to bankers. I see from their track record in the conduct of financial affairs that the only thing they willingly do is to give money to crooks such as Robert Maxwell and Asil Nadir. People like that can always get money. Bankers are a naturally conservative group, and I shall never be happy with a treaty that gives great power to bankers.

I am not, however, opposed to a united Europe. I am prepared to participate in any debate on the format of a united Europe and on the democratic checks and balances that should be in place.

Irrespective of that issue, and given the state of the country, I would vote for anything to get rid of the shower on the Benches opposite. Even if I agreed with them, I would vote against them today in the slight hope that that might lead to the Government's downfall in a general election. I would do anything to precipitate the next general election. I would be prepared to sit naked in the middle of Parliament square if it would advance the cause of a general election.

Mr. Frank Cook: It would not.

Mr. Livingstone: I am not surprised.

The Government should be honest about what is behind this debate—and there is bitterness because they have not been that. An honest, open debate on whether we should move towards a united states of Europe would be a cleansing experience for all right hon. and hon. Members.

Nothing was more typical of the conduct of this debate than when the Foreign Secretary slithered to his feet during the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn). My right hon. Friend was pointing out that the social chapter has very limited powers. If any of my other right hon. or hon. Friends imagine that it would bring some form of revolutionary socialism to Europe, they would be sorely disappointed. It embodies a small series of reforms with which even the Liberal Democrats can feel happy. It has very little real backing or power. Nevertheless, it marks a small step forward.

My right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield said that the same speeches made against the social chapter could have been heard when Parliament debated the law to prevent young children from being used as chimney sweeps. The Foreign Secretary intervened to say, "But there could be a European directive about paper boys." The right hon. Gentleman did not mention paper girls because he is a bit backward on political correctness.

That is the kind of nonsense we have been hearing. That is not what Europe is about. There may be the odd problem—such as the flavouring of crisps mentioned by the hon. Member for Birmingham, Edgbaston (Dame J. Knight), but they are peripheral to the real issue. Incidentally, we already have legislation to protect paper boys and paper girls. How typical of the Foreign Secretary to be unaware that it is on the statute book and say, "You could even get legislation from Brussels about the working conditions of paper boys."

It is difficult today for boys and girls to get such jobs, because, as there is no other work, grown men and women are doing them. The same occurred during the great recession in the United States, when men and women were driven to taking jobs that were normally done by children. The Government have managed to replicate that. That is the context in which we are holding this debate.

We are told that there was no deal involving the Ulster Unionists. Does anyone in Britain seriously believe that no understanding was reached? Of course, no one signed a bit of paper because one side did not trust the other. It may yet be revealed that someone took a tape recorder to the interview and, if so, it might be interesting and should be published.

It is an insult to the intelligence of the British people, let alone to that of the House, to deny that a deal was struck. A deal was struck, but at what cost to the chances of bringing to an end the appalling decades of violence and discrimination? That is perhaps the most scandalous aspect of the proceedings. When I hear the Prime Minister say that there has been no deal, I do not believe him; nor will anyone else in Britain. When the Ulster Unionists go home, they will not be saying that there was no deal. I imagine that the leader of the Ulster Unionists who did the deal may be counting his fingers. A deal was certainly done. It represents a step backwards for any hope of reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Winnick: Does my hon. Friend agree that one of the changes that have undoubtedly occurred in the past 10 years has been the improvement in the relationship between the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic? Would it not be a cause of great concern if that good

[Mr. Winnick]

relationship were in any way undermined by a feeling in Dublin that there has been an understanding, if not a deal? Should not every effort be made to continue a good working relationship between London and Dublin, which includes the understanding that Dublin has an interest in what happens in Northern Ireland?

Mr. Livingstone: I share my hon. Friend's concern. Discussions in the corridors of the Dail today will centre on the cost of the deal and what it will mean. The deal will cause a setback and will mean distrust. The Irish Government will know that, when the crunch came, the first thing to be sacrificed was progress in the developing relationship between the British and Irish Governments.

Mr. Dickens: Does the hon. Gentleman remember a deal done years ago between the Labour party and the Liberals? It was called the Lib-Lab pact. An understanding was reached, and the Liberals sustained the Labour party in office for many years. Does he not understand that the Ulster Unionists were upset when the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, North (Mr. McNamara) suggested rule from Dublin? It is no wonder they joined us.

Mr. Livingstone: There is a small difference between the two cases. As I remember it, there was an open and public debate about the Lib-Lab pact. I was opposed to it and would have preferred it if my party, having lost the majority, had called an election. In any event, the pact was conducted in public and was honest and open. That is the difference between the Lib-Lab pact and the squalid little deal which, we are told, was not made.

Mr. John Townend (Bridlington) *rose*——

Mr. Livingstone: I must press on because many other hon. Members wish to speak.

I am sure that the Government will survive today's motion, but they assume that the issue will then go away. It will not. Labour went through a trauma in its relationship to Europe just over 20 years ago. In a remarkable mirror image of the events of the past two days, a Tory Government in trouble were sustained in the Division Lobbies by 69 Labour Members who kept the Government in power because of their overall commitment to Europe. It has left a legacy of more than a decade of internecine warfare, bitterness and strife within the Labour party. It is only 21 years later that one of those 69 hon. Members was able to get elected to the leadership of the Labour party. He is one of only five survivors. Almost every one of the 69 who has not been claimed by death or the Social Democratic party—which is almost the same thing—has gone. That legacy haunted us, and this deal will haunt the Tory party.

On the BBC news this morning I heard some of the broadcast from the Swindon Conservative association. I heard the applause, the jubilation in Swindon——

Mrs. Currie: Slough.

Mr. Livingstone: I beg your pardon—Slough. There was jubilation among the Tory audience when they heard that their Government had been defeated. The rank and file members of the Tory party, the core Tory vote, do not support the treaty. I remember seeing the late Iain Macleod, as local government election results were coming in on television one night in the mid-1960s and the Scottish National party was making great advances and a Labour Government were in power, having it put to him that that was bad news for the Tories. His reply was that any swing to nationalism was good for the Tories because the Tory party was the English nationalist party.

That is the divide. Labour is an internationalist party. When Clem Attlee retired, he did not say that he was going to spend more time with his family. If we read his biography, we see that he wanted to devote more time to rebuilding the idealism of the United Nations' move towards global government. There are broad internationalist instincts in all of us on these Benches. It is inevitable that we should be attracted towards European and various other international projects, but the gut, core basis of the Conservative party is English nationalism. The Conservatives are betraying their nationalism today.

Mrs. Currie: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Livingstone: No, I shall not give way again. I am about to conclude my speech.

The Tories are betraying their English nationalism today. There will be bitterness in every constituency association. The rebels who will be humiliated today by being driven through the Lobby will never forgive and will continue to organise. This will be short-term victory. The victory gained today will result in defeat for the Conservative party at the next general election.

Mr. Jack Thompson (Wansbeck): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Can you provide the House with some assistance? Earlier today, the question of assisted area status was raised on a point of order. Is the House aware that this morning correspodence was sent to the local authorities in my constituency, at least, regarding assisted area status? I understand that we are not to be informed about that in the House until Monday. Is that not again an example of——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. That has absolutely nothing to do with the Chair.

2.21 pm

Sir Peter Hordern (Horsham): The hon. Member for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone) talked about his party in a way that I could not recognise. He said that it is an international party, but I remember when the Labour party was most anti-European. It was only with great difficulty that the original European legislation, introduced by my right hon. Friend the Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup (Sir E. Heath) was passed. It is true that 69 Labour Members of Parliament voted for the original treaty of Rome. Apart from them, it was always the Conservative party that was keen on Europe.

There has, however, been a consistent division within our party about Europe, for understandable and patriotic reasons. However, it has gone too far. Tactics were used during the passage of the Maastricht Bill that were very different from those used when we considered the treaty of Rome. At that time, there was most strenuous opposition from some of my right hon. and hon. Friends. I remember that Derek Walker-Smith and others in the Conservative party opposed the treaty most strenuously, but they never opposed it on grounds of procedure; nor, so far as I can recollect, did they ever vote for something in which they did not believe.

Mr. Cormack: Will my right hon. Friend give way?

Sir Peter Hordern: I shall give way to my hon. Friend in a moment.

Last night we saw, not for the first time, some of my hon. Friends vote in favour of the social chapter which they, above all, resist and resent. They did so for a tactical consideration: because they thought that to do so would result in defeat for the Act. It was wrong to do that. When the Government were defeated last night in the second Division, the vote did not represent the views of the House. There is no majority in the House for the social chapter. It was, therefore, absolutely right for my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister to make this issue a matter of confidence in Her Majesty's Government and to connect with it the social chapter. This business needs to be sorted out once and for all.

We devoted an enormous amount of time to consideration of the Act. Many comments during this debate, and others, have been made about that. We held separate debates on the question of the referendum. I know of no Parliament in the European Community that has given such careful consideration to this matter as the House of Commons. We all have different views about the meaning of the Maastricht treaty, so how could the Government have put forward a simple proposition to which the people of our country could respond yea or nay? I do not believe that such a proposition would be possible and, moreover, we would be evading our responsibilities unless we were to consider the treaty in detail and arrive at our conclusion after the most careful consideration.

Mr. Cormack (Staffordshire, South): My right hon. Friend is making an excellent speech. He mentioned our former colleague, Sir Derek Walker-Smith, later Lord Broxbourne, who was not only a principled opponent but, once the decision had been taken, became an active member of the delegated European Parliament, to which he made a most constructive contribution.

Sir Peter Hordern: That is true. I hope that after today's vote we shall all be able to take a much more constructive and realistic approach to the European Community and the intergovernmental conference. That is necessary, and it is certainly necessary for our party.

Mr. Tim Rathbone (Lewes): I want to add emphasis to what my right hon. Friend has said. Continental parliamentarians view the process that we have been going through with some bewilderment, but they admire enormously the detailed way in which we have considered the treaty, which is unparalleled in Europe.

Sir Peter Hordern: Of course that is so, and the whole House knows that it is so. It was right that we gave the Bill endless consideration, but it is now right to reach a conclusion.

I wish to say a word about the social contract. I am not talking about its interpretations, which are many and various, but many people say that all the other European Parliaments and Governments are in favour of the social chapter, and I am sure that that is true; but employers and business men, large and small, throughout the Community are becoming increasingly concerned about the costs of labour and of conducting business. It is an example of Euro-sclerosis. European companies are increasingly investing overseas because the costs of employment in the Community are becoming prohibitive.

As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said, the issue, therefore, is jobs. We must carefully weigh the social improvements. I am not against them. Indeed, I think that there is clearly room for improvements in social matters, and I have no doubt that they will be introduced, but surely it is better that they should be introduced by individual countries. After all, we have a long history of social improvement, especially in health and safety, and under the Single European Act various improvements were made to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. We found no difficulty in accepting those improvements, for the good reason that we had already adopted most of them.

We must, however, be very careful about the extra costs that would be imposed by the social chapter. Irrespective of whether we opt out, it is a matter which must concern all of us as Europeans. As a director of a large European company and chairman of the United Kingdom subsidiary, I am aware of the increasing concern about investing in Europe and how attractive it has become to invest in other parts of the world. I feel sure that that trend will continue and it is bound to have an impact on employment.

Mr. Frank Cook: I should like to put to the right hon. Member the case that I put yesterday: might not European transnationals, which can offer their British work force rates of pay, conditions of work and health and safety requirements below European requirements, experience more industrial unrest because they are selling their British work force short compared with workers across the channel?

Sir Peter Hordern: I do not believe that that is so. We pay our social costs in a different way from other European Community countries. We pay much more through Customs and Excise duties than through direct charges on companies. It is important to bear that in mind.

Let us consider the amount of investment that we are able to attract into our country. Some 70,000 extra jobs have been created through Japanese companies. The great majority of American and Japanese investment in this country has been made as a result of the excellent terms of employment and the competitive conditions that we have created, not least because of the low levels of direct taxation and corporation tax. Other countries find the United Kingdom extremely attractive for investment, and I very much hope that they will continue to do so.

I have a word of warning for my hon. Friends who oppose not only Maastricht, but the European Community itself. My hon. Friend the Member for Stafford (Mr. Cash) said that he had been opposed to the Community for six years. But I recollect his voting in favour of the Single European Act. He was absolutely right to do so, and I do not object to that. Like many of us, he thought that it would be right to have a large market of 340 million people and break down the barriers between the various countries. But it was the Single European Act which introduced majority voting to the European Council of Ministers. The Single European Act gave the Brussels Commission so much more power to issue directives, from which so much trouble has flowed.

We must never make ourselves so antipathetic to the European Community that we endanger the level of investment from other countries. Unless we show ourselves to be part of the European Community—indeed,

[Sir Peter Hordern]

leaders of it—why should other countries believe that we form a proper part of the growing market which we all wish to see? I say that from personal experience—I have been chairman of a large oil company in this country for six years. That company has a substantial refinery on Humberside, which alone, pays Customs and Excise duty of £60 million a month. If it were ever thought that we were unwilling members of the European Community, the additional investment required to improve our refineries would not be forthcoming because the company would feel that we were not interested in our prosperity. That would not happen immediately, because the parent company would wish to protect its investment, but it would ultimately happen.

My hon. Friends may carry opposition to Europe so far, but they should never carry it so far that it works against the interests of our fellow countrymen.

2.32 pm

Miss Joan Lestor (Eccles): I have been in the House long enough and read enough political diaries to know how easily history is rewritten. We never had a referendum in this country on the issue of entering the EEC. We had a referendum on whether to remain in the EEC, which is a different concept and has a different psychological effect on people. We have never had a referendum on the Maastricht treaty to put the issue to the British people. The treaty was not ready until after last year's general election, so it could not possibly have been put before the people. I shall not pursue that issue; suffice it to say that people should not rewrite history—some of us remember it as we have been around a long time.

One finds some interesting things lying around the Lobby. I found the briefing document for the Conservative party. It is so bad that hardly anybody has used it, but I shall paraphrase what it contains, as it is interesting. It states that today's vote is a matter of confidence in the Government, and on that issue, every Conservative should support the Government because if they are defeated there will be a general election. It states that the treaty will be ratified by Britain, and only the continuance of a Conservative Government can guarantee that it will be ratified without the job-destroying social chapter. One or two hon. Members mentioned that. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] We shall see.

The Government's attempt to portray the social chapter as a monster with an uncontrollable appetite for jobs does not hold water. As my hon. Friend the Member for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone) said, it also does not have as its objective the devastation of what the Govrenment have left of the British economy. It talks about basic rights, about decent working conditions, about consultation between employers and labour and about equality of treatment for men and women. I am surprised by the two hon. Ladies who have spoken today. The hon. Member for Derbyshire, South (Mrs. Currie) let the cat out of the bag. She said that it was all a question of jobs and that they came first. She said that it was not a question of pay.

When we debated equal pay for women and anti-sex-discrimination laws, the arguments used were that we could not afford it. It was said that it was really more important that women should be paid at low rates than that we should have to face the competition if they were treated equally with men. It was not equal pay which destroyed this economy. It was not anti-discrimination laws which destroyed this economy.

When the Labour Government left office, we had unemployment of 1·3 million. The figure has never been as low as that since. When we wanted to take little boys out of chimneys, we were told, "Oh my God, it will cost so much money that there will be unemployment." Every time that there is a decent proposal for a piece of social legislation, somebody says that it will cost us dear. The hon. Member for Derbyshire, South and her hon. Friend the Member for Billericay (Mrs. Gorman) have benefited from equal pay. They should be the first to defend the rights of workers when we are in Europe.

Mrs. Currie: Will the hon. Lady give way?

Miss Lestor: I will not give way to the hon. Lady. I asked her to give way to me and she would not do so. Let us have no more of this rubbish.

Mr. Dickens: Will the hon. Lady give way?

Miss Lestor: I will not give way even to the hon. Gentleman, however charming he may be. I only have a few minutes, so he can see me afterwards in the Lobby.

The social chapter is modest in its proposals. It involves legislation on working conditions and on equality, but it excludes the right to strike and rates of pay. I should like the social chapter to be stronger. Now that we are in Europe, we are entitled to the best protective legislation for all the workers in Europe.

The briefing that I read while waiting to speak says that the social chapter would take us back 20 years. I would not mind going back 20 years to the Labour Government. We had jobs then and we had a great deal of security. There are many people who would not mind going back to that. When Conservative Members talk about health and safety legislation, I ask them who introduced it. Let us be careful not to rewrite too much history.

The Government seem to take the view that protective legislation would destroy the rights of people in this country and they say that we want to do it ourselves. They say that we do not want to be dictated to by Brussels and that we do not want such matters determined by people outside here. The Government have had 14 years to do some of those things themselves. They squandered all the benefits of North sea oil and they have sold many of this country's assets. Poverty has increased and there has been an increase in the number of businesses collapsing. We have seen children and adults living in abject poverty.

Eleven other countries cannot be mad. It is dangerous for anyone, especially Prime Ministers, to say, "I am the one who is right. Everybody else is wrong." That is a very dangerous concept.

Mr. Heald: Will the hon. Lady give way?

Miss Lestor: I will not give way. Nobody gave way when I tried to intervene. We have a very short time.

Mr. Heald: Afterwards in the Lobby?

Miss Lestor: I will see the hon. Gentleman afterwards in the Lobby.

Let us get one or two facts straight about the need for protective legislation for workers. One quarter of Europe's poorest people are United Kingdom citizens. On any table

that is used, one in four United Kingdom citizens live in poverty and 4 million of them are children. The wages councils have been abolished. Even with the 32 changes in the classification of unemployment, it has changed little over the years. One fifth of Europe's unemployed live in this country. Our Commission on Social Justice has shown that the gap between rich and poor in this country in 1993, 14 years after a Tory Government came to power, is greater than it has been for 107 years. Yet the Government are telling us that we must leave these matters to them. We have left it to them for far too long. This whole debate has debased politics and it has debased the Conservative party. The Government have wriggled and have done all sorts of things that no politician in this country should do.

What we are asking in connection with the social chapter is simple. The chapter contains a requirement to "take account of the diverse forms of national practice, in particular in the fields of contractual relations, and the need to maintain competitiveness in the Community economy." That is what we are asking for, and I shall never understand how the Government can have failed to accept that.

2.40 pm

Mr. Phillip Oppenheim (Amber Valley): Low wages do not equal low costs. Japan is a high-wage but a low-cost economy. It is a high-wage, low-cost economy not because of any social chapter and not because of employment regulations but because it is an intensely productive economy and so can afford high wages and good conditions in the workplace. Surely that is the key point that Opposition Members have missed. Wages and conditions must be matched by productivity, and less productive countries can only compete on low-added-value, less sophsisticated goods. If wages and conditions are out of line with productivity, the result is unemployment. The classic example is Spain, which has some of the toughest labour regulation laws but the highest incidence of involuntary redundancy and some of the highest unemployment in Europe.

How does one achieve productivity in one's economy? One does not achieve it by means of social charters or labour regulation but by providing a good education and high levels of investment. The Leader of the Opposition groped towards a realisation of that in his speech yesterday, but refused to accept the implications of it, although they are clear. First, we need to carry on reforming our education to make it more rigorous so that we improve the quality of our work force. Labour has opposed every education reform that we have introduced —although it has belatedly done some U-turns.

Secondly, we need investment. Where does investment come from? It comes from savings. It is no coincidence that Japan and the successful economies of east Asia have some of the highest levels of savings in the world. Savings are the pool from which investment comes. High levels of saving also bear down on inflation and consumption and help the productive side of an economy. What has Labour's policy on savings been? It clobbered savers in the 1970s, with huge taxes and negative interest rates. Have the Opposition learnt anything since then? They came to the electorate last year proposing an investment income surcharge, so that anyone who saved would be taxed once when they earned the money and a further whack when they saved it. That is how far Labour has come. If the state spends too much, the state will crowd out private investment. Yet Labour's policy is a policy of higher public spending. Similarly, if the state taxes too much, it will crowd out private investment.

Dr. John Reid (Motherwell, North): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Oppenheim: I apologise to the hon. Gentleman but I do not have time; I think that he understands the constraints of time. What is Labour's policy on tax? It is to raise taxes, which would mean less saving and less investment.

Labour Members still do not accept the need for investment and they do not seem to accept the need for a successful investment-led industrial sector. Yesterday, we heard them sneer every time a business man or a trade organisation was quoted. They still sneer at success and they asked us yesterday why we mention business men so often. I will tell them why. We mention business men because it is business men—and business women—who employ people. They are the ones who create the employment. The Leader of the Opposition accused us yesterday——

Mr. Norman Hogg (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Oppenheim: I apologise to the hon. Gentleman. I cannot because other hon. Members are hoping to speak.

The Leader of the Opposition told us yesterday that we were working towards a sweatshop economy. But we in this country enjoy higher wages and better conditions by far than when Labour was in power and, contrary to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's claims, we have higher standards and better conditions than most EC countries. Even where, technically, EC countries have better conditions, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman knows full well, countries such as Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal do not enforce them.

We have been able to achieve better conditions because, contrary to what the Leader of the Opposition said, we have in the past 15 years made up much of the ground that we lost in the previous decades. In the 1960s and 1970s, productivity in manufacturing grew at the lowest level of all the G7 countries. In the 1980s, we achieved the highest level of growth—higher even than in Japan.

In the 1970s, when Labour was in power, manufacturing output fell. In the 1980s, we had the fastest growth of manufacturing output of any major industrial country with the exception of Japan. We have made up some of the lost ground. We may lag behind some of the leading countries, but we have caught up considerably since 1979.

What about protection for workers? The best protection for workers is not edicts from politicians; it is a good education so that employers will compete for them. If employers can invest more because there is a larger pool of savings in the economy, employers will employ more people. That is the best protection for workers and that is what happens in Japan. Employment regulations in Japan are minimal, but conditions in large companies—as the Leader of the Opposition admitted yesterday—are among the best in the world. Unemployment in Japan is 3 per cent. and all without the social chapter.

Opposition Members have argued that the European Community needs a social dimension to counter benefits to business of the single market. In that, there is an assumption that the single market does not benefit

[Mr. Oppenheim]

workers. However, of course, it does. It benefits them as consumers and producers. Protection does not ultimately benefit employees, as employees have discovered in the most protected economies such as those in India and Brazil.

If we protect inputs to industry, such as steel and semiconductors, we will simply put workers out of business in the car industry, which uses steel, and in the electronics industry, which uses semiconductors. That is why Conservative Members opposed further protection for the coal industry. If we protect coal miners from foreign competition or from competition from gas, we will put workers out of jobs all over the country because they rely on energy as a basic input to their industries.

Even more economically illiterate than the argument that we need a social dimension because the single market does not benefit workers is the argument that we need a level playing field of standardised social conditions for fair competition. Does that mean that we should not trade with Bangladesh because it has lower wages than we have? Does it mean that the Americans have the right to say that they will not buy Jaguar cars or Rolls-Royce aero engines because we pay our workers less than they do?

The logic in that is that there should be trade only with countries that have identical conditions to ours. That would affect less developed countries. It would prevent them from developing and from being able to afford the higher added-value, more sophisticated goods that we want to sell to them.

The danger in this debate is that the European Community and, to a large extent, Opposition Members are missing the point. Instead of concentrating on improving education, on the quality of the work force, on reducing Government deficits and on encouraging saving and hence investment in industry, they think that we can have rigid standards and hide from foreign competition behind protective walls.

That is a fool's game. The last occasion when similar policies were pursued was in the 1930s. We are in danger of pursuing those policies again in relation to eastern Europe. At the very time when those eastern European countries are struggling to turn their economies into market economies, we are telling them that they can sell to us, but only the goods in respect of which they are not competitive. With regard to textiles, steel or commodity chemicals, we raise barriers.

To the successful Asian economies we say, "All right, you can sell to us, but we'll put quotas and heavy tariffs on semiconductors, electronic goods and cars." That is the road down which the Community is going and it has unpleasant echoes of the late 1920s and 1930s.

The Opposition's attitude is irrelevant to the needs of the country and to the European Community. Last night, the Opposition in effect voted against Maastricht, despite the fact that they have told us that they are in favour of it. That should come as no surprise, bearing in mind the history of twisting and turning which has characterised Labour's policy on the European Community over the past 20 years.

Just to defeat the Government last night might have given Opposition Members a certain short-lived pleasure —I do not begrudge them that—but it contributed nothing to the debate. The speech by the Leader of the Opposition —it was great knockabout, do not get me wrong; it would have gone down very well in a minor Glasgow magistrates court—had no substance. It was a triumph of pomposity over substance and it added nothing to the debate. It brought Parliament into disrepute and did nothing to take the European Community forward.

2.49 pm

Mr. Frank Cook (Stockton, North): I must correct the hon. Member for Amber Valley (Mr. Oppenheim). Last night, the Opposition voted to reject the opt out of the social protocol. That is what we voted for and that is what we effectively delivered. Today's debate is a separate issue, as the right hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Channon) reminded us.

I was present throughout yesterday's debate, except for 12 minutes when I took a cuppa and a sandwich in the Tea Room. I have heard all the exchanges today, except during two periods when I was speaking on the telephone behind the Chair. I make no complaint about being present all that time, because I had the privilege of hearing the provocative contribution from my right hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green and Stepney (Mr. Shore) yesterday, and the incisive contribution by the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume). He made some interesting comments on the situation across the Irish channel.

I must associate myself in part with the comments of my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Hillhead (Mr. Galloway). He questioned the reason for the sudden change of allegiance of the Ulster Unionists. It is significant that they have been absent almost all today and that they made no attempt to contribute to yesterday's debate. I heard it said that they had three speeches but did not know which to deliver. One was in favour, one was against, and one was in case of an abstention. When I put it to one of them—I will not identify him—that they had decided to vote for the Government, he said yes. I said, "Why? Was it a deal?" He said, "Not a deal, more a commitment." As my hon. Friend the Member for Hillhead said, the population of Ireland generally will be very interested to know just what was worth the 30 pieces of silver.

Yesterday, we heard the contribution of the hon. Member for Coventry, South-West (Mr. Butcher). It was a very moving display of personal sadness and clear logic. I feel sorry for the hon. Gentleman because he must be feeling wretched today, unless of course he has been thoroughly sedated by the sledgehammer that the Prime Minister is using to drag his allegiance back into line. Today, we have had the benefit of speeches of my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) and by my hon. Friends the Members for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell) and for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone), not to mention that of the hon. Member for Aldridge-Brownhills (Mr. Shepherd), who was clearly very upset at having fought so valiantly but having to come into line under such a draconian threat.

My hon. Friend the Member for Hillhead paid tribute to the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Cash). I associate myself with that tribute. Indeed, I pay tribute to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The manner in which you patiently conducted the protracted Committee proceedings was an example to everyone who has occupied your office. On behalf of my colleagues, I thank you for that.

I do not want to rehearse the arguments that I made yesterday, but I draw attention to one that was partly answered by the right hon. Member for Horsham (Sir P. Hordern). I referred to European transnationals being allowed to create a climate in this country that would enable them to deliver to their work force conditions which were below the European requirement. The right hon. Member for Horsham simply denied it.

I suggested yesterday that ICI would never countenance that, because it provided for its staff to an extent that far exceeded European requirements. I know that that is true; I have direct experience. I was surprised when the Minister prayed in aid what Sir Denys Henderson had said. I could not accept it yesterday; I am afraid that I must accept it today. I spent some of my time behind the Chair talking to Sir Denys at some length, and put to him some of the points that I made yesterday. Conservative Members seem to think that funny; I do not. The anxiety felt by ICI's work force is now being transmitted to the head of the company.

Sir Denys said to me, "Frank, we did not want to be pressed into a jelly mould of German making. You know that our pay and conditions, and the protective regulations introduced under our joint consultative procedure, are far better than those operating elsewhere in Europe." Of course I knew that: as I have said, I have direct experience in this regard. But that is not the point. The point is that ICI's work force will see allegiance to a declaration accepting inferior standards in only one way: they will see it as an intention to move towards such standards.

I suggested to Sir Denys that such firms as ICI might run foul of the European anti-dumping laws. "Which anti-dumping laws?" he asked. I had to tell him of my numerous trips to Brussels and Strasbourg to plead for inward investment in my constituency by foreign firms that might be in danger of undercutting European producers. We had to secure quotas to ensure that our home-based industries were not threatened. Sir Denys was surprised at what I told him.

I also told Sir Denys that if we did not adopt the social protocol, we would not be able to engage in discussions following international debate at a later stage. "Yes, that is a risk," he said, in a manner that suggested that he had not thought of that before.

Far from fearing a jelly mould of German making, Sir Denys Henderson should fear a jelly mould of the Prime Minister's making. He told me, "When I discussed the matter with the Prime Minister, I did not realise that I would be quoted in the House."

Dr. Reid: That is very interesting.

Mr. Cook: Indeed it is. But Sir Denys knew full well that he would be quoted today.

Representing the House on the North Atlantic Assembly, I am privileged to meet delegates from other Parliaments throughout the NATO countries, both socially and formally. What started four or five years ago as a joke among the Dutch, Germans, French and Danes —the joke being that Great Britain was not so bloody great any more—has ceased to be a joke, right across the political spectrum. No one laughs any more.

Discussing the social chapter under a confidence motion tabled by a discredited Prime Minister does this country no credit; indeed, it devalues it even further.

2.58 pm

Sir Edward Heath (Old Bexley and Sidcup): As we move towards the end of the debate and the history of the Maastricht treaty in the House, I should like to concentrate the mind of the House on one point. Before doing that, I wish to say that, in taking this action, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has acted with complete honesty and great integrity. What he has done is right. What is more, he has acted speedily and has put the whole situation in the hands of the House. For that he is to be loudly and widely commended.

Some Opposition Members honestly and understandably claim that this situation weakens the Prime Minister. After the Division, which we shall win, his position will be immensely strengthened because people will recognise that he has acted speedily and boldly and has done the right thing.

I said that I wanted to concentrate on one point. I do not propose to enter into the argument about the social chapter because my reservations about it are already widely known and were mentioned in the debate by the Leader of the Opposition. There must be much more study in this country in relation to our colleagues in the Community. I hope that after the debate, and after the Act is put into effect and the treaty ratified, we shall be able to concentrate on that important factor, not purely from the party political point of view of trying to outdo each other, but to get to the basic facts of life, which are essential for our constituents and voters.

I do not propose to deal in great detail with the general question of the Maastricht treaty, because there is now an Act of Parliament: the Bill has received Royal Assent. There is much to be developed from the treaty. I am tempted to deal with many of the issues that have been raised, but I shall try to restrain my interest in them. One of my hon. Friends said that this started as a free trade area. We started the free trade area in 1958 because we were not prepared to go into the Community, and that free trade area failed. Therefore, we decided to apply for membership of the Community.

The Community, rather than the treaties of Rome and Paris, has always been a community and not a free trade area, and any attempt today to turn it into just a free trade area is bound to fail because the other EC members want to retain it as a community. If we are to develop economically, we must have a community structure. That is not to argue by any means that the Community is perfect.

I was somewhat taken aback by the argument of one of my wise hon. Friends that we must not rush. We need make only one comparison, the single market, which was created in just over six years. A large part of that was due to the drive by the European Commission and its President, Jacques Delors, who deserves the highest praise. We have spent six years trying to decide where the fast railway link is to go from the channel tunnel, and we have still not reached a decision on it.

Mr. Skinner: The right hon. Gentleman did not want it.

Sir Edward Heath: I certainly did not, and nor did my constituents.

I wish that we could rush forward many of the developments that the country needs. There is no reason why, in an ever-changing world, we should blame the

[Sir Edward Heath]

Community for adapting as speedily as it can to the new world in which we have to operate. Maastricht will allow us to do that.

We have to maintain our friends inside the Community, but we are not doing that at the moment. That is one of the hard facts that we have to face.

Many right hon. and hon. Members have congratulated the House on the wonderful way that it has spent 18 months dealing with Maastricht. With great respect, those outside do not think that a glorious thing. All the reports today say that people are bemused by what went on last night. People have said that they want democracy, but those in Europe ask whether that is the sort of democracy they want. We must develop Maastricht.

Another point arises from all this. There is obviously an enormous amount to be done to inform people not only about the Maastricht treaty but about the work of the European Community and its Commissioners. There is profound ignorance——

Mr. Skinner: We do not like it.

Sir Edward Heath: I know that the hon. Gentleman does not like it, but, thank God, his view is not characteristic of the British people. Once Maastricht is settled, we can devote ourselves, as busily and as energetically as we can, to dealing not only with Maastricht but with all the activities of the Community. That is badly needed by everyone in the country.

I come now to my major point. I have not dealt in any detail with those two points because they are not the matter at issue in the debate or in the Divisions that are to come. It has been said today that last night showed that there was a complete majority for the social chapter. That was not the case at all. The vote on the social chapter was either decided on a tie or lost by one vote. As is well known, Conservative Members who are completely opposed to it voted in favour of the motion.

Mr. Skinner: What difference does that make to the vote?

Sir Edward Heath: There is a difference, to which I am coming.

We must not mislead ourselves or Europe by saying that, because of the vote, there is a complete majority in the House for the social chapter. People in Europe know perfectly well what the situation was. Today, we face one issue, and one issue only—the survival of the Conservative Government. That is what the vote will be about. I hope that all my right hon. and hon. Friends will recognise that that is the issue. It is no longer a question of the social chapter or the treaty itself. The treaty is enacted and will come into force as soon as the House takes the decision about the social chapter.

My right hon. and hon. Friends who have fought this battle all the way through hold their position. They are against the social chapter, and that is what the vote will be about today. How, then, can they possibly cross the Floor and vote in favour of it, thereby helping to defeat their Government? I do not believe that that can happen.

We hear talk about democracy, but it is not democracy if a small group defies and brings to nothing the major decisions taken by the House on Second Reading and again on Third Reading. Those were democratic decisions. I hope that my right hon. and hon. Friends recognise that.

We hear talk of principles. How can it be in accordance with one's principles to vote with the Opposition in favour of something to which one is, on principle, absolutely opposed? How can that possibly be right? It cannot be sustained for one moment.

The vote today concerns the future of the Conservative Government and of our party, and my right hon. and hon. Friends must support the Prime Minister and the Government. I have been a member of the Conservative party for almost 60 years, through good times and bad times, in government and out of government. I believe profoundly and passionately in it. I do not want it or our Government to be brought to an end by a small minority in our parliamentary party.

I suggest to my hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) that he sets an example. When we negotiated entry to Europe, he was a member of my Government. When we decided to enter, he resigned. That was honourable. When the legislaiton had passed through both Houses and the treaty was signed, I invited him to come back to my Government, and he did so. That, too, was honourable. He had lost the battle and he accepted it. I have always respected him for that. I suggest to him and others of my hon. Friends who have fought the battle that the same course should be pursued on this occasion. They have lost the battle and they should now show that they accept the decision, vote with the Government, support the Prime Minister and support the party. I ask and urge them to do so.

3.11 pm

Mr. John Gunnell (Morley and Leeds, South: I shall be brief as I want to make only one major point, which I shall illustrate from experience. I have no confidence in the Government and I believe that the mess from which they are trying to extract themselves is a mess of their own creation because of the way that they have chosen to handle the social protocol.

The Government originally chose to treat the social chapter in a way that would gain the support of the nationalists in their party and bring them on stream. That backfired. Now, people are confused about the social chapter and many falsely believe that it will cost jobs. Had the Prime Minister listened to the right hon. Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup (Sir E. Heath) and the hon. Member for Harrow, East (Mr. Dykes) when they spoke of the social chapter, he would have realised that an alternative position was available. He could have accepted and supported the social chapter and persuaded the country to recognise that it could be used to benefit employment in Britain.

I shall illustrate that assertion from my experience of 12 years as the chairman of the Yorkshire and Humberside Development Association, an organisation financially supported by Government. Throughout those 12 years I spent a great deal of time working with Conservative Members at the Department of Trade and Industry in an attempt to win Japanese inward investment. Over those years I made many visits to Japan and I dealt with many Japanese companies. I was rewarded by a number of those companies coming to Yorkshire and Humberside, notably Citizen, Pioneer and Koyo Sieko—companies that have

created substantial employment. Despite meeting representatives from many Japanese companies over the years, no one has ever asked me about a social contract, the details of the social chapter or the way in which it would affect the way that those companies worked in this country. Time and again, I was asked about Britain's membership of the Community and, knowing that I was a Labour Member of Parliament, about the certainty of our continued membership and therefore the security of those companies' investment in this country. Community membership matters to those companies, not the precise terms of the social chapter.

Those Japanese companies have created for their employees conditions that are vastly superior to those that would be determined by the social chapter. When it comes to health and safety at work, employee information and productivity—which was mentioned by the hon. Member for Amber Valley (Mr. Oppenheim)—Japanese industrialists make clear to their work forces in this country what are their productivity targets and achievements. The three major Japanese companies in Yorkshire and on Humberside all provide proper working conditions and employee information, and they consider health and safety a priority.

To believe that the social chapter would turn away Japanese inward investment is to misunderstand the relationship between a Japanese company and its work force. We may regard that relationship as somewhat paternalistic, but the Japanese insist on effective trade union representation. They demand to deal with only one trade union, but they want conditions spelt out and believe in rewarding their work force. Japanese employers do not make the distinction between management and employees that is to be found in many British companies, and Japanese companies will continue to be successful for that reason.

Mr. Nigel Evans (Ribble Valley): What does the hon. Gentleman have to say to the companies that say that they could not afford the costs of implementing the social chapter?

Mr. Gunnell: If the Prime Minister took the view that the social chapter was a positive innovation in ensuring proper health and safety and working conditions, and equality of employment for men and women, and was something for which he should strive for the good of the economy, the fear of the social chapter that exists among industrialists would be dispelled. The comments made by Conservative Members sitting below the Gangway and by other right hon. and hon. Members in all parts of the House should encourage the public to recognise the chapter's positive advantages.

My experience of inward investment goes beyond Japanese companies. The social chapter is not a barrier of any kind to inward investment. The Conservatives went wrong in the way that the Prime Minister chose to use the social chapter issue to unite those on the right of his party. That backfired, and the right hon. Gentleman is left with the difficulties that confront him today.

Courage is needed to accept the social chapter and to ensure that Britain moves forward, to enjoy increased and full employment, and is a country in which there are optimum working and health and safety conditions and equality of employment. The opportunity lost to the Government is represented by the lack of confidence in the way in which they are led and in which they lead the country.

3.19 pm

Mr. George Robertson (Hamilton): Initially, I felt slightly uncomfortable about speaking in this debate in this immensely important position, but I have been able to diagnose the problem: it is, I think, the first time in 10 years that I have spoken in daylight, and that is probably only because my right hon. Friend the Member for Copeland (Dr. Cunningham) has laryngitis.

As many right hon. and hon. Members of all parties have said, this has been a unique debate. The circumstances that have led up to it and the circumstances that provoked it yesterday have all been unique, certainly in my parliamentary lifetime. In many ways, the two debates have lived up to the character and importance of the subject matter.

The debate still arises out of section 7 of the European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993 and the House's decision that a final vote would be taken on whether this country would opt in to the part of the Maastricht treaty from which the Government had opted us out. It is to be the only opportunity for the House to make that decision. The debate then became about the rights of Parliament and whether the view of the House, as it would have been expressed if the amendment had been carried last night, was, in terms of its strict instructions to the Government and ratification of the treaty on European union, to be carried out and whether the will of the House was to be obeyed or defied by the Government. That was and remains a most important, serious and even fundamental issue.

The Government's implied threat—they got as close to it as they possibly could—that they would have defied the will of the elected House of Commons can now unfortunately be tested only if right hon. and hon. Members vote for the Opposition's amendment this afternoon.

It is still the same amendment; it still offers exactly the same opportunities. Some of those who believe in parliamentary sovereignty and campaigned against the Maastricht treaty have done so only on the basis of a belief in, and what they call a cherishing of, parliamentary sovereignty. They should perhaps take this opportunity to see whether the leadership of their party believes in parliamentary sovereignty as much as they and the British people do.

The debate has gone beyond all that and is now an issue of confidence in the Government. If the Government lose this afternoon, the Prime Minister says that the Queen will be asked to dissolve Parliament and call an election. Let me tell the Prime Minister, or his surrogates as he is absent, that I can say with some force that millions and millions of people who are listening to and watching our debate will be of one mind and will have one message for the Conservative party: let us have an election; vote for an election. Of course, the Government's claim is only a ploy, a dangerous, over-the-top, desperate ploy to push through a policy when the Prime Minister has lost the argument, lost the case, lost his majority, lost authority and now, visibly, lost his nerve too. One of the elements of this

[Mr. George Robertson]

unique set of debates has been the sight of scrambling contenders for a throne that is already seen to be grotesquely unsafe.

The serious question with which the Prime Minister must deal, because he did not do so in his two speeches, is what precisely he is telling his party and the country. What are these confused signals supposed to mean?

"I am the greatest Euro-sceptic of all"

said the Prime Minister to the Tory party conference, yet he is the man who is

"at the heart of Europe".

Those who are still sceptical and harbour doubts—I know that they are in the Chamber this afternoon—should read carefully the words of the Prime Minister yesterday in praise of Europe, of a deepening of Europe and of being a part of Europe, and then wonder what they will be voting for and what the Prime Minister's victory will be deployed as when he achieves the result that, specuation has it, he will achieve.

The right hon. Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont), the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, was the only Minister who said, "We will never sign the social chapter." He was dismissed. Who knows whether he was dismissed for saying that? The Foreign Secretary has not said it. We invited him to say exactly that in numerous debates, but at no stage would he put his authority behind such a statement.

There is one lesson that those who are experts on the railways will give to the Prime Minister, a lesson that would have come well from the former Member of Parliament for Christchurch, Mr. Robert Adley: if we give mixed signals, the train can come off the track. That is precisely the danger and the problem that faced the Prime Minister.

Some of us wondered why the Foreign Secretary did not speak in last night's debate. There was a mystery there. The Foreign Secretary is a man who writes mystery books as a reserve second profession, guarding against the prospect of retirement or dismissal from the Cabinet. We thought that because the names "Hurd" and "Hunt" are similar, a word processor error had led to the Secretary of State for Employment winding up last night's debate.

Then we thought—this was extremely generous of my right hon. Friend the Member for Copeland—that the reason might be that the Foreign Secretary was a man of honour. In the debate on 22 April he said:

"We have no difficulty in accepting the challenge with which the proposers of new clause 74 present us. It is reasonable that the House should want the opportunity to vote on the principle of the social protocol. New clause 74, which we are debating today, offers such an opportunity." —[*Official Report*, 22 April 1993; Vol. 223, c. 548-49.]

We had some expectation that honour would triumph and that, as the only Minister who had been willing to say that he would obey the will of Parliament, he had perhaps disqualified himself, but I fear that now we know the truth. The senior fireman has been deployed because the Government knew all along that they would lose yesterday, so he had to be kept in reserve.

In the course of the Foreign Secretary's other occupation, he occasionally allows his inner feelings to be revealed. [HON. MEMBERS: "Come on!"] Those inner feelings are of considerable importance. In his last book *[Interruption.]* I ask the House to listen carefully—the Foreign Secretary—*[Interruption.]* We can tell a lot about the Conservatives and how uncomfortable they are because of the situation in which they find themselves. *[Interruption.]* They should listen. In his last novel "The Palace of Enchantment" the Foreign Secretary described the career of a disillusioned Foreign Office Minister who had fallen out with his Prime Minister, his wife and his constituents. The Minister went to Africa. "Edward abstracted himself", the book says. It adds:

"He had a speech typed fair in front of him, produced by Sally in a neat folder from the depths of her despatch case . . . He put nothing of himself into it."

[Interruption.] They do not want to listen. The author went on:

"A hopeless little fraud of a speech, but all that was possible on the present policy. Sir Reginald Anson had been right in saying it was not an occasion for a minister."

We now know why the Government deployed the Foreign Secretary—the chief salesman of the unacceptable—to try to tidy up the mess that was created behind him.

This debate is still about the social chapter. The Prime Minister devoted a substantial chunk of his speech to the issue of the social chapter, little daring to trespass on the other record of the Government that might be on trial in the debate. The social chapter, to many hon. Members and to many outside the House, is the defining difference between the political parties represented in the House—an attitude that says, "We shall compete at the cheapest, lowest quality end of any market and not at the high-quality, high-price end, on which all of our competitors in western Europe have built their prosperity." The vote is not just about confidence in the Government; it is about confidence in the attitude of a Government.

Mr. Alan Howarth (Stratford-on-Avon): The hon. Gentleman should understand that Conservative Members care every bit as much as he does about investing in the quality and future of our labour force, which is why we have made such a priority of the expansion of further and higher education. Will he explain why the Labour party wants to transfer responsibility for social and employment policy from the Government to Brussels? Is it because, whatever veneer of reform may be applied to the Labour party, he and his hon. Friends despair of its ever being returned to Government?

Mr. Robertson: The hon. Gentleman must answer this: why do the Germans, who have a right-wing Government, and the French, who now have a right-wing Government, still believe that it is important to have a level playing field not only for business but for people? Perhaps if the Government had invested in people, education, training and higher education in the past 14 years, we would not be sitting here looking at others' record of success compared with our miserable record of failure.

I remind the House that the vote on the social chapter was not offered willingly. The debate was not offered to the House by a democrat Prime Minister who wants to ensure that the House endorses the centre point of the triumph of diplomacy for which he was responsible. No, the vote was squeezed out of a reluctant Government who, throughout the ratification process, have dodged any vote on the social chapter and any opportunity that would allow the House to make a decision on that in which the Prime Minister, and perhaps occasionally the Foreign Secretary, believes.

The debate was conceded under duress, but the Government, who did not want a vote, and who would have avoided a vote, still tell us that this is an

inconvenience to Parliament. They had the effrontery to *tell the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown)* yesterday that by voting against a motion that endorsed the Government's policy on the opt out he was, and we all were, voting against ratification of the Maastricht treaty. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Foreign Secretary told us that he welcomed the challenge and the opportunity of the vote, and he must bear the burden of responsibility for the fact that he was able to get a majority for his policy only by a squalid deal with some political parties on the Opposition side of the House that chose to support him yesterday evening. Eventually, history will tell us what the deal was that persuaded the Ulster Unionist party to move across the House, and history will judge those who participated in it on both sides, because I am sure that there are still many chickens to come home to roost.

That procedure was only the culmination of a long process of dithering during the ratification of the Maastricht treaty. There was the opt out, way back in December 1991, when even the Prime Minister's political friends among the Christian Democratic Heads of Government were critical. In the few days after the Maastricht treaty was signed, Mr. Wilfried Martens, the head of the Christian Democratic Heads of Government, said that he specifically criticised Mr. John Major for having

"taken a negative position at Maastricht concerning EUROPEAN political union, and more particularly concerning the social charter".

The chairman of the Conservative party wrote to the husband of one of my hon. Friends to canvass for funds for the Conservative party. The letter stated:

"Britain's place in the world is now safeguarded. The key negotiations in Europe and beyond are being carried out by a proven and admired team."

The punchline, presumably designed to deliver the cheque, stated:

"British interests are in safe hands."

We then had the paving debate. I have a certain sense of déjà vu now—the paving debate involved a completely unnecessary motion which was originally to be a motion of confidence, then it was not, then it was, then it was not, and ultimately it was deemed to be a motion of confidence. In Committee, the Bill was under the custodianship of a Minister who had resigned before discussions on it began in the House, presumably to stop us demanding his resignation every time he blundered—there were plenty of occasions when we could and should have done so. The process has involved defeats, surrenders and retreats—all followed by today's debate and last night's debacle. We now have an Act of Parliament on the statute book, two thirds of which is written by the Labour party, and all the better for it as it strengthens it.

The right hon. Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup (Sir E. Heath) said that the public have not understood the procedures that we have deployed. The Labour party set out with two objectives: to ensure that an important treaty was given appropriate coverage and detailed scrutiny in the House of Commons and secondly, to obtain the social chapter for the people of Britain. The Conservative party cannot continue to wriggle away from its responsibilities. They are alone in Europe as the only political party, other than the French National Front and the neo-nazi Republican party in Germany, to oppose the social chapter.

Mr. Michael Fabricant (Mid-Staffordshire): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Robertson: No, I shall not give way.

I was responsible for coining the expression, ticking bomb. When I did so nobody could have contemplated that the bomb would go off and leave egg all over the faces of Her Majesty's Government. The Government may well win today because of the threats that have been made. No greater threat can be made than that of collective mass suicide and the withdrawal of the Whip from individual Conservative Members. But those Conservative Members who still have their doubts will still have to live with their consciences when the vote is interpreted tomorrow as a vote for the Prime Minister's European policy. Those hon. Members sitting below the Gangway and slumbering away at the end of our great debate who have been in favour of the social chapter all along, will also have to live with their consciences if they vote against the Labour amendment which presents the only opportunity in the near future for the people of this country to obtain the social chapter.

I hope that there are still those who have sufficient qualms about what they are being asked to do, sufficient spirit and principle and sufficient of the bravery shown by so many hon. Members last night, to stand up for what they believe.

We care deeply for our country and that is why we feel such despair and such disappointment when we see how the Government and the Prime Minister do their business in Europe. The Prime Minister acknowledged that yesterday among his many contradictory signals. It is remarkable that, as the winding-up speeches take place in a confidence debate, the Prime Minister is still not in his place. One wonders whether he is still trying to stitch together yet another deal to save his skin at the end of this afternoon. It is not only wrong, but a discourtesy to the House that he is not here at this point.

In Europe where we live, where we work, where we trade, where we bargain, where we buy and where we sell, we must have a Government who represent the British people. Whether one likes Europe or hates it—there are many on both sides of the argument here—it is where we shall thrive or perish as an economy and as a proud nation. To render us powerless and marginalised has been the hallmark of this Conservative Government, who are always suspected and who are only grudgingly accepted as a partner. Government policy satisfies neither those who hate the Community nor those who love the European neighbourhood in which we are forced to live.

We have ambitions for our country and for its people. We want them to walk tall again in our country in a prosperous Europe. We are confident about Britain's place and Britain's case. We do not share the Tories' miserable lack of confidence. They predicate every negotiation with failure, and every initiative with no chance of amendment, and they see every measure as a threat to the British way of life.

We want our country to lead in Europe and not constantly to lag in the rear. We want to see our country initiating, not preventing, building, not wrecking, and setting the agenda in Europe, not kicking over the tables. We want this country to set the pace for co-operation in Europe. We want our country to get the best of Europe. We are ambitious for Britain and for Britain in Europe.

[Mr. Robertson]

We invite all Conservative Members, wherever they are, who share that vision and that ambition to join us in the Division Lobby this afternoon.

3.41 pm

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Douglas Hurd): Before he started on his rather lengthy peroration, the hon. Member for Hamilton (Mr. Robertson) made some remarks about the winding-up speech last night. It is not entirely bizarre that a debate on employment law and practice should be wound up by the Secretary of State for Employment.

This is the last speech—[HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] This is the last speech in the last debate on the ratification of the Maastricht treaty. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] I was fairly sure of applause for that proposition at least. After months of negotiation and months of debate, the discussion is coming to a close.

I was a little surprised, after this long exercise in parliamentary democracy, to hear the right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) talk about the death of democracy. At the end of the day, it is not the Queen, not the Government, not the House of Lords, not Mr. Delors and not the electorate in France or in Denmark who have decided this matter on behalf of this country. It is the House of Commons. We have done the job that we have been sent here by our constituents to do, and I do not think that we should be ashamed of that fact.

At last, as my right hon. Friend the Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup said, the treaty has been passed. It has been signed by the Queen and is part of the law, subject to section 7, which it contained. Last night, the House did not manage to conclude that matter. Once again, by a majority —although only a majority of one—the House refused to endorse the social chapter. The minority included many who disapprove of the social chapter. The Prime Minister and the Government decided that we should not let this matter drift through the summer recess. We decided that we needed to ask the House to resolve it today and that not only the authority of the Government but the reputation of Parliament depended on our doing that.

The basic political difficulty has remained the same throughout. It was evident on Second Reading and it was evident yesterday. Yesterday's debate showed a strong majority in favour of the treaty, as has every major vote, and reflected the Labour party's consistent efforts to force through the social chapter. The Opposition want a socialist Europe and, when push comes to shove, the socialism is more important than the Europe. Some of my right hon. and hon. Friends have disliked the treaty so much that they have been prepared to back the social chapter in the hope that, by doing so, they could defeat the treaty. That hope has gradually faded. It shrivelled yesterday and it is dead today. I shall return to that just before I conclude.

Mr. Dalyell: Will the Foriegn Secretary give way?

Mr. Hurd: No, the Opposition Front-Bench spokesman overran his time and did not give way. [HON. MEMBERS: "He did."] I am sorry; in that case, I give way to the hon. Member for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell).

Mr. Dalyell: What serious answer does the Foreign Secretary give to the question posed first by the Leader of the Opposition and then by a number of the rest of us? Why, if we need to be "in the same room"—to use my right hon. and learned Friend's phrase—on the rest of European policy, should we suffer by being out of that room and not on the inside track in relation to the social chapter?

Mr. Hurd: That was precisely the point to which I was about to come. The comments of the Leader of the Opposition were echoed, as so often, by the leader of the Liberal Democrats. The Leader of the Opposition made the point that the hon. Gentleman has just summarised, but he misrepresented our position. We believe that we should be at the heart of the argument in Europe on those matters that the Community needs to discuss and to decide. The Leader of the Opposition implied that that doctrine should be extended and that every domestic matter should be discussed and decided by the Community. [HON. MEMBERS: "No."] Yes, indeed. We believe—and this is the difference between us—that conditions of work, firm by firm and industry by industry, are best decided in this country, and by employers and employees according to their circumstances, and not laid down, perhaps by qualified majority voting, in Brussels, as would happen under the social chapter. That is the difference between us, which was analysed in an exceptional speech made by my hon. Friend the Member for Amber Valley (Mr. Oppenheim), who gave a very perceptive account of how modern management views these matters. I need not repeat what my hon. Friend said.

Many Opposition Members seem to think that all that counts is to have the same degree of social protection throughout Europe. It does not seem that the right hon. and learned Member for Monklands, East (Mr. Smith) has heard of Asia or Japan or the United States. He does not seem to be aware of the growing concern in Europe about the lack of competitiveness in Europe. It is perfectly true that the debate was slow to start, that employers in Europe were slow to latch on to it and that it has been slow to spread—it has not reached the Labour party yet. An intense debate is going on throughout business circles about how to bring to an end the decrease in the competitiveness of Europe. It has certainly reached the European Community and it has certainly reached Mr. Delors.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister and I listened to a fascinating analysis by Mr. Delors at the last European summit on precisely this matter. We did not agree with his prescriptions. However, the Opposition would benefit greatly from a little session with him on his analysis to learn how, measurement by measurement and statistic by statistic, Europe has been falling behind in competitiveness over recent years.

The Leader of the Opposition needs a little more information about a boomerang. He accused my right hon. Friend of choosing one. A boomerang, properly employed, stuns its target and then returns shrewdly into the hands of its thrower. It is quite a handy weapon, as we see, indeed, today.

The leader of the Liberal Democratic party chided my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister for giving two different messages on the same subject. The theme of that, and who said it, simply lead me to say, "Wow." That from a man who, in almost the same speech, advocates both the reinforcement and the withdrawal of our forces in Bosnia. When it is a matter of deciding which naval base should

refit Trident, the leader of the Liberal Democrats has a very simple choice: Liberals in Scotland back Rosyth and Liberals in the south-west back Devonport.

When it comes to VAT on fuel, if the leader of the Liberal Democrats is talking to an environmental audience, it is a grotesque anomaly that fuel should not be taxed in this country. Of course, when he is talking to an audience of pensioners, it is a gross wickedness that it should be so taxed.

The leader of the Liberal Democratic party really started the debate in this country on the social chapter by the sheer ferocity of his attacks on the social chapter which, in this Session and in respect of this Bill, he has consistently defended. The leader of the Liberal Democrats has the gifts of a master tailor: he is skilled at measuring and fitting his opinions to his audience. His opinions vary as widely as his audiences and, as his audiences vary a great deal, one can never be absolutely sure of his opinions.

Many excellent speeches have been made in the debate. The position has been summed up very well, particularly by my right hon. Friends the Members for Bridgwater (Mr. King), for Honiton (Sir P. Emery) and for Southend, West (Mr. Channon). They made the point that the treaty of Maastricht is not at stake in this debate. The question, as it was yesterday, is whether the treaty is ratified with or without a social chapter.

I should like for a moment to return to what has undoubtedly been a fierce tussle within our own party. I follow quite closely the very restrained, self-disciplined remarks of my right hon. Friend the Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup. The opposition to the treaty, and therefore to the legislation, has been strenuously argued through these months—it seems years—by a stalwart group, basing themselves on their convinced interpretation of Conservative tradition. I have heartily disagreed with them. I have often wished them to go away, go to bed and to get lost. However, I do not doubt that their struggle and arguments will find a remembered place in the annals of parliamentary conflict.

I believe that the argument about ratification will end today in success for the Government's arguments. After today, we must all turn to the future and on this point I particularly endorse what my right hon. Friend the Member for Old Bexley and Sidcup said. We have, in the House, in our party, in the country and more widely in Europe, to begin to talk together more intelligently about the future. We are willing to do that and willing to listen carefully to the wide range of views within our party and outside.

But I would not like to end this debate without saying warm thanks to my right hon. and hon. Friends who, throughout, have been on the Government's side of the argument. They have been working morning, noon and night to support the Government, to safeguard their and, indeed, my idea of our place in Europe. They might have found that they have gained a little less publicity than the others, but, of course, without their help, we would not have reached this point and we would not have prevailed.

As the talk about the future continues, common ground will begin to emerge. Again, I am talking partly about my own party, but I am talking also about the House as a whole, I am talking about the discussion in Britain as a whole, and I am talking about the discussion in Europe as a whole. The argument is not over, and there will still be those people who hold to what I regard as an old-fashioned view—that the definition of Europe and the success of Europe, is the steady centralisation of Executive and parliamentary power.

I think that the ideas that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister sketched again yesterday and which he, I and others have steadily set forward at Maastricht and ever since are gaining ground—a Europe which is steadily enlarged as a Community not as a super-state, which is founded on open trading, which makes a success of our membership, which means that the Community is successful in those spheres where it has to act as a Community if it is to be effective, which makes a success of the concept in the treaty of intergovernmental co-operation, and which makes a reality of subsidiarity.

We have never argued that Maastricht was a perfect treaty. We believe that we won a sufficient quantity of the arguments in the negotiations to make it a good treaty for Britain, as negotiated by my right hon. Friend with the opt out. I believe that on that foundation, on that basis, as we begin to discuss in the party, in the Government, in the House, in the country and in Europe the way in which the Community should evolve in the future, we will find that the arguments that we began to put at Maastricht and before, and which we have put throughout these debates, will continue to prevail.

But there is a wider point for Conservative Members, because, as my right hon. Friend said, what we are talking about is the survival and the future of this Government. We are, I think, at a turning point. Politicians often use that phrase, but it is apt this afternoon. We have an economic recovery under way. It is not even seriously contested now by the Opposition. The good economic news is actually flowing in faster than either my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Government as a whole would have expected. What is important and what is new is that we have a reasonably good chance of sustaining that recovery without inflation.

That situation arises after a year which has been extremely rough, with many misfortunes and, no doubt, a share of mistakes. When I say that I believe that this afternoon can be a turning point, I believe that we can put behind us not just the long, necessary but debilitating debate about Maastricht, but that whole year of roughness and misfortune. Because of the coming together of this debate on Maastricht and the economic news, we can go away for the recess with greater confidence than at any time since the previous general election.

The political mood of the country often starts in this House. It takes time to spread outwards, to percolate and to prevail, but I believe that we have a good chance this afternoon, as a result of a successful vote, to change the tone and to make a starting point. I believe that, under the leadership of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, we have cultivated the land well, despite much rough weather. I believe that we have sown good seed, and that we can now work together to bring in a good harvest.

Question put, That the amendment be made:—

The House divided: Ayes 301, Noes 339.

Division No. 360] **[3.59 pm**

AYES

Abbott, Ms Diane	Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Adams, Mrs Irene	Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Ainger, Nick	Armstrong, Hilary
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*	Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Allen, Graham	Ashton, Joe
Alton, David	Austin-Walker, John

Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Bruce, Malcolm *(Gordon)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galbraith, Sam
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Hendron, Dr Joe
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hume, John
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Ieuan Wyn *(Ynys Môn)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McGrady, Eddie
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mallon, Seamus
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Paisley, Rev Ian
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Richardson, Jo
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Robinson, Peter *(Belfast E)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. Peter Kilfoyle and
Mr. Mr. Jack Thompson.

NOES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy

Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Butterfill, John
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Ruclif)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Critchley, Julian
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heath, Rt Hon Sir Edward
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maginnis, Ken
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shepherd, Richard *(Aldridge)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Smyth, Rev Martin *(Belfast S)*
Soames, Nicholas
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trimble, David
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Winterton, Nicholas *(Macc'f'ld)*
Wolfson, Mark

Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. David Lightbown and
Mr. Sydney Chapman.

Question accordingly negatived.
Main Question put:—
The House divided: Ayes 339, Noes 299.

Division 361] **[4.12 pm**

AYES

Ainsworth, Peter *(East Surrey)*
Aitken, Jonathan
Alexander, Richard
Alison, Rt Hon Michael *(Selby)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arbuthnot, James
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Aspinwall, Jack
Atkins, Robert
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Baker, Rt Hon K. *(Mole Valley)*
Baker, Nicholas *(Dorset North)*
Baldry, Tony
Banks, Matthew *(Southport)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Batiste, Spencer
Beggs, Roy
Bellingham, Henry
Bendall, Vivian
Beresford, Sir Paul
Biffen, Rt Hon John
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Body, Sir Richard
Bonsor, Sir Nicholas
Booth, Hartley
Boswell, Tim
Bottomley, Peter *(Eltham)*
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowden, Andrew
Bowis, John
Boyson, Rt Hon Sir Rhodes
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Bright, Graham
Brooke, Rt Hon Peter
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Bruce, Ian *(S Dorset)*
Budgen, Nicholas
Burns, Simon
Burt, Alistair
Butcher, John
Butler, Peter
Butterfill, John
Carlisle, John *(Luton North)*
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Carrington, Matthew
Carttiss, Michael
Cash, William
Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Churchill, Mr
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth *(Rushcl)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Coe, Sebastian
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Anthony *(Wyre For'st)*
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Critchley, Julian
Currie, Mrs Edwina *(S D'by'ire)*
Curry, David *(Skipton & Ripon)*
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Davis, David *(Boothferry)*
Day, Stephen
Deva, Nirj Joseph
Devlin, Tim
Dickens, Geoffrey
Dicks, Terry
Dorrell, Stephen
Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Duncan-Smith, Iain
Dunn, Bob
Durant, Sir Anthony
Dykes, Hugh
Eggar, Tim
Elletson, Harold
Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Evans, David *(Welwyn Hatfield)*
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Evennett, David
Faber, David
Fabricant, Michael
Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Field, Barry *(Isle of Wight)*
Fishburn, Dudley
Forman, Nigel
Forsyth, Michael *(Stirling)*
Forsythe, Clifford *(Antrim S)*
Forth, Eric
Fowler, Rt Hon Sir Norman
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Fry, Peter
Gale, Roger
Gallie, Phil
Gardiner, Sir George
Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Garnier, Edward
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Gorst, John
Grant, Sir Anthony *(Cambs SW)*
Greenway, Harry *(Ealing N)*
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Grylls, Sir Michael
Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hanley, Jeremy
Hannam, Sir John
Hargreaves, Andrew
Harris, David
Haselhurst, Alan
Hawkins, Nick
Hawksley, Warren
Hayes, Jerry
Heald, Oliver
Heath, Rt Hon Sir Edward
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Heseltine, Rt Hon Michael
Hicks, Robert
Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence L.
Hill, James *(Southampton Test)*
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Horam, John
Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Howard, Rt Hon Michael
Howarth, Alan *(Strat'rd-on-A)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Hughes Robert G. *(Harrow W)*
Hunt, Rt Hon David *(Wirral W)*
Hunt, Sir John *(Ravensbourne)*
Hunter, Andrew
Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas
Jack, Michael
Jackson, Robert *(Wantage)*
Jenkin, Bernard
Jessel, Toby
Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Jones, Gwilym *(Cardiff N)*
Jones, Robert B. *(W Hertfdshr)*
Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Key, Robert
Kilfedder, Sir James
King, Rt Hon Tom
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knapman, Roger
Knight, Mrs Angela *(Erewash)*
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Knight, Dame Jill *(Bir'm E'st'n)*
Knox, Sir David
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lamont, Rt Hon Norman
Lang, Rt Hon Ian
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Leigh, Edward
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lilley, Rt Hon Peter
Lloyd, Peter *(Fareham)*
Lord, Michael
Luff, Peter
Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas
MacGregor, Rt Hon John
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
McNair-Wilson, Sir Patrick
Madel, David
Maginnis, Ken
Maitland, Lady Olga
Major, Rt Hon John
Malone, Gerald
Mans, Keith
Marland, Paul
Marlow, Tony
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Marshall, Sir Michael *(Arundel)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Mates, Michael
Mawhinney, Dr Brian
Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick
Mellor, Rt Hon David
Merchant, Piers
Milligan, Stephen
Mills, Iain
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Moate, Sir Roger
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Monro, Sir Hector
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Moss, Malcolm
Needham, Richard
Nelson, Anthony
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Nicholson, David *(Taunton)*
Nicholson, Emma *(Devon West)*
Norris, Steve
Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Oppenheim, Phillip
Ottaway, Richard
Page, Richard
Paice, James
Patnick, Irvine
Patten, Rt Hon John
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Pawsey, James
Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Pickles, Eric
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Porter, David *(Waveney)*
Portillo, Rt Hon Michael
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Redwood, Rt Hon John
Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Rifkind, Rt Hon. Malcolm
Robathan, Andrew
Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Robinson, Mark *(Somerton)*
Roe, Mrs Marion *(Broxbourne)*
Ross, William *(E Londonderry)*
Rowe, Andrew *(Mid Kent)*
Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Ryder, Rt Hon Richard
Sackville, Tom
Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim
Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shaw, Sir Giles *(Pudsey)*
Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Shepherd, Richard *(Aldridge)*
Shersby, Michael
Sims, Roger
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Sir Dudley *(Warwick)*
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Smyth, Rev Martin *(Belfast S)*
Soames, Nicholas
Speed, Sir Keith
Spencer, Sir Derek
Spicer, Sir James *(W Dorset)*
Spicer, Michael *(S Worcs)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Spring, Richard
Sproat, Iain
Squire, Robin *(Hornchurch)*
Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Steen, Anthony
Stephen, Michael
Stern, Michael
Stewart, Allan
Streeter, Gary
Sumberg, David
Sweeney, Walter
Sykes, John
Tapsell, Sir Peter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, Rt Hon John D. *(Strgfd)*

Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Taylor, Sir Teddy *(Southend, E)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Sir Donald *(C'er V)*
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thornton, Sir Malcolm
Thurnham, Peter
Townend, John *(Bridlington)*
Townsend, Cyril D. *(Bexl'yh'th)*
Tracey, Richard
Tredinnick, David
Trend, Michael
Trimble, David
Trotter, Neville
Twinn, Dr Ian
Vaughan, Sir Gerard
Viggers, Peter
Waldegrave, Rt Hon William
Walden, George
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Walker, Bill *(N Tayside)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Waterson, Nigel
Watts, John
Wells, Bowen
Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wilshire, David
Winterton, Mrs Ann *(Congleton)*
Winterton, Nicholas *(Macc'f'ld)*
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy
Yeo, Tim
Young, Rt Hon Sir George

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. David Lightbown and
Mr. Sydney Chapman.

NOES

Abbott, Ms Diane
Adams, Mrs Irene
Ainger, Nick
Ainsworth, Robert *(Cov'try NE)*
Allen, Graham
Alton, David
Anderson, Donald *(Swansea E)*
Anderson, Ms Janet *(Ros'dale)*
Armstrong, Hilary
Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Ashton, Joe
Austin-Walker, John
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Barnes, Harry
Barron, Kevin
Battle, John
Bayley, Hugh
Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Beith, Rt Hon A. J.
Bell, Stuart
Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Bennett, Andrew F.
Benton, Joe
Bermingham, Gerald
Berry, Dr. Roger
Betts, Clive
Blair, Tony
Blunkett, David
Boateng, Paul
Boyce, Jimmy
Boyes, Roland
Bradley, Keith
Bray, Dr Jeremy
Brown, Gordon *(Dunfermline E)*
Brown, N. *(N'c'tle upon Tyne E)*
Bruce, Malcolm *(Gordon)*
Burden, Richard
Byers, Stephen
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell, Mrs Anne *(C'bridge)*
Campbell, Menzies *(Fife NE)*
Campbell, Ronnie *(Blyth V)*
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Canavan, Dennis
Cann, Jamie
Carlile, Alexander *(Montgomry)*
Chisholm, Malcolm
Clapham, Michael
Clark, Dr David *(South Shields)*
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clarke, Tom *(Monklands W)*
Clelland, David
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Coffey, Ann
Cohen, Harry
Connarty, Michael
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Cook, Robin *(Livingston)*
Corbett, Robin
Corbyn, Jeremy
Corston, Ms Jean
Cousins, Jim
Cox, Tom
Cryer, Bob
Cummings, John
Cunliffe, Lawrence
Cunningham, Jim *(Covy SE)*
Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Dafis, Cynog
Dalyell, Tam
Darling, Alistair
Davidson, Ian
Davies, Bryan *(Oldham C'tral)*
Davies, Rt Hon Denzil *(Llanelli)*
Davies, Ron *(Caerphilly)*
Davis, Terry *(B'ham, H'dge H'l)*
Denham, John
Dewar, Donald
Dixon, Don
Dobson, Frank
Donohoe, Brian H.
Dowd, Jim
Dunnachie, Jimmy
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eagle, Ms Angela
Eastham, Ken
Enright, Derek
Etherington, Bill
Evans, John *(St Helens N)*
Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Fatchett, Derek
Faulds, Andrew
Field, Frank *(Birkenhead)*
Fisher, Mark
Flynn, Paul
Foster, Rt Hon Derek
Foster, Don *(Bath)*
Foulkes, George
Fraser, John
Fyfe, Maria
Galbraith, Sam
Galloway, George
Gapes, Mike
Garrett, John
George, Bruce
Gerrard, Neil
Gilbert, Rt Hon Dr John
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Godsiff, Roger
Golding, Mrs Llin
Gordon, Mildred
Gould, Bryan
Graham, Thomas
Grant, Bernie *(Tottenham)*
Griffiths, Nigel *(Edinburgh S)*
Griffiths, Win *(Bridgend)*
Grocott, Bruce
Gunnell, John
Hain, Peter
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Hardy, Peter
Harman, Ms Harriet
Harvey, Nick
Hattersley, Rt Hon Roy
Henderson, Doug
Hendron, Dr Joe
Heppell, John
Hill, Keith *(Streatham)*
Hinchliffe, David
Hoey, Kate
Hogg, Norman *(Cumbernauld)*
Home Robertson, John
Hood, Jimmy
Hoon, Geoffrey
Howarth, George *(Knowsley N)*
Howells, Dr. Kim *(Pontypridd)*
Hoyle, Doug
Hughes, Kevin *(Doncaster N)*
Hughes, Robert *(Aberdeen N)*
Hughes, Roy *(Newport E)*
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Hume, John
Hutton, John
Illsley, Eric
Ingram, Adam
Jackson, Glenda *(H'stead)*
Jackson, Helen *(Shef'ld, H)*
Jamieson, David
Janner, Greville
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Ieuan Wyn *(Ynys Môn)*
Jones, Jon Owen *(Cardiff C)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Jones, Martyn *(Clwyd, SW)*
Jones, Nigel *(Cheltenham)*
Jowell, Tessa
Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Keen, Alan
Kennedy, Charles *(Ross,C&S)*
Kennedy, Jane *(Lpool Brdgn)*
Khabra, Piara S.
Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil *(Islwyn)*
Kirkwood, Archy
Leighton, Ron
Lestor, Joan *(Eccles)*
Lewis, Terry
Litherland, Robert
Livingstone, Ken
Lloyd, Tony *(Stretford)*
Llwyd, Elfyn
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McCartney, Ian
Macdonald, Calum
McFall, John
McGrady, Eddie
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
McLeish, Henry
Maclennan, Robert
McMaster, Gordon
McNamara, Kevin
McWilliam, John
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Mallon, Seamus
Mandelson, Peter
Marek, Dr John
Marshall, David *(Shettleston)*
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Martin, Michael J. *(Springburn)*
Martlew, Eric
Maxton, John
Meacher, Michael
Meale, Alan
Michael, Alun
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Michie, Mrs Ray *(Argyll Bute)*
Milburn, Alan
Miller, Andrew
Mitchell, Austin *(Gt Grimsby)*
Moonie, Dr Lewis
Morgan, Rhodri
Morley, Elliot
Morris, Rt Hon A. *(Wy'nshawe)*
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Morris, Rt Hon J. *(Aberavon)*
Mowlam, Marjorie
Mudie, George
Mullin, Chris
Murphy, Paul
Oakes, Rt Hon Gordon
O'Brien, Michael *(N W'kshire)*
O'Brien, William *(Normanton)*
O'Hara, Edward
Olner, William
O'Neill, Martin
Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Parry, Robert
Patchett, Terry
Pendry, Tom
Pickthall, Colin
Pike, Peter L.
Pope, Greg
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Prentice, Ms Bridget *(Lew'm E)*
Prentice, Gordon *(Pendle)*
Prescott, John
Primarolo, Dawn
Purchase, Ken
Quin, Ms Joyce
Radice, Giles
Randall, Stuart
Raynsford, Nick
Redmond, Martin
Reid, Dr John
Rendel, David
Richardson, Jo
Robertson, George *(Hamilton)*
Robinson, Geoffrey *(Co'try NW)*
Roche, Mrs. Barbara
Rogers, Allan
Rooker, Jeff
Rooney, Terry
Ross, Ernie *(Dundee W)*
Rowlands, Ted
Ruddock, Joan
Salmond, Alex
Sedgemore, Brian
Sheerman, Barry
Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Short, Clare
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Smith, Andrew *(Oxford E)*
Smith, C. *(Isl'ton S & F'sbury)*
Smith, Rt Hon John *(M'kl'ds E)*
Smith, Llew *(Blaenau Gwent)*
Snape, Peter
Soley, Clive
Spearing, Nigel
Spellar, John
Squire, Rachel *(Dunfermline W)*
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David

Steinberg, Gerry
Stevenson, George
Stott, Roger
Strang, Dr. Gavin
Straw, Jack
Taylor, Mrs Ann *(Dewsbury)*
Taylor, Matthew *(Truro)*
Tipping, Paddy
Turner, Dennis
Tyler, Paul
Vaz, Keith
Walker, Rt Hon Sir Harold
Wallace, James
Walley, Joan
Wardell, Gareth *(Gower)*
Wareing, Robert N
Watson, Mike
Welsh, Andrew
Wicks, Malcolm
Wigley, Dafydd
Williams, Rt Hon Alan *(Sw'n W)*
Williams, Alan W *(Carmarthen)*
Wilson, Brian
Winnick, David
Wise, Audrey
Worthington, Tony
Wray, Jimmy
Wright, Dr Tony
Young, David *(Bolton SE)*

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Jack Thompson and
Mr. Peter Kilfoyle.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Resolved,

That this House has confidence in the policy of Her Majesty's Government on the adoption of the Protocol on Social Policy.

Queen Mary's University Hospital

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Michael Brown.]*

4.26 pm

Mr. David Mellor (Putney): My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary suggested that, now that the boil of Maastricht has been lanced, we have the opportunity to look to the future. I am glad to be the first to accept that invitation and to direct the Under-Secretary of State for Health, my hon. Friend the Member for Bolton, West (Mr. Sackville), who has drawn the short straw and must remain a little longer on a Friday afternoon, to the future of London's health service. I do so, conscious of the fact that our brief debate, like most Adjournment debates, has not drawn a large audience. Outside the House, however, many people in the streets of London will be more concerned about the future of London's health services than the future of the Maastricht treaty. The Government have, thank goodness, got the problems of Maastricht out of the way, but it does not mean that there is not a range of other serious issues to be discussed.

I shall make two observations, the first about the future of London's health services and the second specifically about the future of Queen Mary's University hospital in Roehampton in my constituency and, in particular, its burns unit.

As a former Health Minister, I am bound to accept and welcome the fact that there has been a great transformation in the national health service in recent years. In the past decade, the national health service has for the first time become a truly national service in the sense that we now have a pattern of primary and secondary hospital acute care across the nation. It is no longer necessary for significant numbers of people to come to London from outside for treatment, as used to be the case in the old days due to the relatively underdeveloped state of services outside London.

That clearly has implications for London, and conclusions are being drawn. There is little doubt that conclusions have to be drawn about the future of London's health services. Conclusions can be drawn about whether the balance is right between acute care and primary health care. There are certainly far too many elderly GPs with lock-up shops practising in London. It is disgraceful that the British Medical Association has never taken any interest in that issue. The BMA is, of course, a trade union, so the BMA's concern for the patient becomes less obvious at that point.

One is aware of the dilemma that the Government face. I am certainly not one of those, particularly after the responsibilities I held, who would begin to say to those of my right hon. and hon. Friends now charged with one of the most onerous responsibilities in Government that change may not be necessary. However, it is appropriate to try to be wise before rather than after the event about the extent of that change.

There are too many cooks stirring the broth. The Tomlinson report, which in itself was enough of an agenda without anything else, proposed the closure of two household-name London hospitals—Charing Cross hospital and St. Bartholomew's hospital. Following fast and furious on the heels of Tomlinson, there has been a

proliferation of reports from something known as the London implementation group. Every week that passes seems to bring a new report, or the threat of a new report.

One of the problems with the great range of advice being offered to the Government is that it tends to run in contradictory directions. The Tomlinson report suggested the effective denuding of Charing Cross hospital's responsibilities. Once the nonsensical proposition of moving the Royal Brompton and Royal Marsden hospitals to the Charing Cross site was rightly knocked out by Ministers, the London implementation group's specialty reviews appeared to wish to move any available portable specialty to Charing Cross hospital.

I do not believe that the Government can afford to have too extensive an agenda on London's health services. Some of the things that the London implementation group is advising Ministers to do would be difficult to achieve, even if this were the most popular Administration ever invented and if every bit of open land in London was being cleared for the purpose of erecting statues to various leading figures in this Administration. Even if this were a popular Administration, some of the so-called experts are setting a challenging agenda for the Government.

In the Lobby just now, a fellow London Member of Parliament who today presented a petition concerning a hospital in his constituency said to me, "It's the Government that's in intensive care at the moment, not the health service." Ministers ought to bear that in mind when making their dispensations. My judgment is that the future of the London health service—*[Interruption.]* I trust that I am not already boring my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Mr. Tom Sackville): No—carry on.

Mr. Mellor: If the Whip were to move away from my hon. Friend and they ceased their conversation, it would be much easier to deal with this matter. If my hon. Friend is going through some of the experiences that I went through when I was a Minister in the Department of Health, he might find some of this profitable.

There is no understanding among the public of the real challenge that faces those who run the health service. Experts may say that London is over-bedded, but that is not the view of the public at large. If one goes to Bart's, as I did the other day, one does not find empty beds. One finds plenty of work going on there which people are not disposed to regard as being readily portable elsewhere. There being no understanding of the basic evidence, it is fair enough to make the assessment that public confidence in the Government's ability to manage London's health service hangs by a thread—a thread which in my opinion the Government would be wise not to break.

A limited agenda for change, therefore, designed to move London's health service in the right direction but shorn of some of the more extraordinary proposals of the siren voices that have been let loose on these various studies and groups, might be the best advice that I could tender to the Government, as one of their loyal supporters. I have been through the maelstrom of the Department of Health and I know all too well what the public think and how readily the public can become agitated about an issue of this kind.

With the benefit of hindsight—and perhaps with a little more than that—the Government might have been better advised not to let loose quite so many expert committees. This is a classic example of people being given power without responsibility. They have the power to blight great institutions by recommending that they should either be closed or shorn of important responsibilities, with vital services transferred from one institution to the other. That is the power to blight, to cause widespread public unrest and to stimulate professional concern, as doctors and nurses wonder whether they have a future within an institution in which they may have spent a working lifetime.

I certainly should not care to be the Minister who tried to take through the wide repertory of ideas being thrust forward with such frequency by these folk who, above all, do not have the responsibility of maintaining public confidence in the health service while their proposed changes are implemented. That is a classic example of why, far from being the voices of wisdom, so many of these specialist committees' suggestions are siren voices trying to lure the ship on to the rocks.

It is extraordinary that even on matters of which one would expect them to have some sensible grasp they seem to be wanting. I draw the attention of my hon. Friend the Minister—I dare say that he is already familiar with it—to the meeting of the Select Committee on Health on 14 July, before which three leading figures from the London implementation group appeared. One of the points that emerged was this, and I quote from a note that was made of the meeting:

> "It was acknowledged that the Tomlinson report and the speciality reviews had not considered in any depth the financial implications of their recommendations."

That seems a perfect piece of nonsense. How on earth, when the whole raison d'être of the exercise is fitting patient care to the principles of affordability, can a group of people be charged with that responsibility when they acknowledge that Tomlinson had not considered in any depth the financial implications and nor had the speciality reviews?

Having made that point, I turn to the issue of Queen Mary's University hospital. It is a popular hospital. A survey in *The Independent* ranked it as one of the 10 most popular hospitals in the country. It is highly regarded in our community and it has a partcular reputation for dealing with trauma. It has the largest, and perhaps the only, burns unit in London—certainly in an area with a London postal code. Its advanced plastic surgery unit is a legacy of the war years when plastic surgery was performed on those who were horribly disfigured in service in the Royal Air Force. Since the first world war, it has been the nation's foremost centre for dealing with artificial limbs. Indeed, Douglas Bader and victims of tragedies in the Falklands war or IRA bombs have all been treated there. Sir Ranulph Fiennes is a strong supporter of the hospital, which does not lack friends—another material point for the political consideration of this matter—and when he had to have a couple of toes amputated following his historic walk across Antarctica, he had the operation performed at Queen's Mary.

The burns unit was opened in 1985 at a cost of just over £3 million: I know, because I lobbied hard that it should be. Eight years on, the geniuses that the Department has asked to advise it suggest that it should be shut and that two others—one in Tooting and one in Guildford—should be opened. That leads one to scratch one's head and say, "But Queen Mary's University hospital has just been made

[Mr. Mellor]

a trust hospital"—and I am grateful to the Department for doing that, in the teeth of opposition from the regional health authority.

The unit is extremely successful. I have supplied my hon. Friend the Minister with the facts about its workload, so I shall not weary him by repeating them. Suffice it to say that the workload has increased 10 per cent. in the financial year. It is a popular and successful unit which treats a significant number of people from overseas who have the worst burns imaginable. I defy anyone to visit a more haunting place than a burns unit containing patients who have suffered extreme burns. It requires particular dedication to care for them. Why on earth does the implementation group propose closing a unit which is eight years old and cost more than £3 million, and to establish two in its place? If the aim is to produce value for money, no one outside that small circle would believe that such a proposal is credible. The logic of the lunatic asylum is being brought to bear.

It is not a Conservative approach to life to decide that a unit that is growing and has existed as part of an institution for many years can be uprooted, moved, root and branch, and planted elsewhere without losing something. The fact that the unit will be replaced with another unit is not at issue. What matters is the unit's long history in the context of a hospital with an international reputation for treating serious trauma of all sorts. The unit passes all the tests that are set on the need to integrate a specialist unit into the range of other services that are sometimes needed. It is only on the renal unit test that Queen Mary's does not pass muster—I think that four patients—no more—in the past decade have had to be moved out of the burns unit for specialist renal work.

If, on its own merits, there is no reason why the burns unit should be moved, we must ask whether there is a hidden agenda—a thought which is exercising a number of my parliamentary colleagues in London. It is thought that some other motive lies behind the proposal involving the hit list of hospitals to be closed, that perhaps those charged at official level and so-called expert level have decided who shall be the quick and who shall be the dead. If there is no logic in the proposal to move the burns unit of Queen Mary's University hospital away from that hospital, there must be another reason.

There is only one reason for doing so apart from sheer perversity—which cannot be ruled out, but is unlikely—or professional jealousy. The reason is that it is thought inappropriate for a regional speciality to be continued in a hospital which may not have a future. The thinking is that perhaps Queen Mary's University hospital has had its time. Applying the logic of the proposal, it seems that that may be the reason.

I totally exonerate my hon. Friend the Minister of any blame—the committees have been established and are responsible for what they say—but the proposal cannot be justified on its own merits and it is deeply controversial and unacceptable to the public. Other hon. Members—including my hon. Friend the Member for Richmond and Barnes (Mr. Hanley), who, as a Minister, cannot take part in this debate—are extremely concerned. As the subject involves a recommendation to the Government rather than from the Government, however, it is not bound by collective responsibility and I have my hon. Friend's authority to say how concerned he is. A number of other hon. Members whose constituents have been treated at the unit are equally worried.

I do not envy my hon. Friend the Minister the task of trying to steer London's health services safely through the shoals which lie ahead. In view of the problems that exist in a wide context and the problems that we know exist with key London health services such as the ambulance service, which are still a long way from being got right, I urge on my hon. Friend the need to confine changes that will cause public uproar in relation to the closure of valued units and the closure of whole valued institutions to the bare minimum necessary to reshape our health services. I urge my hon. Friend to have confidence in the trusts that have been created. The Queen Mary's trust is not asking for no change—it is ready for change and is already thinking about a strategy that will involve change—but there is all the difference in the world between evolutionary change and change imposed by the arbitrary will of committees such as the specialty review.

Although I do not expect my hon. Friend to repudiate the proposal today, I think it only fair to tell him how I feel so that when, as I hope, in the autumn the Department returns to the topic, it will reassure some of us that it understands the sensitivity of the matter. I hope that it will have an agenda far smaller and across a far narrower canvas than the agenda that some of its experts, who carry no responsibility for the consequences, wish to impose upon it.

4.45 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Mr. Tom Sackville): I congratulate my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Putney (Mr. Mellor) on raising this important topic which is clearly of enormous importance to his constituents. The hospital in question is well loved and respected. Many of my right hon. and learned Friend's constituents and people living in south-west London and beyond have no doubt been treated at Queen Mary's. My right hon. and learned Friend has given us a flavour of the hospital's long experience and of the respect in which it is held.

My right hon. and learned Friend knows, because he is a former Health Minister, that many reports have been published over the years about the need for change in the provision of acute services in London. There have been more than a dozen; Tomlinson is just the latest and its birth was accelerated by the fact that we have separated the provider from the purchaser. We expect the various units to live within budgets, to budget carefully, and to project carefully their future work load and expenditure of income. Within that context, we shall see changes. We want to ensure that they are made in an organised manner.

The Tomlinson report, as my right hon. and learned Friend knows, like many previous reports, has suggested that London is likely to be over-bedded in future in terms of acute services. We shall see a transfer which we shall have to push hard. We shall have to make some positive changes towards primary care which will affect many hospitals in London.

My right hon. and learned Friend also knows that the Tomlinson report and the Government's response to it set in hand six independent specialty reviews. One was to do with burns and plastic surgery, and one of the hospitals that was involved in the review as a provider of those

services was Queen Mary's. The London implementation group, which is the body set up by the Secretary of State to specialise, to go into great depth on the whole question and to give her advice about the decisions that she should take—later this year, we hope—was charged with reporting on acute hospital provision in south-west London.

The regional health authority has, therefore, set up a south-west London hospitals review. That is all quite clear. I do not think that it quite merits the description that my right hon. and learned Friend gave it. He did me the courtesy of giving me some idea of what he would say through the medium of the early editions of the *Evening Standard*.

Mr. Mellor: My hon. Friend's office was advised by those at Queen Mary's of the point that I was going to make, and I invited my hon. Friend to telephone me before 10 am, which he failed to do. My hon. Friend would do well to deal with the substance of the matter rather than making silly points.

Mr. Sackville: My right hon. and learned Friend should not take it too personally. He has made some fairly critical remarks about the review group, both in his speech and in the local newspaper. I remind him that three eminent consultants—for example, Mr. Philip Sykes, the consultant plastic surgeon at St. Lawrence's hospital in Chepstow—a senior nurse, Mrs. Driver from Leicester, and others have given their time to advise impartially on how they see the future for plastics and burns in south-west London.

I must tell my right hon. and learned Friend that there is no sub-agenda. The group is merely saying what it believes will be the demand in the future and how that demand can best be met. The members of the group have decided that, in their opinion, there should be a split, because quite a large number of the patients come to Queen Mary's from beyond the M25. That is their opinion; it is advice which they are offering the Secretary of State. I cannot debate with my right hon. and learned Friend the details of that—indeed, I am glad to say that he has not invited me to do so. That is just one factor in the decisions that will have to be made later.

My right hon. and learned Friend talked about public confidence. The changes that have to be made are extremely worrying for staff, patients and others. We must make any changes that we have to make in as calm and organised a way as possible. Clearly, Queen Mary's has great qualities, and they will all be taken into account. My right hon. and learned Friend must remember, however, that in all these matters, the patient and patient services are what matter.

Loyalty tends to be to buildings and institutions—that is the same everwhere—rather than to the services that are provided in them. Sometimes, painful decisions have to be made. I remind the House that that is true all over the country. In all the great conurbations, we find that we probably have too many buildings, too many acute beds and a very expensive health service that will probably have to be changed so that we can deliver it more efficiently. We know that demand will grow and we will have to make sure that we achieve the greatest efficiency. People in London must remember that there is life outside the M25. There are enormous problems—

Mr. Mellor: My hon. Friend is in danger of persuading me that, coming from Stockport, he is unaware that there is life within the M25. He had better not be too insouciant about this issue.

Mr. Sackville: It is Bolton, not Stockport. The problems that afflict Newcastle, Birmingham, Manchester and all the great conurbations are the same, even if in London they are perhaps more intense. Difficult decisions have to be made everywhere. If we do not face up to the sort of decisions that have to be taken in London, because it is the capital or because of the influence of particular consultants or the national media or whatever, we are letting down the NHS employees around the country and patients who may feel—there is evidence to back this up—that, until now, they have been subsidising services in London.

Those are the arguments that lead up to the Tomlinson report and those are the kinds of decisions that we have to make. I hope that my right hon. and learned Friend will remember that.

There are always powerful arguments to be made against the closure of any well-loved hospital or of any health services. They can be made in more or less emotional ways. They can be made by pointing to quality of services, to the venerability of services or whatever. But we must face the fact that changes will have to be made.

I will not try to prejudge this issue. I will only say to my right hon. and learned Friend that what he has said this afternoon will have been heard. Everything that he has said will be taken into account in any decisions that will be made later this year—as will a petition which I understand is being organised from Queen Mary's, and all the other factors, including the specialty review.

There is no hidden sub-agenda in any recommendations that have been made to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State about Queen Mary's. Decisions have to be made based on what will, over the next half century, be the best way to deliver services for everyone in south-west London taking into account the effects that those decisions have on services for people who live further out and who now have to come into London and may not feel that that is the future for them.

I congratulate my right hon. and learned Friend once more on raising this subject today and I have no doubt that what he has said will be heard and will influence the debate very strongly.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at six minutes to Five o'clock.

House of Commons

Monday 26 July 1993

The House met at half-past Two o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PRIVATE BUSINESS

LEEDS SUPERTRAM BILL
Lords amendments agreed to.

CITIBANK INTERNATIONAL BILL *[Lords]*
Order for Third Reading read.
Bill to be read the Third time on Tuesday 19 October.

UNIBANK BILL *[Lords]*
Order for Third Reading read.
Bill to be read the Third time on Tuesday 19 October.

Oral Answers to Questions

TRANSPORT

Ferry Safety

1. **Mr. Ward:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress he has made in the European Transport Council on the issue of ferry safety.

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. John MacGregor): I told the Transport Council last month that we are committed to applying higher standards of ferry stability. Since then, we have made good progress in reaching a draft agreement with other member states, and with Norway and Sweden, to achieve these higher standards for ferries in north-west European waters.

Mr. Ward: My right hon. Friend will be aware that some of the best ferry services in the country sail from the port of Poole. Is he satisfied that our European partners are coming up to the standards that we require? What pressure is he bringing to bear on them to ensure that safety measures are brought into operation as quickly as possible?

Mr. MacGregor: As my hon. Friend will know, the ideal is to achieve higher standards through the International Maritime Organisation, and we have been doing a great deal to try to do that in that forum. However, we were disappointed with the progress there, so for some considerable time I have been discussing with our European partners in the EC the possibility of introducing these higher standards in north-west European waters, failing ability to reach agreement in the IMO. I am delighted to say that large numbers of members of the Community, and Norway and Sweden, have joined us in this. I hope at a meeting tomorrow to finalise agreement, and I am grateful for their co-operation.

Ms Walley: Any improvements in SOLAS 90 ferry stability standards are most welcome, but I must tell the Secretary of State that many families preparing to go on their summer holidays, whether they sail from Poole, Ramsgate or the Dover ports—or anywhere else—want to know that the highest safety standards have been agreed.

As for the IMO, it is the Government's own port state control inspections that are crucial. Will the right hon. Gentleman tell the House that he will not go ahead with the deregulation of the Surveyor General's office? In effect, that would lead to lower standards while the rest of Europe attempts to achieve common standards of safety inspection.

Mr. MacGregor: I disagree entirely with the hon. Lady's point about the Surveyor General's office. We have been playing a leading part in the European Community on port state inspections and achieving stricter standards for them. We have been making a good deal of progress and we reached agreement on the way forward at the last Transport Council.

Ferry stability is a different question. Of course I agree that we must have the highest standards of ferry stability. We already have high standards in this country and we want to make them higher still. We are getting a lot of co-operation from our European partners. At the Anglo-French summit this morning, I discussed this very point with my French opposite number, Mr. Bosson. We reached agreement and I am grateful for his support.

Mr. David Shaw: Will my right hon. Friend confirm that the Government are doing all in their power to ensure that Dover ferries may earn the reputation of being the safest ferries in the world? Will he also confirm that many millions of people can safely go on holiday this year using the wonderful ferries of Dover and have a marvellous time?

Mr. MacGregor: Yes, I can certainly give my hon. Friend that assurance. With the building of new ferries, there is increasingly the opportunity for even higher standards. The SOLAS 90 argument is to get the higher standards applied to the older ferries. It is already happening and the agreement, which I hope we shall reach tomorrow, will be a further significant step in that direction.

Mr. Skinner: As, I assume, a legitimate member of the Cabinet, will the Secretary of State assure us that, when the channel tunnel opens, he will not allow the ferry companies to cut costs and put safety back on the agenda in a more serious way? Will he tell every member of the Cabinet that, when it comes to protecting the safety of passengers, he will not let the bastards grind him down?

Mr. MacGregor: The hon. Gentleman was so busy contriving his question that he failed to listen to earlier answers. If he had been listening, he would have realised that with our relevant Community partners—in this case, those in the north-west European waters—we have gone a long way to reaching an agreement on higher standards and I hope that we shall achieve that agreement tomorrow.

Gyratory System (Catford)

2. **Mr. Dowd:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when work is expected to commence on site on the A205 Catford town centre gyratory system; and

whether the directorate of environmental services of Lewisham council will be permitted to compete for the design contract.

The Minister for Transport in London (Mr. Steve Norris): Subject to satisfactory completion of the statutory procedures, the work is currently programmed to begin in spring 1995. Competitive tenders have been invited for the design contract. Under the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970, local authorities such as Lewisham are not empowered to compete in this way for work offered by the Department.

Mr. Dowd: I thank the Minister for his answer. On the final point, will he confirm that the timetable for the consultants has been rigged to prevent local authorities from tendering, because the date has been set before the EC directive, which would outlaw such discrimination, comes into effect?

I also thank the hon. Gentleman for the decision on another south-east London road scheme—that at Oxleas wood—and hope that it marks a change in the Department's thinking, away from schemes for roads that nobody wants and towards those which everyone wants. The south circular, the A205, falls into the latter category. Will he confirm that there have been five start dates since the scheme was inherited fully formed from the Greater London council in 1986 and that, if the entirely unnecessary trunking of the south circular had not taken place, the people of south-east London and south circular users would have benefited from the improvement many years ago?

Mr. Norris: If I followed all that, I welcome the hon. Gentleman's commendation for my right hon. Friend's announcement that we will re-examine the east London river crossing to ensure a better environmental outcome. The hon. Gentleman will know that we are undertaking that work at the moment. As for the ability of the local authority to tender for the scheme, I suggest that no ulterior motive is involved. It is clear that, under the 1970 Act, this is not the type of work for which a publicly subsidised local authority should tender. I regard that as not only a wholly unexceptionable principle but one to which it would be sensible to continue to adhere.

Mr. Dunn: Any works undertaken in Catford are bound to have a huge impact on the flow of commuter traffic from north-west Kent and south-east London into the centre of London. Will my hon. Friend assure me that every step will be taken at all times to minimise traffic dislocation to my commuters from Dartford, especially during the works?

Mr. Norris: I will indeed give my hon. Friend that assurance. The Department tries, whenever possible, when major works are being undertaken, to take account of the effects on other parts of the region. I will certainly take my hon. Friend's words to heart.

Ashford International Station

3. **Mrs. Lait:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects work to commence on the building of a new Ashford international railway station with related works.

The Minister for Public Transport (Mr. Roger Freeman): I expect the railway works for the Ashford international passenger station to commence in October. The time scale for construction of the station buildings is a matter for the private sector promoter. I hope that work will begin in the first half of next year and that the new station will open by October 1995.

Mrs. Lait: I am grateful to my right hon. Friend for that information, since the opening of the Ashford international station will benefit my constituents in Hastings and Rye. Does he know that there are rumours that the Hastings-Ashford line may be closed? Will he scotch that rumour once and for all and confirm that the electrification of that line will go ahead?

Mr. Freeman: I can assure my hon. Friend that no Minister has received any indication that the line is likely to close. Therefore, I can confirm that, as far as we are concerned, the line will remain open. It is an important and valuable line.

I am pleased to tell my hon. Friend that British Rail and the Department of Transport are in discussion with the private sector about its participation in electrification—not only of that line, but of the west coast main line—that will mean that we can accomplish those important infrastructure works faster than would otherwise be possible.

Dr. Howells: Will the Minister realise that there is a problem not only in constructing the Ashford international railway station, but in getting there if one travels from any of the regions? Many passengers in Wales, for example, would like to travel to Paris and Brussels via the international link, but can travel direct only if they leave at 2 o'clock in the morning. What will the Minister do to spare us the delights of having to travel round the Circle line in London?

Mr. Freeman: As the hon. Gentleman will know, some of the trains on the Great Western railway route will travel directly to Waterloo international station. If he has not seen the impressive new station, I strongly recommend that he does so and that he commends its use to his constituents.

Mr. Rowe: Is my right hon. Friend aware that there was a meeting last week at which the future of the railway lines through Ashford was discussed and that Union Rail failed to provide the necessary information for the basis of that meeting until 24 hours before?

Union Rail has a similar meeting in my constituency on Wednesday and has so far failed to provide any of the information required. Does my right hon. Friend agree that, if there are to be meetings with the public to try to explain the positions of the Government and Union Rail, the necessary material on which to base judgments must be made available beforehand?

Mr. Freeman: I can assure my hon. Friend and other hon. Friends who have an involvement with the route plan for the channel tunnel rail link that we want Union Rail to conduct a proper consultation. At Maidstone last week, I undertook to write to all the local authorities and my hon. Friends by the end of the week, re-emphasising the rules of procedure under which Union Rail will be consulting, not only at Boxley and Ashford, but at other locations along the route.

Rail Privatisation

5. **Mr. Barnes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he next plans to meet representatives of the British Railways Board to discuss the privatisation of the railways; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. MacGregor: I meet the chairman and other British Rail representatives regularly and will be doing so again this week.

Mr. Barnes: Most work on the railways has never been well paid, but at least it used to be secure and, after it, people received a pension. Is there to be a guarantee of job security in future and will there be a guarantee of the solvency of pensions when the dreaded day of rail privatisation arrives?

Mr. MacGregor: We reached agrement with British Rail and with the British Rail pension trustees last week on the final arrangements in relation to a solvency guarantee, following pretty long discussions in which we dealt with all the other issues. Arrangements have been drawn up and I answered a parliamentary question on the subject last week. In a generous way, I think that that gives the assurance that the hon. Gentleman seeks.

Mr. Channon: Before privatisation takes place, would my right hon. Friend agree that there are still many lines in Network SouthEast that require new rolling stock? Will he therefore strongly encourage the new leasing deals? Will he also comment on the prospects of Network SouthEast being allowed to lease trains for that purpose in the near future?

Mr. Macgregor: As my right hon. Friend knows, a £150 million leasing deal, which was agreed and announced in the autumn statement last year, is currently out to tender, and BR will make its decision on it within the next two months. One of the possibilities there is for Network SouthEast. I hope that we shall be able to continue that kind of arrangement in the future. As to privatisation, the opportunities for leasing will be substantial.

Mr. Trimble: Will the Secretary of State assure me that the privatisation of railways will not prejudice investment in the west coast main line, which is of major importance to us in Northern Ireland, as the Larne-Lochryan-Carlisle route is the major route used to carry the commercial traffic of Northern Ireland—*[Interruption.]*

Mr. MacGregor: I thought that other Opposition Members were also interested in the west coast main line—it is not just of interest to Northern Ireland. I can tell the hon. Gentleman that there is no reason why privatisation should in any way adversely affect the proposals for the west coast main line. I hope that some of the preliminary work on that will start shortly. We are investigating also the possibility—we are out to consultancy on it at the moment—of involving the private sector in the construction and financing of the modernisation of the west coast main line.

Mr. Jonathan Evans: Will my right hon. Friend please note that there will be a warm welcome in Wales this week for his right hon. Friend the Minister of State when he travels with me on the heart of Wales line from Swansea to Shrewsbury? Will my right hon. Friend take this opportunity to say that that is a demonstration of the commitment of the Government to socially necessary lines in rural areas, just like the central Wales line, and give lie to the fear that has been built up by Opposition Members that services of that kind, which are so essential in my constituency and other rural areas, will in some way be diminished by the Government's proposals?

Mr. MacGregor: I entirely agree with my hon. Friend. My right hon. Friend is doing a great deal of travelling around the country and is making clear, as we shall in Wales and as we have made clear throughout, that the subsidies will continue for socially necessary lines. I am happy to give my hon. Friend that assurance and I am sure that my right hon. Friend, who is looking forward to his visit very much, will do so as well.

Mr. Wilson: Will the Secretary of State accept that there is absolutely no need for the spurious and divisive contest between the west coast main line and Network SouthEast and that it is perfectly well within the gift of Government to allow both rolling stock schemes to proceed under the leasing procedures, which they have belatedly acknowledged as feasible?

Will the Secretary of State address himself also to the question of where the money is to come from to fund the profits that operators will look for under privatisation? Will he particularly address himself to the report by Price Waterhouse to BR, which has been commented on in today's *Glasgow Herald*, which shows that private investors are being encouraged to believe that they should seek a 30 per cent. return on their investment?

Will the Secretary of State tell us, after many months of discussing those issues, where that 30 per cent. is to come from in a subsidised, loss-making railway system? It can come only from increased subsidy, which is clearly not the Government's intention, or from cuts in services, increasing fares and the loss of jobs. Would not the Secretary of State be doing his Back Benchers and his candidate in Christchurch a great favour if he were now to draw one of those famous lines in the sand and forget all about railway privatisation during the summer recess?

Mr. MacGregor: I was in Christchurch recently and have to tell the hon. Gentleman that there was not a great deal of concern about railway privatisation, because the aasurances that I was able to give were clear. As to his other two questions, the leasing arrangement was feasible only because of the prospect of privatisation. It is only that which has made it possible. But, of course, one cannot do everything at once. One has to make choices among priorities. There must be a limit to the levels of public expenditure—it would be as well if the hon. Gentleman recognised that. As to the Price Waterhouse report, I have not yet seen it, let alone read the *Glasgow Herald*.

Mr. Wilson: Here is the newspaper.

Mr. MacGregor: I would rather read the Price Waterhouse report in full, if I may, and will certainly look at it.

The hon. Gentleman will know that there will be considerable opportunities for franchisees through efficiency gains, better marketing, increasing passenger returns and so on. I would also tell him that the Price Waterhouse report is premature, because, until the Bill is given Royal Assent, we will not be going out positively seeking franchisees and marketing the opportunities. It is not possible to make such calculations at this stage.

Regional Airports

6. **Mr. Bates:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department has to strengthen and develop the role of regional airports.

Mr. MacGregor: The Government are keen to see regional airports meeting all the demand that they can attract. We also wish to encourage much greater involvement of the private sector, including privatisation of local authority airports.

Mr. Bates: I am grateful to my right hon. Friend for that answer. Is he aware that many local regional airports such as Teesside remain unable to take full advantage of the new opportunities in freedom of air traffic movement, in particular around Europe, because they are shackled to local authorities, which lack the imagination and expertise to compete in a sophisticated market? Therefore, willl he give serious and urgent consideration to introducing measures to entice or compel local authorities to release those airports into the private sector, where they belong?

Mr. MacGregor: My hon. Friend is right on several counts. There are certainly big opportunities in Europe, not least with the third aviation package, the opening of the skies in Europe and the removal of so many controls. He is also right to say that regional airports have a big opportunity and to suggest that that is best seized in the private sector, as the British Airports Authority has done.

I have been trying to encourage local authority airports to go in that direction, partly by the fact that, given all the other priorities for public expenditure, I have cut the amount of public expenditure available, knowing very well that the private sector can find the funds. This year, through the 100 per cent. capital receipts, we have also given encouragement for local authority airports to seize the opportunity.

Mr. Snape: Is the Secretary of State aware of the newly announced twinning of Birmingham and Chicago? What support and encouragement can he offer to establish direct air services between those two cities?

Mr. MacGregor: I am keen to do so and, in the discussions that I am having with the Secretary for Transport in the United States, on which I have embarked and which I will be pursuing further in September, I am seeking further liberalisation of routes from the United States to regional European United Kingdom airports. Indeed, I recently made an interim offer, which he was not able to accept but which involved further opportunities for regional airports. I shall have that in mind in the negotiations in which we are now involved.

Mr. Hawkins: Will my right hon. Friend join me in welcoming the further expansion of small regional airports, such as Blackpool in my constituency, and in particular the fact that a number of extra air services have started this year, including a direct flight three times a week to and from Stansted and a third airline using Blackpool as the airport of entry from the Irish Republic?

Mr. MacGregor: Yes, I welcome the development of regional airports and we believe that airport development is something for the airport operators themselves. I am pleased to hear of the progress that Blackpool is making.

Mr. Bennett: Will the Minister accept that, if it had been left to the private sector, for Manchester airport there would be nothing there? That is a good example of the foresight of the Manchester city fathers and other local authorities, which have developed one of the best international airports in the country. Is it not grossly unfair for the Government to be robbing them of that asset just as the airport is proving to be such as success?

Mr. MacGregor: There is no question of robbing. I hope that the hon. Gentleman will acknowledge that there has been massive Government investment in Manchester airport. The significant point now is that regional airports can, in the same way as London airport, raise their funds from the private sector because they are regarded as successful businesses. I hope that the hon. Gentleman has noted that BAA, since privatisation, has put in a great deal more capital investment than was possible when it was in the public sector.

Mr. Steen: Will the Secretary of State consider ring-fencing the flights from Heathrow to Plymouth? As he knows, the west country depends on the link between Heathrow, Plymouth and Newquay, so he would be doing it a great service if he would do something to protect the route. British Airways has taken it over, and nobody is certain that it will not give up the slot and use it for a more lucrative route.

Mr. MacGregor: As my hon. Friend knows, I fully appreciate the importance of air services to the south-west, but we have discussed the difficulties of ring fencing particular slots. In that regard, I see British Airways acquisition of Brymon Airways as a reassuring development. I am pleased to note that British Airways has stated that it recognises the importance that the people of Devon and Cornwall place on their air link with Heathrow and looks forward to improving its communications with its international network there.

Road Building

8. **Mr. Mullin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department is proposing to spend on new road building during the next five years.

Mr. MacGregor: The current public expenditure plans of my Department involve the spending of £4·1 billion on the construction of new motorways and trunk roads in the years 1993-94 to 1995-96. In the current year, we plan to spend £1·4 billion on building new motorways and trunk roads as part of this year's record expenditure of £2·1 billion on national roads.

Mr. Mullin: I welcome the Secretary of State's decision not to concrete over Oxleas Wood. Was it a one-off or the first step in a programme to prise his Department from the grip of the road lobby? If the Government are interested in making savings in public funds, is not their insane road building programme an obvious place to start?

Mr. MacGregor: I do not accept that it is an insane road building programme and, as I go round the country, the demands and requests that I receive are for building bypasses and improving the motorway network, on which the vast majority of people want us to put emphasis. Increasing emphasis is being placed on environmental issues. Having benefited from close proximity to a wood,

and knowing the importance of lungs, I believe strongly in trees and woods and lungs for London. I took my decision on Oxleas Wood on its merits. Nowadays, the Department of Transport puts heavy emphasis on all environmental aspects of the road programme.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: Is my right hon. Friend aware that my hon. Friend the Member for Surrey North-West (Sir M. Grylls) and my right hon. Friend the Member for Chertsey and Walton (Sir G. Pattie) are today visiting the European Environment Commissioner to express the concern of many thousands of people in Surrey and elsewhere around London about the proposal to build link roads on the M25? To what extent is my right hon. Friend of the view that link roads work in harmony with local, district, county and regional plans and, indeed, with the Department of the Environment's Green Paper, which was published only last week and suggested that we should restrain traffic growth in the interests of the environment and of health?

Mr. MacGregor: I think that they are consistent with regional plans and with the Department of the Environment's Green Paper, with which I was closely associated and with which I agree. We propose to hold a public inquiry next year on the proposed link road between the M3 and M4, which will have to look at the fact that doing nothing is not an option. Whatever restraint—motorway tolling or other measures—is put on the growth of traffic, there is no doubt that traffic on that section of the motorway, which is one of the most congested in the country, will continue to increase. Unless something is done, the danger is that a substantial amount of traffic will be diverted back to local roads, which will recreate the congestion and environmental disadvantages that the M25 was designed to remove.

Mr. Harvey: Will the Minister confirm whether his Department is considering a network of 12 or 14-lane wide motorways, as speculated in some Sunday broadsheets, whose vivid diagrams almost went off the edge of the page and probably evaded the tabloids altogether? Is not he concerned about projected growth figures of 35 million vehicles by 2025, and how will that square with the commitments that the Government gave at Rio? Is not he concerned by reports linking asthma with car usage? Does not a point come when one has to say enough is enough and instead seek investment opportunities in the public transport network?

Mr. MacGregor: Let me deal with a few of those points. First, I do not confirm the reports in the Sunday newspapers. We are talking about a three-lane link road on each side of the M25 on one section, and I have announced one other. The important point is that it is not just the M25 around London—preventing traffic coming into London—but a major arterial route between several other motorways. It is an exceptional part of the motorway network and, in my view, needed the type of proposals that we are putting forward to a public inquiry.

We are taking a large number of steps to deal with environmental pollution. I am aware of the asthma research and look forward to seeing the results in 1994. The hon. Gentleman should not neglect the fact that allowing traffic to move freely also contributes to removing pollution from the atmosphere. If traffic is congested and stays still, it is a major contributor to atmospheric pollution; we are taking many steps to put that right.

Mr. Luff: When my right hon. Friend considers how much money to spend on investment in roads, will he consider the advantageous effect of a significant investment in local rolling stock on the railways in my constituency? Does he acknowledge that investment in the new Cotswold turbos between Worcester and London has led to a 26 per cent. improvement in revenue in the past two months on my local rail service, and will he bear that strongly in mind when considering the relative merits of road and rail investment?

Mr. MacGregor: My hon. Friend is quite right and I am aware of all of that. However, when considering the problems on the M25 that we discussed earlier, one must realise that whatever one does on the railway system will not substantially reduce the increased amount of traffic likely to flow on that road.

My hon. Friend mentions an important point, which enables me to emphasise yet again, particularly to those who argue that the Department of Transport is mainly concerned about roads, that 56 per cent. of the Department's spending is on roads, compared with 44 per cent. on public transport. Given that nine tenths of traffic goes by road, that shows that, if anything, we in the Department of Transport are skewing—relatively speaking—public expenditure favourably towards public transport.

Mr. Prescott: Does the Secretary of State accept that his Department's estimates mean that growth in use of the private motor vehicle will need a road to accommodate demand equivalent to a 275-lane motorway from London to Glasgow? Is not his proposal to increase the M25 to 14 lanes the down payment on that crazy policy? Will he conduct a fundamental review of the road programme that will encourage people to transfer to public rather than private transport, as the only way of dealing with congestion and environmental problems? I assure him that we will vigorously oppose his plans for the M25 through the summer and beyond.

Mr. MacGregor: The hon. Gentleman is free to put his points to the public inquiry that I have set up, but I have thoroughly considered the arguments and believe that there will continue to be a need for a substantial road building programme such as we envisage. I notice that the Opposition Front-Bench Members have decided on a wholesale review of the road building programme and the scrapping of some major projects. They fail to appreciate that the road programme is a vital part of our overall transport strategy. I believe that to halt our present plans is to ignore the needs of industry, to ignore the right of every person to choose how to make a journey and to ignore the fact that, as living standards improve, there will inevitably be growth in road traffic. I also remind the hon. Gentleman that, as I said earlier, 44 per cent. of our current spending is on public transport.

Biddulph, Staffordshire (Bypass)

9. **Sir David Knox:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he intends to include the Biddulph bypass in the highways capital programme for Staffordshire.

The Minister for Roads and Traffic (Mr. Robert Key): It is up to Staffordshire county council to decide whether to include the Biddulph bypass scheme in its next bid for highway capital.

Sir David Knox: Is my hon. Friend aware that his Department considers the Biddulph bypass a very useful scheme? Is he aware that there is an urgent necessity for the bypass to reduce congestion, improve traffic safety and facilitate industrial development? As it will be on the list submitted next year, will he approve it?

Mr. Key: I look forward to seeing the details of the scheme. It is important and I would only add to what my hon. Friend has said that I am sure that it would also be of enormous benefit to the people in Biddulph, on that very busy road between Stoke and Congleton, and that the environmental benefits will be substantial. Of course, it has featured in earlier Staffordshire transport policies and programme bids, but it has not so far been sufficiently advanced to be considered for transport supplementary grant. I will consider it very carefully and bear in mind the strong representations that my hon. Friend has made.

Dr. Wright: Is the Minister aware that a route has been proposed for the Birmingham northern relief road—a privately funded toll road which, interestingly, has a form of tolling that the Government rejected in their Green Paper?

Madam Speaker: Order. We are dealing with Staffordshire at the moment. *[Interruption.]*

Dr. Wright: I am sure that the Minister is aware that the Birmingham northern relief road passes through southern Staffordshire. Is he further aware——

Madam Speaker: Order. You have a Speaker who knows the region very well. It is nowhere near that area: I know that.

Bus Deregulation

10. **Mr. Duncan Smith:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress he has made in the sale of bus companies outside London.

Mr. Freeman: Seventeen of the original 53 local authority-owned bus companies outside London have been sold. I am pleased to be able to inform the House that interest in the sale of the remaining municipally-owned bus companies remains high.

Mr. Duncan Smith: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the sale of bus companies is good for employees—[HON. MEMBERS: "No!"] It is good for employees because it gives them the possibility to share in the ownership of their company, which is good Conservative policy. Despite all the nonsense spoken by the Opposition, Oxford is a good example of how things can go right when the principles are correctly put in place.

Mr. Freeman: The hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, East (Mr. Prescott) is not inclined to suggest taking those bus companies back into public ownership because he knows very well that privatisation has been a success among management and employees.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMISSION

National Audit Office

29. **Mr. Cohen:** To ask the Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission what plans he has to monitor the performance of *(a)* the Comptroller and Auditor General and *(b)* the National Audit Office.

Sir Peter Hordern (Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission): The Public Accounts Commission considers the National Audit Office corporate plan in July each year. This year, it contained a chapter on NAO efficiency and performance overall, showed key performance measures—both targets and actual—and the impacts of NAO work, and recorded outcome against plan for the preceding financial year. The performance of the Comptroller and Auditor General in delivering more results with relatively fewer resources speaks for itself.

Mr. Cohen: Will the Chairman ensure that there is a full response to the most serious allegations about the Comptroller and Auditor General in the July edition of "Business Age" magazine? Saudi-related arms deals and the under-priced sale of Royal Ordnance are two of the scandals, and while he was at the Ministry of Defence the Comptroller is alleged to have audited himself. Is not the system wrong? Should not there be better performance monitoring of the auditor and his staff? As he can be removed only by the Queen and the two Houses of Parliament, is not the state auditor in thrall to the Head of the Government instead of being independent in law, as is the state auditor in other countries?

Sir Peter Hordern: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for giving me notice of his supplementary question. The Comptroller and Auditor General has been to see me at his own request about these matters. I heard and accepted his explanation on each of the points made in that article. It is the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, not the Government, who nominates the Comptroller and Auditor General. Secondly, the points made in that article can be and, I believe, in some cases have been investigated by the Public Accounts Committee, and could be again. Both the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and I have every confidence in the Comptroller and Auditor General, who is a devoted servant of the House.

30. **Mr. Wicks:** To ask the Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission what plans the Commission has to increase National Audit Office expenditure on cost-benefit analysis.

31. **Mr. Simon Hughes:** To ask the Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission what proportion of National Audit Office studies are cost efficiency reviews; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Peter Hordern: In 1992-93, the National Audit Office delivered 51 major value-for-money studies, which comprised about half the work of the NAO, and plans to continue deliveries at the same level in the future. The selection of topics for investigation is based on a systematic review of expenditure and value for money. The NAO's investigations employ cost-benefit analysis techniques where appropriate.

Mr. Wicks: Does the Chairman of the Commission agree that while we know much about the cost of public

programmes, we still know too little about their impact and benefits? Does he further agree that we need to know more about the impact of public investment on areas such as family policy and crime prevention?

Sir Peter Hordern: The hon. Gentleman has a good point. The National Audit Office is doing far more value-for-money studies than it has done in the past, using the techniques that I have mentioned. I accept that there is always room for improvement. If the hon. Gentleman has specific points in mind, I hope that he will get in touch with me and I will see that they are directed to the attention of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Mr. Simon Hughes: As the right hon. Gentleman rightly says, past work has been very helpful in identifying cost benefits in each of the reports produced. Has there yet been a benefit analysis of the delivery of public services across Greater London, comparing the time when there was a strategic authority with today, when that authority has been replaced by 33 local authorities? If no such analysis has been carried out, can the information be included in one of the forthcoming reports?

Sir Peter Hordern: I will consider it. If the hon. Gentleman will write to me, I will take the matter up. If he is referring to the London residuary body, which is a matter of interest to him, the PAC has the right to call for papers and persons. If the hon. Gentleman wishes to follow that up, it could be a matter for the PAC to recommend that the C and AG investigate.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Health and Safety Training

34. **Mr. Spellar:** To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, as representing the House of Commons Commission, what representations he has received about health and safety training for staff of the House.

Mr. A. J. Beith (on behalf of the House of Commons Commission): None.

Mr. Spellar: That seems a fairly unsatisfactory reply. Would it not be more satisfactory if the health and safety matters of the House were brought under the auspices of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974? That would mean that such matters were properly covered and controlled by statute.

Mr. Beith: Neither I nor the other Commissioners are responsible for the fact that representations are not made to us. The hon. Gentleman's question went wider than his original one. He raises a fair point about how effect can best be given to the general desire for health and safety requirements to be applied in the House. It is the Commission's policy that they should be applied. Discussions are taking place about the means to be used to give legislative effect to that policy.

POLIS

35. **Mr. Fabricant:** To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, as representing the House of Commons Commission, what measures are being taken to facilitate the provision of POLIS within Members' offices via the parliamentary data and video network; and when the network will be extended to the Norman Shaw buildings.

Mr. Beith: The parliamentary data and video network is at present available to Members on the lower floors of Millbank, and a small number of Members outside via a telephone link. The network has been authorised only as a pilot phase and is currently being reviewed by the Information Committee, which hopes to report later this year. Any plans to extend the network, including POLIS, to the Norman Shaw buildings, or elsewhere, will need to await approval of the service by the House following the report from the Information Committee and the provision of the necessary funds in the estimates.

Mr. Fabricant: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his long and helpful answer. Does not he accept that the provision of POLIS to all Members of the House will help reduce the burden on our excellent Library and librarians? It will also help all Members of the House assist still further their constituents, including my own in Lichfield, Rugeley and Stone.

Mr. Beith: The hon. Gentleman makes his case clearly. It was the kind of interest that he has shown which led to the approval by the Commission of the pilot project. It is on the basis of that pilot project that the House will be able to decide whether to extend the scheme and continue it.

Mr. Olner: These new developments will obviously be welcomed in the Norman Shaw buildings, but there is a great deal to be done in this particular building. Many of the offices here only have an annunciator. It would be better to ensure that the facilities were more widely available to people in the House and to bring everyone up to a level standard.

Mr. Beith: That is the approach which the Commission has taken. It was convenient to carry out the current pilot study in Millbank because new work was being done there. Any extension of it would have to be considered by the House as a whole, but I imagine the desire to see that the facility—if extended—is available to Members generally would weigh heavily with the Commission and the House.

Mr. Colin Shepherd: Does the right hon. Gentleman agree that an unlimited expansion of the use of POLIS would lead to a substantial increase in the demand on telephone services, bearing in mind that the databank is held remote from the House? Is not the financial implication of the expansion of POLIS part of the Information Committee's remit in assessing its acceptability to the House?

Mr. Beith: Yes, it is. It will also be one of the Commission's concerns when any proposal is considered by the House. The final decision, however, will rest with the House.

Health and Safety

36. **Mr. Austin-Walker:** To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, as representing the House of Commons Commission, what breaches in the Palace of Westminster of the provisions of the health and safety Acts have been reported to the Commission.

Mr. Beith: The Commission has received no such reports.

Mr. Austin-Walker: Is a specific Officer of the House responsible for health and safety? How can hon. Members who employ staff ensure that they are complying with the health and safety Acts when they have no control over the environment overall? Surely now is the time to end Crown immunity, so that the House is open to inspection by local environmental health officers.

Mr. Beith: Each Department has its safety representatives, who carry out the necessary work in that Department. The removal of Crown immunity from these buildings was mentioned in an earlier question, and I expressed my willingness for that to happen, but it is a complicated legal process. Discussions are taking place; in the meantime, the Commission considers it important for the House to retain its policy of seeking to comply with the requirements placed on it by the legislation.

Office Accommodation

37. **Mr. Wicks:** To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, as representing the House of Commons Commission, what plans the Commission has to increase office accommodation for hon. Members.

Mr. Beith: Planning for the construction of the phase 2 building is progressing. The building will accommodate some 500 people, and will include sets of offices for 210 Members of Parliament and their staff. As an interim measure, the House has acquired the lease of a building at 7 Millbank. Once conversion work has been completed, that building will provide offices for some 115 Members and their staff. The upper floors of the building are expected to become available in stages between October 1993 and February 1994.

Mr. Wicks: Does the Chairman of the Commission think that, in future, one body rather than two should allocate offices to both Members and their assistants or secretaries? My constituents are surprised when I tell them that my office is in Norman Shaw North, and that my assistant works in the Millbank building about 12 minutes away. Sometimes they say that, if we cannot run the House of Commons, it is not surprising that no one seems to be running the country.

Mr. Beith: I am not the Chairman of the Commission, Madam Speaker; you are.

The arrangements whereby parties use the accommodation allocated to them are normally settled within the parties. If those arrangements were put on a new footing, the parties would no doubt have to make representations to the Commission.

Refreshment Department Account

38. **Mr. Steen:** To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, as representing the House of Commons Commission, what was the surplus on the Refreshment Department account in the last financial year; and what amount was carried forward from previous years.

Mr. Beith: The Refreshment Department's income and expenditure account for the year ending 1 April 1993 showed an operating surplus of some £320,000, and a total surplus—including interest—of £445,000. The accumulated surplus brought forward from previous years is £2·7 million. By decision of the Commission, that is being set aside as a reserve to provide funds for the capital improvement programme required by the Department.

Mr. Steen: I understand that the House is to authorise the spending of about £19 million on updating the kitchens. Does the right hon. Gentleman agree that money need not be spent on updating kitchens for good food to be provided? Would it not be a good idea to spend some of that surplus of nearly £3 million on improving the food in both the Members' Tea Room and the cafeterias? Could we not have some good west country dishes and some nice English wine? There are some wonderful west country recipes, and my hon. Friend the Member for Teignbridge (Mr. Nicholls) has some splendid ideas for the kind of food that could be sold here.

Mr. Beith: The hon. Gentleman is a member of the Catering Committee, and he doubtless provides such advice regularly. The Committee and the catering manager have never been short of advice from Members about delicacies from various parts of the country that could be included in our menus.

Expenditure is necessary, however, both to comply with environmental health requirements and to ensure proper working conditions for staff. It is amazing that such good food has been provided from some outlets in the House where kitchen conditions are frankly not good enough.

Mrs. Dunwoody: Will the right hon. Gentleman assure us that some of the money will be spent on improving conditions for staff? At present, the conditions are only slightly better than those operating in Victorian times. Surely, if we are to make laws about employment, the House of Commons is the first place where we should improve facilities for staff.

Mr. Beith: Most certainly. That has been the policy of the Commission, and the Commission and the Catering Committee both want to see that policy continue.

Mr. Cormack: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell me how much tripe has been served during the past year?

Mr. Beith: Not without notice.

Sub Judice Rule

42. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Lord President of the Council what plans he has to bring forward proposals to amend the sub judice rule as it applies to discussions in the House.

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): I have no such plans. That is primarily a matter for you, Madam Speaker. Any hon. Members who believe that the application of the sub judice rule in the House should be changed should refer their concerns to the Procedure Committee.

Sir Teddy Taylor: My right hon. Friend's response may have been overtaken by the sad events of last week. Will the Lord President, in the new spirit of comradely friendship, offer his best wishes for good health and fortitude to Lord Rees-Mogg in the important battle for British freedom which he has now embarked upon?

Mr. Newton: I hope that I have always approached my hon. Friend—a fellow Essex Member of Parliament—in a spirit of comradeship and friendship, despite our occasional disagreements. I fear, however, that he may be stretching the current spirit of goodwill just a little with the latter part of his question. I am sure that my hon. Friend will have noted your ruling on Thursday, Madam Speaker, that you would not be applying the sub judice rule on that occasion.

Mr. Cryer: The case that has been submitted by Lord Rees-Mogg is concerned with the application by Ministers of the proceeedings, and is not a criticism or attack on the House which would have been a quite different matter. Is not it important that Ministers are subject to a judicial review of their actions if they ignore legislation that has been passed by the House and try to corrupt that legislation to support the Maastricht treaty?

Mr. Newton: The hon. Gentleman, in a way that is perhaps not unfamiliar, appears to be enticing me into something that may be in breach of the sub judice rules that are subject to your guidance, Madam Speaker. I have no intention of commenting further on the case, beyond saying that it appears to involve potentially complicated ingredients.

Northern Ireland Select Committee

43. **Mr. Barnes:** To ask the Lord President of the Council if he is now in a position to announce the formation of a Northern Ireland Select Committee; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Newton: As the Government have made clear on a number of occasions, both in response to the Procedure Committee's 1990 report on the workings of the Select Committee system and on subsequent occasions, that is a matter which we continue to keep under review.

Mr. Barnes: I do not know whether that answer will satisfy the Ulster Unionists who, are understood to have entered into a squalid deal with the Government in connection with the advance of their position within the House. There is a serious case for the establishment of a Northern Ireland Select Committee, in that matters relating to Northern Ireland should be put under scrutiny through the House, and the present procedures do not provide for that.

Should not the deal that was entered into have sought to persuade the Ulster Unionists to join the British-Irish parliamentary body, where they could have become involved in that body's scrutiny avenues and help in the establishment of a Northern Ireland Committee which the SDLP could be asked to join as well?

Mr. Newton: The Government have always recognised that there is a case for the established of such a Committee. That is precisely why the Procedure Committee made observations on the matter, while acknowledging a number of difficulties, in its report of 1990. That is also why the Government have responded on a number of occasions in the way which I have repeated today.

The hon. Gentleman makes further allegations of what he chooses to describe as a squalid deal. I can do no better than repeat what my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said in response to a question from the hon. Member for Newry and Armagh (Mr. Mallon) on 23 July. He said:

"Nothing was asked for, nothing was offered and nothing was given."—[*Official Report*, 23 July 1993; Vol. 229, c. 631.]

Those sentiments have been repeated by Ulster Unionist Members.

Mr. Bellingham: The hon. Member for Derbyshire, North-east (Mr. Barnes) may be aware that the Ulster Unionists have places on the British-Irish governing body, but they choose not to use those seats for the moment.

Does my right hon. Friend agree that a Select Committee for Northern Ireland is long overdue? Does he also agree that the arguments that that would somehow encourage integration are rotten arguments which should be ignored?

Mr. Newton: I note what my hon. Friend says. Rather than hearing talk of what the hon. Member for Derbyshire, North-East (Mr. Barnes) described as a "squalid deal", the House might wish to be reminded of the remarks of the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, North (Mr. McNamara) about how he saw the future government of Ireland. One need look little further for reasons why the Ulster Unionists might wish to support the Government.

Recesses

44. **Mr. Tony Banks:** To ask the Lord President of the Council what proposals he has to vary the timing and length of parliamentary recesses.

Mr. Newton: I have no such proposals, although I use my best endeavours to give as much notice as possible of recess dates. Those endeavours have not been so successful this year as I should have liked.

Mr. Banks: Does the Lord President accept that, apart from the occasional Member of Parliament who has a Caribbean island, for most of us the summer recess will not be a holiday so much as a time to catch up on work that we had to put to one side during Maastricht? While I accept that the Government want to creep away and lick their post-Maastricht wounds, clearly we want to carry on the job of bringing them down, which we almost achieved last week. Does the Lord President accept that it would be better to even out our sittings over the year? While he is answering, will he tell us when we shall deal with the Jopling report?

Mr. Newton: The last part of the hon. Gentleman's question anticipates a question which the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) has tabled. The second part of his question was political rhetoric rather than a question. I disagree with what he said. In the spirit of comradeship and friendship in which we started these exchanges, I agree with the hon. Gentleman about the first part of his question, which was about whether Members of Parliament would generally spend a large part of the recess doing work of other kinds.

Assisted Areas

3.30 pm

The Minister for Industry (Mr. Tim Sainsbury): With permission, Madam Speaker, I should like to make a statement on the Government's review of the assisted areas map. I had hoped to make the statement to the House last Friday, following approval from the European Commission on Thursday. But this was not possible because of other business. However, I signed the order giving effect to the new map on Friday and gave a written answer on the map. The order will come into effect on 1 August.

My right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Scotland and for Wales and I wrote to all the right hon. and hon. Members to inform them of the effects of the new map on their constituencies. We also made available in the Vote Office a short document setting out how we carried out the review and the outcome.

The present assisted areas map dates from 1984. It is out of date. In June last year we issued a consultation document announcing a review, setting out the procedures and inviting representations during a period of public consultation. A list of submissions received was placed in the Library on Friday.

The map defines those parts of Great Britain which are eligible for schemes for regional assistance. Those schemes are designed to promote new investment and jobs—inward investment from both United Kingdom and foreign firms, as well as investment from existing firms in the area.

The new map represents the Government's assessment of those areas which now face structural unemployment problems. There are some major differences from the previous map. This is not surprising. Unemployment patterns have changed significantly. For example, unemployment in south-east England increased from 8·4 per cent. of the work force in 1984 to 10·1 per cent. for the year to June 1993. Several areas have seen their relative employment position improve markedly. Closures or manpower reductions at defence establishments or major defence suppliers have hit localities particularly hard. In other areas, known major job losses in prospect will have serious effects on the local economy.

We have addressed those issues in a comprehensive review. Measures of unemployment have been the major factor in our consideration. We have examined current rates, the record of unemployment in an area over the past five years and the pattern of long-term unemployment, as well as trying to gauge future need for new jobs in each travel-to-work area. We have also weighed carefully the arguments put to us in the consultation process.

Clearly all those factors could not be accommodated in an automatic statistical process. We have had to make judgments about the extent of the structural problems of an area, the strength of local economies and the present status of an area and its neighbouring areas. The methodology used in the review is set out in the background document. Copies of this are available to the public on request.

The new map covers 33·8 per cent. of the working population of Great Britain. That is a little less than the 35 per cent. covered by the previous map, but the coverage of development areas at 16 per cent. is slightly higher. The map sets out those areas that we consider are in most need of assistance in Great Britain today and it includes many areas previously assisted.

The new map takes account of the level of unemployment in London. The inclusion of parts of Lea Valley, Park Royal and the London end of the east Thames corridor is a demonstration that the Government are fully aware of the serious unemployment problems in some London boroughs. In designating those parts of the capital, we sought to assist new investment in areas where there are substantial available sites and where infrastructure connections are good. Assisted area status will increase employment opportunities throughout the capital, but particularly in boroughs with the highest current unemployment rates.

Parts of the eastern and wider south-east regions are designated in the map. We have, for example, recognised the extremely high unemployment rates and structural problems currently faced by east Kent.

We recognised also the problems of some coastal towns —Great Yarmouth, Skegness and Hastings appear in the new map. Some areas previously heavily dependent on defence work face serious difficulties of adjustment. For that reason, Barrow and Weymouth, for example, come into the map while Fishguard and Haverfordwest are upgraded.

Substantial coverage in the east midlands and in Yorkshire will help coal closure areas with the task of regeneration. High unemployment in the west midlands is recognised by upgrading Wolverhampton and part of Birmingham.

The shape and overall coverage of the map for Scotland remains broadly unaltered. However, some adjustments to the status of individual travel-to-work-areas have been made to reflect changes in their relative circumstances.

While coverage in Wales has been reduced to reflect the relative improvement in unemployment levels in many parts of Wales, we took particular account of other policies and programmes of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State—including the programme for the valleys and the west of Wales task force—as well as the position of north-east Wales in relation to other travel-to-work areas.

I recognise that there will be disappointment in areas failing to gain designation or losing assisted area status. We had difficult choices to make, but it is right to ensure that assistance is concentrated on those areas with the most serious problems.

As I said, the new map will come into operation on 1 August, so businesses that have been engaged in pre-application discussions with Departments under the various regional schemes will have an opportunity to complete formal application procedures before the changes take effect. Offers that have already been made will of course be honoured.

I emphasise that there is no direct connection between the assisted areas map and the structural funds maps. Those regions that are designated as assisted areas in the United Kingdom have no automatic right to objective 2 or 5(b) status under structural funds. Now that the structural funds regulations have been adopted, the Government will set in hand the procedures for determining which areas they should propose to the Commission for designation under objectives 2 and 5(b). As the House knows, objective 1 status has already been obtained by the Government for Merseyside and the highlands and islands.

In conclusion, many complex issues have been considered in this review. Our decisions were arrived at in a rational and structured way. The new map responds to the current position in the country and gives help where it is needed to enable areas to take full advantage of the recovery from recession. Assisted area status will give all designated areas the opportunity to attract new investment and to provide new jobs.

Mr. Robin Cook (Livingston): I understand why the Minister did not find it attractive to make a statement on Friday about changes due to be introduced on 1 August. After all, it was not at all clear last Friday that the Government would last until 1 August. Now that it looks as though the Government may hold together until Sunday, I am glad that the Minister shared our view that the House should have an opportunity to discuss a statement which has an immediate and direct effect on local economies and which—as was demonstrated a moment ago—is of immediate concern to many constituencies.

Does the Minister accept that I understand why Ministers have had to extend regional aid to towns in the south, where their policies have turned past prosperity into mass unemployment? Will he confirm that Clacton, Dorchester, Dover, Harwich, Hastings and Torbay have all seen their unemployment rate double in the three years since the present Prime Minister took office in No. 10? Does he admit that the new map which he has just unveiled is a confession of how fast the economies of these towns have declined over three years during which they have been ruled by a Conservative Government in Whitehall and represented by a Conservative Member of Parliament in Westminster?

May I ask the Minister, however, to square the pride that he has just expressed at extending the areas eligible for regional aid with his Department's spending plans, which show a cut in the budget to pay for it? Will he confirm that spending on regional aid this year is now at a mere fifth of the same budget in 1979, although unemployment has almost trebled? Can he confirm that over the past four years, even in a time of recession, this Government have halved the budget for regional aid? Can he explain to the House why he is spending less on regional aid when he has just admitted that there are more towns which need that help? Will the Minister also confirm that his statement does not contain a single extra penny to redress those cuts?

Is it that cut in the budget which explains why the Minister is paying for the extensions to his map by taking away help from towns that still need support? May I challenge him to name a single area that he has downgraded where unemployment has gone down since the present Prime Minister took office? If he cannot name such an area, will he admit that unemployment has gone up in every single one of the 20 areas that he has relegated? Can he explain why his review has left those communities with less help for more unemployment?

The Minister cannot have failed to notice the criticism that, of all the areas downgraded, only Corby is to the south-east of the midlands. Can he confirm that 17 of the 20 areas to lose out are in England, north of the midlands, or in Scotland, or in Wales? These are the parts of Britain furthest away from the big markets of Europe. They need extra support if they are to succeed against the extra costs of getting their goods to the centre of Europe. How can the Minister justify asking the parts of Britain with the highest costs of getting to Europe to shoulder the biggest cuts in regional aid? Given that Britain already has one of the most centralised economies in Europe, is it not an odd version of regional policy that gives less help to the regions furthest from the centre?

Britain already spends less on regional aid and less on support for manufacturing than the other member states of the European Community. Wealthier countries, such as Germany and Belgium, spend three times as much per head as we do on state aids to industry. Even poorer countries, such as Greece and Ireland, spend more than we do. What Britain needs is not just a Government who reshuffle the map to show which towns have slipped down the league table. What we need is a Government who will lift Britain from the bottom of the league and stop pretending that we can solve a growing problem on a shrinking budget.

Mr. Sainsbury: The hon. Gentleman referred to the size of the budget. I remind him that we are concerned here with a budget that is targeted at where help is really needed. As he will recall, in 1979 we had regional development grants, which was a very indiscriminate way of helping the regions. The change to regional selective assistance has produced benefits. As the recent scrutiny showed, we have a budget that produces really good value for the money spent.

In view of the enthusiasm of the hon. Gentleman's party for supporting measures from Brussels that would seriously damage the competitiveness of our industry, I am somewhat surprised by his reference to taking away help. As he knows, the size of the map is determined by, or is subject to, the approval of the Commission. I should have hoped that the hon. Gentleman would welcome that, because the Commission has to approve the size of the maps for all member states, which helps to keep down state aid and which creates a level playing field for our industry. I had hoped that the hon. Gentleman would welcome that and recognise that adding an area which is more in need of help necessarily means that an area that is less in need of help comes off the list.

We all know that the hon. Member for Livingston (Mr. Cook) is a well-acknowledged expert at seeing the gloomy side of every silver lining; clouds are always in his sight. In those circumstances, I would have been surprised if he had drawn attention to the fact that, since the last map was drawn, unemployment has dropped—and in some cases has dropped very significantly—in the north, the north-west, Yorkshire and Humberside and the east and west midlands. Does not the hon. Gentleman find that a matter for welcome and an explanation of why there have been changes? Or is it perhaps that the Labour party does not really want to represent the whole country, but wants to be selective? It is the hon. Gentleman's credentials on political impartiality that need to be examined.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. It must be pretty obvious to the House that I cannot call all the hon. Members who are standing—*[Interruption.]* Because I must safeguard the interests of private Members and the other business on the Order Paper. Therefore, I ask that questions be brisk and that answers be equally brisk.

Mr. Michael Alison (Selby): May I express my gratitude to my right hon. Friend on behalf of my constituents and

[Mr. Michael Alison]

myself in that some parts of Selby district lying within the Castleford and Pontefract travel-to-work area, notably the town of Sherburn, have been included for the first time for intermediate area status? We are deeply obliged to my right hon. Friend for that. He may not appreciate that Sherburn does not have as severe an unemployment problem as that in parts of the town of Selby which lie in an adjoining travel-to-work area. Would my right hon. Friend be kind enough to agree to receive a small deputation as soon as possible to argue the case for objective 2 status for parts of the town of Selby?

Mr. Sainsbury: I thank my right hon. Friend very much for his kind remarks. Representations made by him, and by hon. Members from all parts of the House, were very helpful in assisting us to arrive at the right conclusion in respect of the map.

With regard to objectives 2 and 5(b) status under the structural funds, the regulations have only just been agreed. Indeed, they were agreed at 5.30 am last Tuesday in Brussels. We will send out a document very shortly about the consultation process that we will enter into. I will, of course, be very willing to receive representations.

Mr. Malcolm Bruce (Gordon): As I represent the constituency with the lowest unemployment in the United Kingdom, I have no axe to grind in this particular context and I recognise the Government's case for the review. My only request is that the travel-to-work areas should be reviewed soon and sensibly so that we do not have the nonsense of areas like the summit of Ben Macdui being within the Aberdeen travel-to-work area.

There will, of course, be disappointment where there has been loss and appreciation among my hon. Friends where areas have retained or enhanced their status. I know that my right hon. Friend the Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed (Mr. Beith) and my hon. Friends the Members for North Devon (Mr. Harvey) and for Rochdale (Ms Lynne) would like to be associated with that. Nevertheless, will the Minister accept that as long as we have these periodic reviews, they are, in effect, a testament to failure? We need to ensure that we have a programme to eliminate unemployment in this country and to ensure that we can all benefit from prosperity and low unemployment.

Mr. Sainsbury: The hon. Gentleman displayed the usual Liberal Democrat party skill in respect of sitting on the fence about sitting on the fence. He was not quite clear whether, on behalf of some of his Friends, he wanted to welcome the announcement or to criticise it.

With regard to the travel-to-work areas, we do not yet have, and will not have for 18 months or so, the sensitive data that will enable us to calculate new travel-to-work areas. I have said that the map will last for at least three years. Obviously, when we have that sensitive data and we can see the shape of the new travel-to-work areas, we will take account of the implications of that, including the implications in respect of the summit of any mountain, whether in England or anywhere else.

Dame Peggy Fenner (Medway): Although I recognise why my right hon. Friend has included east Kent, its inclusion will make it particularly difficult for the Medway towns which fit the criteria of relying heavily on defence work. My constituency has lost the naval base and its largest employer, an aircraft and avionics company. Will my right hon. Friend co-ordinate activities with our right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment and reconsider a small extension of enterprise zones so that we may compete with east Kent for a rightful share of industry?

Mr. Sainsbury: I can understand my hon. Friend's reaction. Considerable sums of Government money have gone into the Medway towns, particularly in respect of the much applauded Chatham dockyard redeployment. On the defence point, there might be representations from my hon. Friend's area in respect of the Konver funds which are available.

Mr. Neil Kinnock (Islwyn): Is it not already obvious that the statement is mainly a product of pork barrel politics? Does the Minister accept that the relative increase in unemployment in south-east England is far more cyclical than structural and that there is a case for new assistance? As that case exists, such new assistance should come from additional funds and not from the reallocation of funds. As south-east England is obviously nearest to the European mainland and the channel tunnel link, and as it benefits most from the reduction in interest rates, is it not obvious that the circumstances do not warrant the reduction in status for assistance as in other parts of the United Kingdom? Is it not obvious on any assessment that the statement comes about not as a product of the examination of economic realities but as a result of political expediency?

Mr. Sainsbury: The right hon. Gentleman does not do himself justice. He seems to support his hon. Friend the Member for Livingston (Mr. Cook) in suggesting that there should be unlimited state aids available not only in this country but elsewhere. I should have hoped that, on this matter at least, he would support the Brussels Commission's efforts to restrain the availability of state aids and therefore help our industry.

The right hon. Gentleman referred to pork barrel politics. With respect, that term should be used with care in respect of Wales. After all, the unemployment rate in Wales is the same as that for the whole of Great Britain, yet more than 70 per cent. of the working population in Wales are covered by assisted areas. There are good reasons for that. They recognise the points that I made in the statement, but I scarcely think that they are grounds for complaint.

Mr. Nick Hawkins (Blackpool, South): My right hon. Friend will be aware that there is great disappointment in my constituency and in that of my hon. Friend the Member for Blackpool, North (Mr. Elletson) at the fact that we have not acquired assisted area status. Will my right hon. Friend confirm that he will be happy to meet a delegation from Blackpool, led by my hon. Friend and myself, to discuss objectives 2 and 5(b) status? Does he accept that we have very severe structural unemployment, including three in 10 male unemployment in the centre of Blackpool? When my right hon. Friend reconsiders the way in which travel-to-work areas are calculated, will he bear in mind that Blackpool's case for assisted area status has once again been damaged by the fact that it is surrounded by Fylde and Wyre, which have very low unemployment, and that Blackpool has problems of its own?

Does my right hon. Friend agree that the position regarding the United Kingdom would be made very much better if the former Opposition Member who became a European Commissioner, Mr. Millan, did not continue to block tourist-related areas from objective 2 status? That does enormous harm, as would the Opposition's desire to impose the social chapter.

Mr. Sainsbury: I appreciate the concern and disappointment in my hon. Friend's constituency and, I am afraid, in other areas throughout the country. My hon. Friends the Members for Blackpool, South (Mr. Hawkins) and for Blackpool, North (Mr. Elletson) made expert representations on behalf of their constituencies. Of course I shall be happy to meet a delegation; and I note my hon. Friend's other remarks about the important subject of tourism.

Mr. Harry Cohen (Leyton): Does not the Minister's statement reek of political corruption? Why did Enfield get assisted area status ahead of Leyton, for example? On any criterion of need such as unemployment, my constituency is far ahead. Could it be that the right hon. Gentleman's boss at the Department of Trade and Industry is an Enfield Member, as is the Chief Secretary to the Treasury? Is this not a contemptibly corrupt statement?

Mr. Sainsbury: May I remind the hon. Gentleman that the President of the Board of Trade is the Member of Parliament for Henley, not Enfield?

Mr. Cohen: The hon. Member for Enfield, North (Mr. Eggar), then.

Mr. Sainsbury: The important point that the hon. Gentleman should recognise is that if he were as familiar with the Lea valley as I am, he would know that it has major sites of existing industry and sites available for new industry. I suspect that many people in his constituency work in that area and others who, sadly, have not got jobs at present could easily travel to that area if new jobs were created there. That is why it makes sense to us to target help where it will produce the greatest benefit.

Mr. William Powell (Corby): As the Member for a constituency that is apparently a victim of pork barrel politics, may I congratulate my right hon. Friend on his statement and welcome it on behalf of the former assisted area of Corby? My right hon. Friend should be aware that assisted area status was one, but only one, of the factors that enabled such a remarkable transformation in the industrial and commercial scene of Corby to take place. We are grateful for what the Government have done in the past decade, and we recognise that the time had come for other areas to receive some of the benefits given to Corby.

I should like to question my right hon. Friend on one matter. Assisted area status also prised open the opportunity to receive derelict land grant, which was vital to the reconstruction of Corby. Now that assisted area status has been removed from Corby, will my right hon. Friend make representations to the Secretary of State for the Environment to ensure that derelict land grant can continue to flow to Corby, because the job of restoring that land is not yet finished?

Mr. Sainsbury: I much appreciate what my hon. Friend has said in respect of his constituency, on behalf of which he has made energetic representations. He has struck exactly the right note. Corby's economy has been transformed in part as a result of the assistance it received through the assisted area map, but largely because of the efforts made by those in all parts of the Chamber, the private sector, and local government and because of central Government help. To build on that success is surely the way forward for areas such as Corby, because they have reduced unemployment, achieved success and, as a consequence, are no longer eligible for assisted area status.

Mr. Gerald Kaufman (Manchester, Gorton): When the right hon. Gentleman made his statement, he said that the arrangements announced today were made to assist those areas with the most serious problems. Can he then explain why it is that the Sutton Coldfield constituency, which ranks 552nd in terms of the unemployment rate, with 6·4 per cent. unemployed, has been upgraded, while my constituency, 37th in the unemployment table, with 18·2 per cent. unemployment and 25·4 per cent. male unemployment, has got no help at all? Sutton Coldfield is, of course, the constituency of the chairman of the Conservative party.

Given that the Government have taken away housing programme funding, section 11 funding and urban programme funding from my constituency and reduced the benefits to the poor and deprived who live in my constituency, is it surprising that my constituents use the word about the Prime Minister that the Prime Minister uses about members of the Cabinet?

Mr. Sainsbury: I am afraid that the right hon. Gentleman does not serve his interests or those of his constituents with that type of remark. May I remind him that, in 1984, unemployment in Manchester was 13·2 per cent., which put Manchester exactly within the worst third in terms of those in the working population? Unemployment in Manchester is now 10·5 per cent., which means that it is not even within the worst half in terms of those not in the working population.

Mr. Andrew Bowden (Brighton, Kemptown): My right hon. Friend has a deservedly high reputation in this House for integrity. He will share my disappointment at the fact that Brighton and Hove have not been included. Can he see any possibility of helping the Brighton and Hove travel-to-work area, given that we cannot now fairly compete in persuading firms to come to the two towns because others will be able to bribe them to go elsewhere? Will he consult his colleagues on other ways of helping these areas?

Mr. Sainsbury: I am grateful for my hon. Friend's opening remark. I know that Brighton and Hove have no more energetic supporter than my hon. Friend. I also know of the disappointment in the area at not being designated. As I have said, inevitably some areas that were close to inclusion had to be left out because of the limit. I hope that Brighton and Hove will gain additional strength in attracting investment and more jobs from the considerable improvements made to the A23 and the bypass—improvements funded by Government money. They will help to further the attractiveness of the area.

Mr. Alan Milburn (Darlington): Does the Minister realise that stripping Darlington of assisted area status is a devastating blow not just to the town but to a region that has had the highest unemployment rate in every month since the Government came to power? Is he not aware that his policy of cutting regional aid spending at a time of

[Mr. Alan Milburn]

recession is economically illiterate and has forced hundreds of areas to compete for slices of an ever-diminishing regional aid cake? Why should Darlington be sacrificed so that the right hon. Gentleman can gerrymander the new assisted areas map in a vain attempt to prop up crumbling Tory support both across the country and particularly in southern England? Does he not realise that his announcement is a slap in the face for the business community in Darlington, and that the Government will not be forgiven for having written off the town?

Mr. Sainsbury: I think that the hon. Gentleman is another one who would not recognise success if it fell on him. In 1984, Darlington's unemployment rate was 13.3 per cent.; for the year to June 1993, it has been 9.3 per cent., which means that it is two thirds—65·2 per cent. —down the list of the worst areas for unemployment. Yet the hon. Gentleman still claims that special help is needed. Instead, he should recognise the success achieved by the private sector in his constituency.

Mr. Colin Shepherd (Hereford): Does my right hon. Friend acknowledge that there is a good deal of dismay in areas that have not sustained their assisted area status? May I draw his attention in particular to the dismay felt in the Cinderford and Ross-on-Wye travel-to-work area, part of which lies in my patch? A number of those who have been teaming together to create employment opportunities feel that their work is not yet done, and it would be helpful if my right hon. Friend were kind enough to state the predominant reasons for the withdrawal of assisted area status from the area.

When would it be appropriate to take a delegation to see my right hon. Friend to discuss the question of objective 5(b) status, given the stress caused in rural areas, especially in the marches, by changes in the common agricultural policy?

Mr. Sainsbury: I appreciate the disappointment in my hon. Friend's constituency at the loss of intermediate area status. My hon. Friend asked me about the most important factors involved in that. As we made clear in the consultation and background documents, measures of unemployment are the principal factors, but they are not the only ones that we took into account. On that basis, current unemployment in the Cinderford and Ross-on-Wye travel-to-work area is fractionally above the national average, and on the five-year average the area only just gets into the worst 60 per cent., not the worst 33 per cent.

I would be happy to talk to my hon. Friend and a delegation about objective 5(b) or objective 2 status in the near future.

Mr. Stanley Orme (Salford, East): Will the Minister explain why an area like Salford, with all its problems of high unemployment, crime and so on, has been excluded from the map?

Mr. Sainsbury: As the right hon. Gentleman knows, we are retaining support for Trafford Park where, I suspect, many of his constituents already work. If additional employment were created there, it would provide opportunities for his constituents and others in the Manchester and Salford area. As Manchester is one large travel-to-work area, the comments about overall unemployment which I made to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton (Mr. Kaufman) also apply in this case.

Mr. Michael Jopling (Westmorland and Lonsdale): Will my right hon. Friend accept the warmest possible congratulations and thanks from those of us in Cumbria who recently did our best to persuade him to grant assisted area status to parts of Cumbria? The inclusion of Barrow, and an area around it which is in my constituency, among those areas granted intermediate status will be especially welcome, but will he please talk to his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport because one of Barrow's main problems is the road links with the M6? Portions of that road in my constituency require urgent improvement, and that would be one of the quickest ways to help Barrow.

Mr. Sainsbury: I thank my right hon. Friend for his opening remarks. I was very impressed by the representations that he and others made when I visited the area and back in London. I shall, of course, pass his comments to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport. It is fair to say that, if I followed the Opposition's suggestions, new areas of Cumbria and Barrow-in-Furness would not have been included in the map because it would not have been possible.

Mr. Cynog Dafis (Ceredigion and Pembroke, North): The elevation of the Fishguard area to full development status is welcome, but the relegation of Cardigan, which is covered by the west Wales task force, from full development area status to intermediate status makes very little sense. The relegation of Lampeter and Aberaeron from full development status to no status makes even less sense. Bearing in mind the fact that those areas have deep structural problems, including that of depopulation and migration of the young, is it not clear that the Minister was determined that Wales should suffer from the process a net reduction in assistance?

Mr. Sainsbury: I am grateful for what the hon. Gentleman said at the start of his question, but I must point out that in the Lampeter and Aberavon travel-to-work area——

Mr. Rhodri Morgan: Aberaeron.

Mr. Sainsbury: Aberaeron. I am grateful to the hon. Member for Cardiff somewhere for his help.

The point in which I think that the hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North (Mr. Dafis) is interested is that the unemployment rate dropped from 12 per cent. to 7·6 per cent. As I said earlier in relation to the unemployment rate in Wales as a whole, it would surely be unrealistic not to reflect in the map some of the considerable success that has been achieved in stimulating employment in Wales and especially in attracting inward investment, which would, of course, be drastically discouraged if we were to saddle ourselves with the social chapter.

Mr. Roger Gale (Thanet, North): On behalf of my hon. Friend the Member for Thanet, South (Mr. Aitken) and my constituents, may I thank my right hon. Friend for the way in which he has represented the United Kingdom's interests in the negotiations with the European Commissioners? Will he contrast the mealy-mouthed reception from the hon. Member for Livingston (Mr.

Cook) with the generous reception given by the local authority in Corby which, having seen the success of assisted area status there, has offered its expertise to local authorities in east Kent? Is it not a fact that east Kent will now be able to compete with northern France on equal terms for jobs not only for east Kent but for the whole of the United Kingdom?

Mr. Sainsbury: I can do no more than say that my hon. Friend's response is surely the right one on behalf of his constituents and the people of the whole of east Kent. They will be able to take the opportunities provided by the availability of regional selective assessment to build their economy and ensure that they are soon in the same position as Corby. I am grateful for what my hon. Friend said about seeking to represent the whole of Great Britain, and not just a part of it.

Mr. Peter Shore (Bethnal Green and Stepney): Although I welcome the long overdue inclusion of some depressed parts of London in the list of assisted areas, will the Minister explain why and on what grounds he has excluded the notoriously hard-pressed boroughs of east London, especially my own borough of Tower Hamlets, where unemployment has been running at more than 20 per cent. for many years?

Mr. Sainsbury: I am conscious of the unacceptably high levels of unemployment in the right hon. Gentleman's borough. He will be aware of the many urban programmes, including the London Docklands development corporation, that benefit the area. He will also be aware that the areas that we have designated in London have available industrial premises and space for the creation of additional investment and employment. If that happpens, and we hope that it will as a result of the measures that we have taken, those employment opportunies will be available to people in that whole travel-to-work area, which is reasonably near his constituency.

Mr. Paul Channon (Southend, West): Is my right hon. Friend aware that it is believed that Southend was on the original list for assisted area help and that my constituents and I are astonished that it was withdrawn from his proposals at the last minute? Will he say whether that is the case and, if so, why?

Will my right hon. Friend also be prepared to meet Southend council, our hon. Friend the Member for Southend, East (Sir T. Taylor) and myself to discuss ways of getting help under objective 2 status?

Mr. Sainsbury: There were areas around the margin of eligibility for inclusion in the map, which would have been included had the map covered a larger area of the working population of Great Britain. I am sure that my right hon. Friend will agree that it is right that the Commission should exercise constraint on the overall coverage, as it does in other countries. For instance, the German map has now been reduced by 2 per cent.—much more than ours. In those circumstances, there were unfortunately areas that had to be omitted and I recognise that Southend was one.

I should be happy to receive a delegation of my right hon. Friend, his hon. Friend and councillors to discuss the matters that he has raised.

Mr. Ken Purchase (Wolverhampton, North-East): It is welcome that Wolverhampton enjoys its new status, along with Birmingham, and the Minister will be encouraged that, in the past, Wolverhampton has put together a team of excellent workers who have managed to lever European funds from other areas. Against that and the disadvantage to other areas from which Wolverhampton will receive its new support, it must be recognised that in 1979 Wolverhampton was part of the second wealthiest region in the United Kingdom. Now it shares the distinction with Northern Ireland of being one of the poorest. Fourteen years of Conservative rule have brought such a map into being.

I share the opinion of my local chamber of commerce, and more so with the Wolverhampton *Express and Star* —a Tory paper if ever there was one—that it is a tragedy that Wolverhampton, Birmingham and the west midlands have to receive special treatment to overcome the difficulties brought about by the economic policies of the Government. The Minister ought to ask himself what the Government should be doing to put the economy of the country right rather than messing about with maps.

Mr. Sainsbury: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman can persuade some of the doubting Thomases on the Opposition Benches that the map is targeted at the areas that need help and that it responds to changes in economic circumstances. That is the realistic answer to some of the questions that have been asked by his hon. and right hon. Friends.

I hope that we shall see Wolverhampton re-establishing its levels of employment and industrial expertise to those of the days when I remember that Wolverhampton Wanderers played better football than Manchester United.

Dr. Ian Twinn (Edmonton): In contrast to the carping and negative attitude of Opposition Members, may I thank my right hon. Friend for his Department's recognition of the desperate structural needs of industry in the south, especially in the Lea valley? As one of the Enfield Members of Parliament, may I say that our constituents in Enfield, North and Edmonton will notice that the attitude of Opposition Members and the Labour party is of not wanting to create new jobs in those areas, especially in north London.

Mr. Sainsbury: My hon. Friend is right, and I am grateful to him for his appreciation of what has been done. He has put his finger on the essential point that, if we had followed the approach of the hon. Member for Livingston (Mr. Cook) and his friends, there would have been no changes to the map and no relatively worse off areas would have been able to receive help.

Mr. John McFall (Dumbarton): The heart-breaking aspect for my constituents is that the information on which the list was compiled is out of date. Unemployment in 12 of the winners has fallen by 10 to 46 per cent. in the past six months, yet my constituency, which has had a 7 per cent. fall, is a loser. My constituency still qualifies on the three criteria that the Minister stated—present unemployment, long-term unemployment and growth potential. Will the Minister meet a delegation from the local enterprise company and the council to ensure that

[Mr. John McFall]

Dumbarton retains its full development status? Dumbarton's figures are more up to date than those of the Department of Trade and Industry.

Mr. Sainsbury: I appreciate the hon. Gentleman's sorrow at Dumbarton being downgraded from a development area to an intermediate area, but I know that my hon. Friend with responsibilities for industry in Scotland will be happy to see him this week. Unemployment in the Dumbarton travel-to-work area is well above the worst third in the country, which the hon. Gentleman should take into account.

Mr. Peter Griffiths (Portsmouth, North): Does my right hon. Friend accept that there is not only disappointment but concern in Portsmouth that the criteria that he used in drawing up his map failed to identify areas of social and economic deprivation in the city, which are the equivalent of that anywhere else in the country but which the city is unable easily to rectify because of the long-term rundown of the defence commitment, which is part of the Government's policy? In those circumstances, does he feel that he has a responsibility to offer help to Portsmouth?

Mr. Sainsbury: I can understand my hon. Friend's reaction. We carefully considered the implications of the defence review, all the changes in the Navy and their impact on his constituents. I hope that he will recognise that there are swings and roundabouts: some naval activities in the area will increase, whereas others will be run down. I know that he and my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Martin) made energetic representations on behalf of the Portsmouth travel-to-work area, but I had to take into account not only the overall effect of defence changes but the fact that Portsmouth is not in the worst third for current unemployment and is well below the British average for five-year unemployment. Unemployment measures were the main measures that we took into account.

Mr. Elliot Morley (Glanford and Scunthorpe): Is the Minister aware of the disappointment in areas such as Scunthorpe that have lost full development status and have gone to nothing? The way in which unemployment is calculated leads areas such as Scunthorpe to have little confidence because it has been changed and messed around so much over the years. Is he aware that millions of pounds of public money have been spent on site reclamation, the benefit of which is only now being felt? It will be difficult to attract industry to Scunthorpe when it is surrounded by areas that have status.

Will the Minister meet a delegation from the councils concerned when he reviews the travel-to-word areas in the second half of 1994 to consider the impact of the changes on an area that is suffering from long-term structural change and does not need a quick fix in terms of political need?

Mr. Sainsbury: It is a little early to start talking about delegations when we have—*[Interruption.]* Wait for it—the information on new travel-to-work areas. Consideration of objective 2 and/or objective 5(b) status is in the immediate future. The new travel-to-work areas will not be considered before 1995 at the earliest.

Is the hon. Gentleman aware that unemployment in his travel-to-work area is only 9·7 per cent.—[HON. MEMBERS: "Only?".]—which, although still too high, is below the national average? Does he believe that Scunthorpe has achieved a great success in restoring employment opportunities after the losses that occurred at the end of the 1970s and early 1980s? Will he welcome the forthcoming opening by Kimberly-Clark as a major new employment opportunity in his area as a result of Government help that the area received?

Mr. David Shaw (Dover): Will my right hon. Friend confirm that he very much had regard to the considerable changes that will take place in Dover and Deal as a result of the channel tunnel, the single European market and the problems of competition from the Nord-Pas de Calais region when he listened to the representations that I made at the seven meetings that I had with him and the President of the Board of Trade on this important issue?

Will my right hon. Friend further confirm that it has been disappointing that the Labour party has not actively supported the south-east of England getting assisted area status, especially Dover and Deal, whose people are very grateful to the Government for recognising the considerable change that is about to take place and for the support that they are now giving the area?

Mr. Sainsbury: I agree with my hon. Friend about the attitude of the Opposition to assisted area status in parts of east Kent and the south-east. If a league table were based on the energy and effectiveness of the representations made on behalf of any area, I think that my hon. Friend would be near the top of it. I am sure that he will recognise that Dover and Deal would not have been included purely on the employment factors, but, taking account of the looming problems to which he referred, we clearly had a situation that deserved support.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): Is not it true that the statement and delaying of the order have been held back so that the rejigging and gerrymandering of assisted area status can be used to bribe anti-Maastricht Tory Members of Parliament? There is no reason why the order could not have been laid several weeks ago and come before the House for debate in the usual way.

The people of Bradford will feel outraged that the Minister is removing assisted area status from Bradford when they have been denied section 11 grant and, as with many other areas, have been removed from urban aid grant, and when there are 552 vacancies with 25,000 people on the dole as a result of the Government's policies.

Does the Minister not realise that Bradford depends on manufacturing more than the national average, particularly on textiles and engineering, and both those industries are facing severe difficulty? It is a disgrace, and the Minister should know it.

Mr. Sainsbury: It is not possible for us to declare the result of our review before Friday at the earliest, because the Commission—the European Commission; the hon. Gentleman will have heard of it—has not approved our map. The map is subject to its approval because the aid given under regional selective assistance is state aid, so that his first allegation is nonsense.

It is perhaps not surprising that we should hear nonsense from the hon. Gentleman. He gave a splendid impersonation to Bradford of outrage. May I say to "Outraged of Bradford" that, in 1984, unemployment in Bradford was at 13·5 per cent., which put it in the worst

third of unemployment areas of the country. It is now 10·6 per cent. and Bradford is only just inside the worst half. That is one of the factors that we took into account in deciding where the aid should best be targeted.

Mr. David Evennett (Erith and Crayford): I congratulate my right hon. Friend on his statement. In particular, I warmly welcome the inclusion in his list of the London end of the east Thames corridor. My constituents in the wards of Belvedere, Erith, North End and Thamesmead East will be delighted, because they have had structural unemployment in those areas for so long.

Does my right hon. Friend agree that the east Thames corridor has tremendous potential, and his announcement this afternoon will help to realise it?

Mr. Sainsbury: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for what he has said, and entirely agree about the potential of the east Thames corridor. I hope that, with the help of the measures that I have mentioned in the statement, that potential will be realised in the near future to the benefit of his constituents.

Mrs. Margaret Ewing (Moray): In the context of the structural funds, will the Minister accept that there was a warm welcome given to the recognition of the long, hard-fought local campaign to include the whole of the enterprise area in Highlands and Islands for objective 1 status?

Is the right hon. Gentleman yet in a position to announce the exact figure that will be allocated, given the unhelpful speculation following on from the attitude of the Irish representatives at the Commission? Can he give us an exact timetable for the procedures that are to be observed in negotiations for 5(b) status, which is important, particularly to the fishing communities of the north-east of Scotland?

Mr. Sainsbury: First, I express my thanks for the hon. Lady's remarks about what she described as a long and hard-fought campaign. From my personal experience, I can say that it was indeed very long. It was about the hardest-fought campaign that I have experienced, among many, in respect of the European Community.

With regard to the sums of money involved, I hope that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will be making an announcement in the near future.

Sir Roger Moate (Faversham): I congratulate my right hon. Friend on the courageous way in which he tackled what is self-evidently a difficult task and thank him for his courtesy and consideration in doing it, particularly in recognising that parts of the south-east have persistent and structural unemployment problems. Unemployment in my constituency is 14·2 per cent.—something that is unknown to the Labour party, or perhaps it does not even care.

Will my right hon. Friend say what the likely duration of the map will be? The previous map survived for nine years. In his statement, he says that it is expected to last at least three years, but three years is too short a planning period for many industrial investments. Can he reassure us that that is seen as the minimum and is likely to be much longer?

Mr. Sainsbury: I am grateful for what my hon. Friend has said, and I was glad to have the opportunity to see for myself at first hand the situation in his constituency and to receive representations both from him and the public and private sectors in his constituency.

With regard to the duration of the map, we have said at least three years because it will not be much before the end of three years that we have information relating to the new travel-to-work areas. We should not prejudge the duration of the map beyond that because we may find that the new travel-to-work areas show that there should be changes. When we make the next review, I assure my hon. Friend that, as was the case with this review, we shall take into account the statistics and not the political gerrymandering that seems to be preferred by the Labour party.

Mr. D. N. Campbell-Savours (Workington): When the people of Workington, where unemployment is 15·1 per cent. on the narrow base rate, learnt of their downgrading from development area status, they were astonished, astounded and angry. Despite what the right hon. Member for Westmorland and Lonsdale (Mr. Jopling) said, let me make it clear to him that Yorkshire farmers know nothing about west Cumberland. Workington has a new factory of 500,000 sq ft that is empty, which the Leyland bus plant formerly occupied. Can the Minister find us a tenant or a buyer in the conditions of the new intermediate area status, because if we can fill that site, many of Workington's problems will be resolved?

Mr. Sainsbury: I can understand the hon. Gentleman's concerns about the problems in his constituency, and I know that the unemployment level there is far higher than either of us would like to see. However, I hope that he will recognise, with regard to the downgrading from development to intermediate area status, that the constituency's unemployment rate does not put it in the worst 15 per cent. on either current or five-year average unemployment. Those are factors to which we have to have regard. I hope that, as a result of the combined efforts of the private sector, local authorities and central Government, we shall be able to find a tenant and provide more employment opportunities for his constituents.

Mr. Patrick Nicholls (Teignbridge): Does my right hon. Friend agree that, although there must be some disappointment in Teignbridge that it was not possible to extend to a greater extent the intermediate status, nevertheless the settlement for the west country is truly excellent? As the prosperity of Teinbridge depends on the prosperity of the west country, the decision that he has announced today will be greatly welcomed.

Mr. Sainsbury: I am particularly grateful for what my hon. Friend said about the west country, and I also appreciate what he said about his constituency; I understand his disappointment that only a small part of it receives assisted area status. I am more than a little surprised that neither from the Labour nor from the Liberal Benches have we had a word of thanks on behalf of the south-west.

Mr. Paddy Tipping (Sherwood): Coalfield communities face real challenges and real difficulties. In the Nottinghamshire coalfield, 40,000 people worked in the industry in 1980 and, in a few weeks' time, that number will shrink to 4,000. In the space of 13 unlucky years, nine out of every 10 mining jobs will have gone. Given that, will the Minister consider including in the Nottingham travel-to-work area places such as Hucknall, which has

[Mr. Paddy Tipping]

lost its pits, and Calverton, which may lose its colliery, so that they may have a chance of new investment, new jobs and a new future?

Mr. Sainsbury: I can understand the hon. Gentleman's concern about employment opportunities for those who formerly worked in the coal industry. I hope that he will recognise that in what we have done—for example, in respect of Mansfield, which moved straight from non-assisted area status to development area status, or Chesterfield, which moved from non-assisted area to intermediate area status—we are responding, in as an effective and well targeted way as we can, to the needs of the areas to which he referred.

Mr. Rupert Allason (Torbay): I thank my hon. Friend for his statement, and I also thank him on behalf of my constituents and the delegation that I brought to see him. He will be aware that the decision to restore assisted area status to Torbay will be greatly welcomed. Will he assure the House that his Department will do everything possible to help local authorities in those areas that have been granted intermediate status so that they may exploit European and other funds to the maximum?

Mr. Sainsbury: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for what he said and assure him that, as always, my Department will do all that it can to help local authorities to attract inward investment and in any negotiations with the European Community.

Mr. John Morris (Aberavon): In an attempt to assist the Minister to distinguish between Aberaeron and Aberavon, may I point out to him that there will be intense disappointment that Port Talbot and Neath have been reduced to an intermediate area? An announcement was made last Thursday that Freeman's factory would close next March. How will new factors, which have arisen since the map was cobbled together, assist the situation in the future? When can the map be reopened?

Mr. Sainsbury: I hope that the right hon. and learned Member will recognise the considerable progress made in reducing unemployment in his constituency, or the travel-to-work area in which it is sited, from 16·8 to 10 per cent.—from well above to below the national average. I hope that we shall continue to build on that success.

As I have made clear, the present map should last for at least three years. As my hon. Friend the Member for Faversham (Sir R. Moate) said, we need a period of stability for people to benefit from the opportunity to carry out investment projects or to make inward investments which will provide work for a reasonable period.

Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend, East): Does the Minister agree that, far from being omitted, Southend-on-Sea was removed from the list that the Government presented to the Commission on 15 June? Will he bear in mind that, as a result of the Commissioner instructing the Government to reduce the figure from 35 to 34 per cent., there is widespread disappointment and concern in Southend-on-Sea, particularly as my constituency has 14·5 per cent. unemployment? If any area in the south-east deserves help, it is Southend-on-Sea.

Mr. Sainsbury: I understand the concern of my hon. Friend's constituents. Clearly it is a great disappointment when they were near to being included and have had to be left out because of the constraints imposed by the amount of cover that we can give. I assure my hon. Friend that we shall do all that we can to assist with regard to any structural fund help that might be available.

Mr. Robert Sheldon (Ashton-under-Lyne): Is the Minister aware that Tameside is one of the two metropolitan boroughs that were not created from a county borough? That causes enormous problems because of the diversity of centres within the borough, and there are associated costs. Will the Minister let me have an analytical breakdown of why Tameside was not given intermediate area status? He said that judgment was used. Is he aware that a distinction needs to be made between judgment and pork barrel politics, which was not clear in this instance?

Mr. Sainsbury: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that a clear distinction was made. He is an expert on analysing statistics. I cannot promise to give him an answer off the cuff, but I will write to him in response to his request.

Mr. Richard Tracey (Surbiton): My right hon. Friend is to be congratulated on conducting a difficult piece of work. Will he agree that more parts of London should qualify for this sort of assistance? Will he undertake to keep a close eye on changing patterns of work in London so that fresh areas can be assisted in the near future?

Mr. Sainsbury: I can assure my hon. Friend that we shall pay close regard to the situation in London before the review of the map in three years' time or so. Meanwhile, London benefits from the measures to which I referred today, and from a large number of urban programmes. I know that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment will keep those programmes under close review to ensure that they target help to London as effectively as possible.

Mr. Derek Fatchett (Leeds, Central): In justifying the downgrading of certain areas, the Minister said that those areas now have lower unemployment than they had in 1984. Will he confirm that Barnstaple, Ilfracombe, Bideford, Clacton, Dover and Deal, Folkestone, Great Yarmouth, Torbay and Thanet all have lower unemployment than in 1984? On that criterion, why have those places been included while places represented by my right hon. and hon. Friends have been excluded? In reply to my right hon. and hon. Friends, the Minister said that Bradford had only 10·6 per cent. unemployment and that Scunthorpe had only 9·7 per cent. Is it not a clear indication of the Government's limited ambitions and moral bankruptcy that they see such figures as low unemployment?

The simple fact is that the Minister has had to announce a map that reflects the Government's economic failure. All of Britain should now be an assisted area because the Government have failed so abysmally.

Mr. Sainsbury: I should have hoped that the hon. Gentleman would recognise from his Front-Bench position that we are inevitably looking at the scale of change in unemployment and the relative position of different areas. I remind him, as he is another of the

half-empty rather than the half-full glass school, of the relative position of the regions. The northern region, the north-west, the Yorkshire and Humberside region and the east and west midlands have all had significant improvements in unemployment since the last map was drawn, whereas in London and the south-east and south-west unemployment has got worse. That is the reality and the reason for the map that I have produced. It is targeted on areas that most need help.

Points of Order

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. I hope that these are not points of frustration. I think that they are, but it must have been obvious that by no means could I call all hon. Members, even those who are directly affected. I am prepared to listen to points of order that relate to our Standing Orders and procedures.

Mr. George Stevenson (Stoke-on-Trent, South): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. In view of the obvious disquiet that remains among many hon. Members about the Government's statement with which we have been occupied for the past hour, would you consider a request for an emergency debate on this serious issue?

Madam Speaker: No, I cannot do that. As hon. Members know, if they catch my eye they can raise this matter on the motion for the Adjournment.

Several hon. Members *rose*——

Madam Speaker: Order. There can be nothing further to that point of order.

Mr. Frank Dobson (Holborn and St. Pancras): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Have you had an approach from the Secretary of State for Employment with a view to his coming to the House to make a statement about the collapse of Astra Training Services, which, before it was privatised, provided training for 100,000 people a year but which may now be going out of existence? From this very day, trainees from Astra will no longer get their expenses and there is increasing evidence of financial sharp practice by the company. Most hon. Members, or at least Opposition Members, would have expected the Secretary of State to have been here because he has much explaining to do.

Madam Speaker: I have not been informed that any Minister seeks to make a statement today.

Mr. Andrew Rowe (Mid-Kent): Further to that point of order, Madam Speaker. Your reply suggests that you have not had an approach from Ministers to come to the House to demonstrate the Government's contempt and disgust at the news that one of the girls who was pardoned by the King of Thailand has been offered £67,000 to make a film. I hope that, even at this late stage, the Government will make sure that she makes absolutely no money from this disgraceful deal.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman is right: I have had no request from any Minister to make a statement today.

Mr. Paul Flynn (Newport, West): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. When you took over your duties as Speaker, you explained that you would follow the practice of previous Speakers and not allow points of order during Question Time but would hear them at this time or at 3.30 pm. We understand the good reasons for that. They are that points of order, many of them not entirely genuine, were often allowed and they disrupted Question Time. However, that practice creates a difficulty, such as occurred today when, inadvertently, questions to the Lord President of the Council were started a full minute early at 3.24. That meant that it was not possible to call questions

[Mr. Paul Flynn]

Nos. 40 and 41 for the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed (Mr. Beith) and certain matters could not be raised. The difficulty that that presents to those of us who always behave immaculately in the House is that there was no mechanism for raising a genuine point of order at that time and allowing the questions to be asked in a proper way. Hon. Members were denied the possibility of raising the serious matter of the vermin that have been sighted in the dining areas of the House.

Madam Speaker: I take points of order during Question Time only exceptionally and if they are immediately relevant. There are far too many abuses if I allow a lot of discretion in these matters.

Mr. David Sumberg (Bury, South): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. As you know, we rise tomorrow for the summer recess. The order in connection with which we have just heard a statement comes into force on 1 August this year. Can you tell me how I can make it absolutely clear that I am delighted that two thirds of my constituency has received assisted area status——

Madam Speaker: Order. I think the hon. Member is demob-happy. I cannot allow such a point of order.

Mr. Harry Cohen (Leyton): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Can a Minister from the Department for Education come to the House before the recess to deal with a point raised in a national newspaper on Saturday? It was said that an opted-out school in my borough is refusing to take blind and partially sighted children because it does not suit its criteria. That is a serious matter and we should have the opportunity to debate it with an Education Minister.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman should try catching my eye on the motion for the Adjournment.

Mr. David Winnick (Walsall, North): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. You recently gave guidance on the sort of words that hon. Members are not allowed to use in the House. When we come back from the summer recess, Opposition Members will wish to criticise Ministers—and will continue to do so, day in and day out. Will we be able to use the expression that the Prime Minister used about three of his Cabinet colleagues, or do you believe that such language would lower the tone of the House?

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover) *rose*——

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member for Bolsover need not rise; I can see his hackles rising. Is this further to that point of order?

Mr. Skinner: Yes, Madam Speaker. As you know, many years ago, a Member of Parliament referred to "Members of Parliament for hire". It was suggested that such an expression was, prima facie, a breach of privilege and the matter went before the appropriate Committee because those Members of Parliament were not identified. Now we have an example of the Prime Minister specifying that three members of his Cabinet were, to use his word, "bastards". We do not know who they are. Some of today's newspapers have speculated that they are the Home Secretary, the Secretary of State for Social Services and the Secretary of State for Wales—and one other.

Madam Speaker: Order. The hon. Gentleman knows very well that that is not a point of order for me.

Mr. Skinner: Of course it is.

Madam Speaker: Not at all. I am not concerned with the language that is used outside the House. I am, however, very much concerned with the language that is used inside the House and therefore I ask all hon. Members to use moderate language. That is the proper, courteous method of debate in the House.

Mr. Winnick: But it was the Prime Minister.

Madam Speaker: I am not concerned about which Minister or Member was involved; I ask that moderate language be used at all times in the House.

Mr. Nigel Spearing (Newham, South): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I am sure that everyone is aware of the importance of the debates and decisions that featured on Thursday and Friday. I wish to raise three points of order relating to them which could have constitutional significance. I have given notice of them.

The first point relates to the text of the social charter. I was informed by the Government in a written reply—it can be found in column *295* of *Hansard* for 22 July—that they have never published or publicised the text of the social charter. The social charter was debated during the passage of the Bill through the House and last week. If and when there is any further legislation relating to this central matter, as there may well be, can we be assured that the text will be available to those affected beforehand, on the Table of the House and in the Vote Office?

The second point is of more profound significance. You will be aware, Madam Speaker, that for several hundred years it has not been the practice of the House to reverse, within a short time at least, a decision which has been taken. Page 362 of the 21st edition of "Erskine May"—the Boulton edition—says:

> "Proposing a negatived question a second time for the decision of the House, would be, as stated earlier, contrary to the established practice of Parliament. Sufficient variation would have to be made, not only from the form but also from the substance of the rejected question, to make the second question a new question."

A very similar question was proposed on Friday to the one that had been negatived the day before. However, in the second there was a distinction, to some extent, because there was no preamble reference to section 7. The second motion asked us to have confidence in the policy of the Government in the social area rather than simply noting it. While the wording may have varied to some extent, the purpose and the effect of accepting both would have been the same. The only change was in method, in that the word "confidence" was introduced in the second motion. Presumably that was on your ruling—otherwise it would have been out of order—and that was at least one area in which the substance was changed.

The use of the word "confidence" introduced a whole range of circumstances that attach to that word and are habitually used in motions of no confidence. But this time it was the opposite; it was proposed by the Government and used in a new way. In using it, the Government might be said to have introduced a hybrid element. The motion had three purposes: to approve the social policy, to show confidence in the Government and to trigger section 7 of the European Communities (Amendment) Act.

It is well known that a vote of no confidence would have resulted in at least a request to the Crown for the dissolution of Parliament. I put it in those terms because whether the request would be granted might be a matter of constitutional debate. But that is beside the point. What should have been taken into consideration is the consequence of a successful request and its effects on hon. Members' livelihoods and those of their families.

The use of the royal prerogative, which was referred to by my right hon. Friend the Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) in his speech on Friday, resides with the Crown outside the control of the House, albeit on the advice of a Minister or a collection of Ministers, as we are told happened in this case. That is a novel use of this particular power and revives the prerogative powers of the Crown, albeit on the advice of a Minister, against the rights and privileges of hon. Members to speak and vote without constraint on their livelihoods and persons.

The question of documentation on a matter of great constitutional importance; the use, perhaps the precedent, of a hybrid form of confidence motion; and the way in which these matters impinge on the prerogatives and the rights of this House, established in the late 17th century and part of our constitution, are of very great importance.

I do not expect a ruling or comment from you on these matters today, Madam Speaker, in view of the short notice and the short lapse of time since those events. I would ask you to consider them, to note what is said elsewhere, and, if you see fit, to say something about them after the recess.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Gentleman did not give me notice of all the matters that he has raised. I can deal with them because they are precise, although he took some time to explain himself.

First, I do not want to be tedious and repetitious because I dealt with the hon. Gentleman's first point when the matter was raised with me last week by the right hon. Member for Bethnal Green and Stepney (Mr. Shore). I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply that I gave then. The hon. Gentleman seems to allege that Friday's debate was out of order because it amounted to a rescinding of a resolution that was reached on Thursday. The debate was not related to the rescinding of a resolution as the House did not come to a resolution on Thursday. There are no rules that are specifically directed against second attempts to obtain a resolution when the first attempt has failed. I quote "Erskine May", which says that the House must

"instinctively realise that parliamentary government requires the majority to abide by a decision regularly come to, however unexpected".

At the outset of proceedings on Friday, I stated that, in my opinion, the Prime Minister's statement of the previous evening had created a new situation and that both the Government motion and the Opposition amendment were perfectly in order. The result of the Division at the conclusion of the debate confirmed my view that that was the case.

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Have you noticed that in connection with the summer Adjournment motion I have tabled an amendment stating that it might be convenient to allow an extension of debates, for example on Wednesday and Thursday, relating to assisted area status?

Madam Speaker: It was remiss of me not to announce that there are two amendments on the Order Paper, neither of which has been selected.

Adjournment (Summer)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

That this House, at its rising on Tuesday 27th July, do adjourn until Monday 18th October.—*[Mr. Arbuthnot.]*

4.50 pm

Mr. John Biffen (Shropshire, North): A little earlier this afternoon, Madam Speaker, you advised us all to use moderate language. I am happy to begin the debate on the summer recess in a spirit of moderation and good will that I hope will secure a most accommodating response from my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House.

My right hon. Friend will not be surprised to know that I wish to refer to local authority finance. Although I wish to refer to the subject as it relates specifically to Shropshire, I will also touch upon more general areas. Taking a cue from events earlier, I realise that few subjects can generate such commitment as the distribution of national aid to either regions or local authorities. I hope that I will earn my right hon. Friend's good will by addressing my remarks in a spirit of calmness, rather than seeking unjustifiable demands.

There is continuing anxiety in Shropshire about the sparsity factor in the education funds that have been made available by the Government. The matter was raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Ludlow (Mr. Gill) on 13 July. I endorse his remarks and appeal again for proper and equitable regard to be paid to the sparsity factor in considering what may be made available to the county authorities in Shropshire.

I do not wish to make my main remarks about that subject, but to concentrate on the area cost adjustment. As my right hon. Friend will know from his experience before he became Leader of the House, that is a matter of concern as it relates to the distribution of the standard spending assessment. While my remarks will be brief, they carry with them the good will of my hon. Friend the Member for Shrewsbury and Atcham (Mr. Conway). He has now been seduced by the Trappist joys of the Whips' Office and cannot be here to add his voice of moderation.

My right hon. Friend will know that the area cost adjustment concerns the methodology of labour costs, and as a consequence has a premium for London and the south-east. The tenor of questions on the statement by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Industry was to try to offset a perceived disadvantage for the south from the north in terms of regional aid. I should like to point out to my right hon. Friend that local authority finances are not a seamless robe. There can be certain situations in one respect, and quite contrary situations in another. My remarks this afternoon contrast to some extent with what has been said this afternoon.

My interest is not related merely to the county of Shropshire. That county has been asked by 27 shire counties to carry out an investigation into the impact of the area cost adjustment. They have produced a study that has revealed that employment costs are higher in London, but are not obviously otherwise higher in the south-east. The report says:

> "Research shows there are no regional pay variations outside London for most local government employees. This includes teachers, fire fighters and uniform policemen."

The fact that the area cost allowance factor has been rising considerably faster than the standard spending assessment further emphasises the work that has been undertaken by Shropshire on behalf of its sister shire counties. Considerable sums of money are now committed for an item which has been inequitably distributed.

I have three questions that I want to put to my right hon. Friend. I do not expect an answer at the conclusion of the debate, but I should be immensely grateful if he would write to me and gave a considered reply, which I might then make publicly available in Shropshire.

First, has the study undertaken by Shropshire on behalf of the shire counties been received by the Department of the Environment? Secondly, what is the initial reaction of the Department to that study? Thirdly, is it expected that any changes that might be consequential will be implemented in the 1994-95 standard spending assessment?

I shall leave those questions with my right hon. Friend. I believe that my tolerable brevity may encourage him to give a generous and merited reply, and I now leave the field to others.

4.58 pm

Mr. Barry Jones (Alyn and Deeside): I do not think that the House should rise before there has been an adequate explanation from the Minister who currently heads the Department of Trade and Industry of why my constituency should have been denuded of the prize of assisted area status.

I protest because 3,200 people are out of work in my constituency, of which more than 800 are officially designated as long-term unemployed. Moreover, Shotton steelworks in my constituency put into effect in 1980 the largest redundancy programme ever in western Europe. In a period between Christmas and Easter, more than 8,000 people lost their jobs. The job of reconstructing our local economy has a long way to go yet. My constituents and I have always thought that assisted area status was of prime importance in that reconstruction.

I have studied the decision that the Department of Trade and Industry has made about the boundaries of the areas to retain the status. I cannot see why the larger part of my constituency should have been denuded of the prize. I do know, when I look at the new map, that the people of Wales have had a raw deal. It appears that the status that some parts of Wales previously had has now been taken away and given to southern England. I should have liked the status previously given to Wales to be retained. I would then have said that the Government should give more aid and allow other areas of Britain to benefit from development area status.

On the other side of the River Dee, opposite my constituency, is the area called the Wirral. That area is represented here in the mother of Parliaments by the Secretary of State for Employment, whom we previously knew as Secretary of State for Wales. We note that, across the river, the prized development area status remains. I am not convinced that north-east Wales should lose while, across the river, development area status has been retained, or that the whole of Wales should be denuded of development area status while in southern England there has been an accretion in the areas covered. That cannot be right or just, and I wish to protest.

I want to see my country—Britain—made great again as an industrial power. That can happen only if the Government adopt a strategy which makes it possible for manufacturing industry to prosper. I want manufacturing

industry in Britain to be retained, strengthened and enhanced, but what has happened in the past 10 or 14 years has been virtually the opposite of that objective.

During the time that Her Majesty's Government have worn the colours of the Conservatives, more than 2·5 million manufacturing jobs have been lost. That cannot be good for the future. It has been a devastating blow for many communities, individuals, families and homes, not least in my country of Wales.

If we do not have manufacturing industries that prosper, we shall not have the wealth that underpins the welfare state. If we do not have a Government and a Cabinet who are prepared to make manufacturing the top priority, there can be no hope and no future in the next century, which is approaching us with gathering speed. Today, the Government have missed yet another opportunity to show that they care about the foundation of our industrial society—manufacturing.

An example is the steel industry. British Steel, which is lean, fit and productive and has previously been profitable, now faces hard times. It appears that the Government and the Cabinet are not prepared to help the foundation industry in Britain which the steel industry still represents. The one thing that eastern Europe does well is making bulk steel. The problem is that steel is virtually being dumped in western Europe and our markets.

The President of the United States and his Government are prepared to put savage high tariffs on British Steel's exports. I forecast major trouble for our steel industry if they are allowed to continue. Let us examine the details of how our steel industry is coping with the challenge from western Europe and inside the Community.

The British steel industry has made its sacrifices over and over again. Tens of thousands of jobs have been sacrificed in the past decade and earlier. Yet the Spanish and Italian nations are not playing fair. What did the Prime Minister say about that problem when he went to Tokyo recently? I should like to know before the House rises what the Prime Minister did on behalf of the British steel industry.

I have said that I want to see a strong and resurgent manufacturing sector. I cannot see how Britain can become a great industrial nation again unless that happens. Steel is the basis of Britain's manufacturing industry, and it is not receiving fair treatment. It has done all that has been asked of it. In 1980, 8,000 of my constituents were made jobless virtually overnight. They made their sacrifice. The British steel industry has made its sacrifice. We are entitled to ask the Government what they are prepared to do to assist British Steel.

Another good example is the aerospace industry. Redundancies have rained down on Alyn and Deeside. We have a magnificient factory at Broughton in my constituency, which makes the wing of the airbus and the whole of the executive jet. There have been 1,300 job losses in those two activities within one year. I want evidence that the Government are prepared to assist aerospace.

One good thing that has happened recently is the publication of a distinguished and detailed report by the Select Committee on Trade and Industry only last week. It said that the United Kingdom aerospace industry, which could still survive, develop and prosper, made a massive contribution to our balance of payments, employed and trained a highly skilled work force, was engaged in wealth creation through the high added value of its products, provided technological spin-offs for other sectors, created work for other sectors such as machine tooling and computer software, and had the probability of growth in world markets.

That distinguished Committee said that, if the industry was to prosper, money must be made available for more research and technology. I support that fundamental proposal. I believe that a figure of £80 million was mentioned and that the Committee said that it should be delivered urgently.

I cannot see an industrial future for Great Britain unless our Government, our Cabinet and our nation invest in steel and aerospace. I urge the Leader of the House to take up the points that I have raised when he replies to the debate.

5.7 pm

Mr. Roberts Hicks (Cornwall, South-East): I wish to raise with Ministers two essentially west country issues before we rise for the summer recess—the future of our west country regional air link between Plymouth and Newquay and London Heathrow, and water and sewerage charges in Devon and Cornwall. The second subject has already been considered by the House several times.

Central to the current level of water charges is the enormous investment programme which South West Water is obliged to undertake to meet EC water quality and sewage treatment standards. The total figure involved is more than £1 billion, of which water quality represents £450 million, inland sewerage schemes represent £350 million and coastal sewerage represents more than £400 million of investment. Those staggering financial requirements reflect a neglect of investment in the past, and the fact that Devon and Cornwall have a long geographical coastline.

It is equally valid when considering the charges paid by the consumer to take it into account that almost 80 per cent. of the revenue obtained by South West Water from customers is used for investment purposes. Furthermore, the area is relatively sparsely populated. Apart from Plymouth and Exeter, there are no large cities and towns. Average earnings are significantly lower than the national average. In my constituency, average earnings are 14 per cent. below the national average. Demographically, the south-west has a large retired population—most of whom are dependent on fixed incomes of one kind or another. That is the geographical and demographic background to our problem.

In 1991-92, water charges in the south-west were the third highest in England and Wales, and as a consequence of increases over the past couple of years and the projected figure for next year, it will probably have the highest water charges in the country in 1994-95. Our K factor is 11·5 per cent., plus inflation. That is a genuinely worrying prospect for consumers, particularly when one considers the large number of retired people in the area and the average level of earnings.

I received only a couple of weeks ago Ofwat's report for July 1993, "Paying for Quality: The Political Perspective." It states that, if water authorities met all their obligations, £54 could be added to bills throughout England and Wales in the five years from 1995, and a further £23 in the following five years. That would amount to about 5 per cent. above inflation each year from 1995 till the year 2000.

[Mr. Roberts Hicks]

The Director General of Water Services stated that, in some parts of the country, average bills could rise by more than £100 during that same period, and added:

"I do not believe that customers would want to see their water bills rising at this rate. Big increases in bills for low income households and for many pensioners would present real problems in affordability."

The projected figures for Devon and Cornwall show that the increases there are likely to be higher than the average quoted by the director general.

What can and should be done? I immediately dismiss the options of delaying implementation, which would be wrong, and any suggestion of deliberately reducing standards—although I would not object to cutting out frills, niceties and extravagance. The most acceptable and sensible course for the south-west would be for the Government to acknowledge that our coastline is a national asset and to accept that the cost of improvements should in part be met by the Exchequer.

At the time of privatisation, South West Water received a green dowry of £266 million, which was most welcome, and that principle can and should be extended. The population of Devon and Cornwall are certainly looking for some assistance.

As to the future of our regional air link with London Heathrow, there is no doubt that its continuation is essential to regional policy and as a central element in our regional transport infrastructure. My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade acknowledged that in a letter to me in March, when he confirmed the importance of good air links to businesses in the south-west:

"To this end, I wrote to John MacGregor on 25 February to pass on to him the strength of feeling held by people in Devon and Cornwall on the continued ability of Brymon Airways to operate its present services between Heathrow and Plymouth and Newquay. In my capacity as the Minister responsible for regional policy, I asked him to consider the detrimental effects that a reduction in these services could have on inward investment intentions to the Region and on the already high level of unemployment."

It is not without significance that 70 per cent. of passengers using that service are interlining. The service is crucial to attracting inward investment. Devon and Cornwall have a creditable record in that respect, but the chief executive of the Devon and Cornwall Development Bureau has several times stated publicly that, unless that service is continued, the chances of building on that excellent record will be slim.

Devon and Cornwall are competing for inward investment from the United States, Japan and the far east, not only with other United Kingdom regions but with regions across Europe. Throughout the 1980s, we had an excellent regional air link operated by Brymon and felt reasonably secure. Brymon then amalgamated with Birmingham European Airways. Unfortunately, the atmosphere changed, and we grew apprehensive.

In May 1993, British Airways—which previously had a 40 per cent. shareholding in Brymon European—took over Brymon Aviation. I have no doubt that British Airways' assurance that it will continue the west country air link is genuine and sincere, but we all know that commercial circumstances can and do change—hence my continuing anxiety.

Brymon holds 56 valuable slots at London Heathrow, and the value of that asset is estimated at £56 million—£1 million per slot. It is only natural that any commercial undertaking such as British Airways should want to maximise valuable assets.

Parallel to those changes was the publication of a Civil Aviation Authority discussion document, initiated in January, to review access by regional services to congested airports. When the CAA published its conclusions in April, the south-west was disappointed, but not surprised, that the authority stuck resolutely to its refusal to comment on the merits of protecting slots as an aspect of regional economic policy—which it said was a matter for the Government.

At the same time, on 18 January there came into effect a European regulation entitled "Common Rules for the Allocation of Slots at Community airports", article 9 of which refers specifically to regional services. I believe that the west country air link is the only regional air link that satisfies that article's four criteria for the circumstances in which a national Government could reserve certain slots at a fully co-ordinated airport for domestic scheduled services.

Since the publication of the regulations, my west country colleagues and I have held a number of meetings with my right hon. Friends the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Transport. We have reminded them that the west country air link is the only United Kingdom regional air link that satisfies those criteria. If Ministers were to agree, they would not, I believe, be establishing a dangerous precedent but would be making a positive contribution towards safeguarding our regional air link and helping to develop the regional economy of the west country.

5.19 pm

Mr. Malcolm Bruce (Gordon): I want to raise two items of constituency interest and two national items that affect every constituency in the country.

Reference has already been made to Patricia Cahill and Karyn Smith having been pardoned and released from a Thai gaol and to the fact that they are now negotiating unsavoury commercial transactions to try to secure gain from an offence which they have admitted. I hope that the Prime Minister, having secured their pardon, will make his views known, perhaps privately, to them, for a specific reason. The parents of Sandra Gregory, who has just been put on trial in Thailand, live in my constituency and are naturally concerned that anything that may arise out of their actions may prejudice her trial, or any plea for mercy or pardon that may follow from that trial.

I hope that the advisers of the two girls in question, Patricia Cahill and Karyn Smith, will put it to them that they are fortunate to be free and that therefore they have a responsibility to respect the threat and the difficulties facing others in a similar situation. I should like to think that other hon. Members regard that as a message that could usefully go out from this place.

Mr. William Powell (Corby): I associate myself with the hon. Gentleman's remarks. The mother of Robert Lock is one of my constituents. There is absolutely no doubt that what the hon. Gentleman has said is right.

Mr. Bruce: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman.

The other item of constituency interest arises out of the statement to which we have just listened. I made it clear when I asked a question that unemployment in the area

which I represent is low. We do not have assisted area status and do not directly seek it. However, the Minister for Industry referred to the procedures for objective 2 and objective 5(b) status. The Leader of the House may be aware of the fact—if he is not, I am about to make him aware—that the western part of my constituency is a candidate for 5(b) status. The important point to bear in mind is the one that I made earlier: much of that area is part of the Aberdeen travel-to-work area. That travel-to-work area may be administratively convenient, but in practical terms it is a nonsense.

The city of Aberdeen is an extremely prosperous and lively commercial centre. It is the centre of oil-related activities and many other services. The hinterland stretches as far as 70 miles away—right into the foothills of the Cairngorms. It suffers from the problems of rural depopulation and rural deprivation. That area is completely different from the rest of the Aberdeen travel-to-work area.

I have already made the point to Scottish Office Ministers—and I certainly hope to make it to Department of Trade and Industry Ministers—that the area faces serious difficulties. To the west, we have the highlands and islands, which have category 1 status. To the east, we have the booming economy of the city of Aberdeen. If this area does not obtain 5(b) status, it will be in danger of becoming a black hole. It will be denuded by the two compelling magnets on either side of it. These are important arguments and should be considered. Can the Leader of the House therefore give us any indication of the Government's timetable for the determination of 5(b) status and, obviously, of the European Commission's timetable?

As for the national issues that affect every constituency in the country, I refer first to the astonishing reaction to the Sheehy report on the future of policing. A point of clarification that would help me as a Scottish Member is exactly what status the report has north of the border. The police force there is in no doubt whatsoever that the Sheehy report has far-reaching implications and will be drawn on for any reforms of the police service there.

If the reforms are adopted and the Home Secretary appoints the chairmen of police authorities and their members, can the Leader of the House say whether appointments in Scotland will be by the Home Secretary or by the Secretary of State for Scotland? There does not seem to be a clear view of where the responsibility will lie. The demonstration at Wembley last week has, almost overnight and somewhat surprisingly, turned my hon. Friend the Member for Caithness and Sutherland (Mr. Maclennan) into something of a folk hero among the police. I witnessed that today when I attended a meeting with my hon. Friend, at which senior police officers went out of their way to comment on the quality of his speech and to say how much they appreciated my hon. Friend's support.

Without going into the details of the report, which will continue to be debated, there is real concern that its underlying philosophy is alien to the concept of a public service police force. I draw the attention of the House to Sir Patrick Sheehy's article in the *Financial Times* today. I thought that it was a rather offensive article. Nevertheless, I draw attention to a sentence that appears at the end of the first paragraph. Conservative Members may not agree with me, but I find it somewhat chilling. It reads:

> "The federation's response to our report has been so long on emotion and so short on factual content that the shareholders (the public at large) must be confused."

That kind of language, when we are talking about a police force, is, I believe, totally and utterly inappropriate. It reflects a philosophical approach to the reform of the police service that strikes no chord at all with those who are carrying out the job.

Part of the discussion has centred on the issue of performance-related pay and short-term contracts. Police officers ask how performance-related pay will encourage crime prevention, as opposed to crime detection: is there not a danger that it may encourage prosecutions or charges being brought simply to get the statistics up? Does it not also fail to take on board many aspects of a police officer's job that cannot easily be measured in simple terms, where measurement of performance will vary from force to force and from individual to individual? The Government will have to do a lot more explaining if they are to satisfy the police.

The same applies to short-term contracts. When one joins the police, it is not a question of going into a job for life. For most police officers, it is a mission that they expect to pursue during a full-term career. To be theatened with the possibility of the discontinuance of their contract every five years, on the basis of some criteria that the police do not yet know about and in which they do not have full confidence, will not raise the morale of the police force. I urge the Government, for their own sake as well as for the sake of the country, to take these points on board before they make a decision.

My final point on this issue relates to local accountability. There is deep-seated resistance to any suggestion that there should be a nationally co-ordinated police force. The tradition of the independence of police forces and their accountability to local communities is extremely strong. There is something sinister about the idea of co-ordinating police activities through a network of Home Secretary appointees, with an agenda of their own which might be differently driven from that of local communities.

I have highlighted the points of greatest concern about that issue. I do not necessarily expect the Leader of the House to respond to them today, other than to say that he is aware of them and that the Government will consider them.

The final issue that I wish to raise is the very contentious issue of VAT on fuel. It is very serious, and the amendment tabled by the hon. Member for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer) is pertinent. The House is proposing to rise for the recess without a statement from the Government about how they will compensate those pensioners and others on benefit who are very worried about the impact of the extra charge of VAT on their fuel bills.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has been hinting, or hints have been released on his behalf, that the Government may be about to think again or that there is some difficulty in finding a mechanism. However, in a sense, the Chancellor has simply set other hares running by suggesting that he might be more favourably disposed to VAT on food or children's clothes in respect of which he is known to have voted in favour in the past. That will not help the Government's cause and it is not healthy for many

[Mr. Bruce]

people in the community to be worried about one tax which has been promised and then to be told that others may be on the way.

Will the Leader of the House make it categorically clear whether there is to be a rethink about VAT on fuel, its timetable of imposition and whether the full 17·5 per cent. will be adhered to? What measures are the Government likely to produce to provide compensation if they go ahead? If the Leader of the House cannot answer that, when are the Government likely to come forward with an idea of what will be done and who will benefit?

Before coming to the House today, I took the trouble of contacting one or two relevant groups to discover what measures they are looking for. In particular, I contacted Age Concern and Neighbourhood Energy Action. They told me that 8 million people on benefit are looking to the Government for an idea of what might be done.

The proportion of income that the poorest people spend on fuel is, by definition, disproportionately high. According to Age Concern, 15·3 per cent. of the income of single pensioners with an income of under £60 a week is spent on fuel. Even those retired households with incomes of £120 a week spend 9·7 per cent. of their income on fuel. That comprises a significant part of their income and they face a 2 to 3 per cent. increase in the burden on their income through the imposition of VAT on fuel.

The Government have said, "Don't worry. We are going to bring in mechanisms that will compensate you all." However, the two groups to which I have referred can see no way in which the Government can deliver that. The problem is logical to me. I am a Scottish Member and I represent a constituency in the north of Scotland. By definition, fuel bills for my constituents are higher on average than they are for people who live in the south-west of England. In winter, days are shorter and temperatures are lower. Therefore, my constituents' bills are disproportionately higher.

In addition, and this point applies throughout the country—although the colder the area, the more severe the problem—people who are more housebound and less mobile consume more heat. It is difficult to see how any measure can discriminate or identify those people in a flexible way.

The argument that putting VAT on fuel is a matter of encouraging energy efficiency is acceptable only if the Government come up with a comprehensive package to help people achieve more energy efficient housing. It is suggested that the Government might reassess the introduction of the hard-to-heat housing grants which used to operate. It would be helpful if the Government were prepared to provide greater home insulation grants and access to energy audits to enable people to identify the seriousness of their situation. The Government should recognise that they are unlikely to allay the cost of that to all the 8 million people on the lowest incomes.

I should be grateful if the Leader of the House could give us some idea about how that problem will be approached. There is a great deal of concern and worry and we can make any amount of political capital out of this issue. Indeed, the Leader of the House will be aware that we are making a great deal of political capital out of the issue in a particular community. However, there is a serious point, because it affects every constituency to a greater or lesser degree. The people who are directly affected are genuinely and desperately anxious to know how they are going to make ends meet. They know that they will have to face bigger bills, but they do not know yet what measures are likely to be introduced to alleviate those bills or how they will be applied.

The agencies that know about these things do not believe that the Government can fulfil their own objectives of protecting everyone against the impact of the tax on fuel. If the Government are beginning to recognise that and are now prepared to modify their position, the sooner they say so, the better. If that means that they will have to bring in another tax in another area which is just as unpopular, I suppose that the Government will have to say that at the same time.

5.34 pm

Mr. John Ward (Poole): Before the House adjourns for the summer, I believe that we should take a little time to consider the state of nuclear power stations in central and eastern Europe. While I hope to show that a certain amount of work has already been carried out to make the more dangerous plants safe, there is insufficient awareness of the continuing danger from those nuclear power plants.

I should like to begin by complimenting Mr. Bassinet, a former Member of the French Parliament, who produced a report for the Council of Europe which was printed earlier this year. His report has provided much of the information for my speech today. At least Mr. Bassinet's report has increased the awareness of the dangers and problems of the nuclear power plants to which I have referred among the 40 nations that are members of the Council of Europe or special guests at its meetings.

The Soviet-designed nuclear power plants can be divided into two categories: RBMK graphite-moderated reactors of the Chernobyl type and VVER pressurised water reactors. At present, there are 57 reactors, including 15 of the graphite-moderated type, scattered in different countries and 15 reactors of the pressurised water type are still under construction.

The RBMK reactors do not have a containment structure. Their design is old fashioned and has no equivalent in the west. Since the Chernobyl disaster, those reactors have been giving increasing cause for concern and it is recommended by many that they should be shut down within a reasonable time.

The VVER reactors can be broken down into three groups. The oldest, first-generation reactors have the most serious design faults with no containment structure, very little core cooling capacity, and, in the event of failure, they are very badly instrumented.

The second group of VVER reactors is rather better than the earlier models, but it still has many shortcomings. The third group of reactors, which are of recent design, come closest to matching western standards and do have containment structures. However, they suffer from inadequate supervision and remain a source of concern.

With all their inadequacies, many of those nuclear power plants were under strict surveillance and protection by, of all people, the KGB and there was little risk of insecurity as a result of terrorist attack. However, that appears no longer to be the case and some are inadequately protected from any form of forced entry.

Plants in the former Soviet socialist republics have a shortage of specialist personnel, partly through ill feeling against the Russian technicians and partly because some of them have been persuaded to move elsewhere by offers of much higher salaries and better working conditions.

As they have so many other problems, both economic and social, people living near the plants to which I have referred seem almost indifferent to the dangers on their doorstep, even though some of the plants are located close to cities such as St. Petersburg and Kiev. It is reported that plants in Hungary and Bulgaria are better supervised, but the inherent lack of safety in their design still gives cause for concern.

On 26 April, the *Evening Standard* published an excellent article that gave full details of sources of danger from power stations and other nuclear installations. If colleagues wish to seek further information on this subject, I recommend that they read that article.

Most people's immediate reaction is that we should shut down a large number of the reactors operating in eastern Europe. That is hardly a realistic option, given that 50 per cent. of power generation in some of those countries comes from nuclear power.

Given that those plants might have to be operated for some years, I can envisage several problems: first, the lack of containment against radiation leaks or accidents; secondly, inadequate instrumentation and control and brittleness in the reactor vessels; thirdly, the quality of some of the personnel now operating many of the plants; fourthly, pressure on operators to produce the maximum possible amount of electricity, which, in the case of Chernobyl, could lead to short cuts resulting in an accident; and, fifthly and by far the most important, the danger to life not just within the area of the power stations concerned but in Europe generally and possibly beyond, depending on weather conditions, if there were a repeat of the Chernobyl incident.

What is being done and what more can be done? The G7, the European Council and the international atomic energy conference on nuclear safety in 1991 accepted that each country must be responsible for regulating the safety of its own nuclear installations. Those are fine words, but, given the record of Chernobyl and economic conditions in the Soviet bloc, is that enough? At the G7 summit in March last year, steps were taken to set up an international programme to improve nuclear safety and agree new regulations to ensure the safe operation of as many plants as possible.

The United Kingdom Government are playing a significant part in addressing those issues. Apart from their financial contribution, they have made technical help and advice available through the nuclear installations inspectorate and our nuclear industry. Many international organisations are also allocating resources to the problem, but continued progress depends on the will and the finance being available in the countries concerned. I question whether either is available in sufficient quantities at present.

It has been said that it would be prohibitively expensive to bring the 60 or so reactors up to western safety standards and that neither national nor international funds would be available for such a step. We have to set against that the cost to all of us if there were another Chernobyl or an even worse accident. Time is not on the side of the operators of the nuclear plants to which I have referred. Pressure must be maintained to ensure that the problem is solved as speedily as possible, even if international finance has to be diverted from other worthwhile causes.

I accept that we cannot rush into other countries and start organising their work or, indeed, carrying it out for them, but many international authorities have accepted that the oldest reactors represent a very high risk to the international community and that their continued operation would certainly not be accepted in any western country. As Lord Marshall of Goring pointed out in an interview in September, the Russians know their own systems best, and we should support them by supplying them with what they want, particularly the technology which they cannot afford because they have no hard currency. That must be done in close co-operation with the operators, because, if we supplied technology or equipment that they did not want, they would simply not use it. It is desperately important that the international community should focus on that dangerous matter.

I have concentrated on the problems associated with nuclear power plants, and that is where most of our efforts need to be concentrated, but we cannot ignore the many experimental and small reactors in the former Soviet Union which, although small, are equally dangerous. For instance, the former chief nuclear safety inspector for Russia has said that there are 50 such nuclear reactors in Moscow alone, together with a waste dump which is in a highly dangerous condition. I have no time to go into the detail, but that illustrates once again the need for urgent co-ordinated international action and serious consideration of how funds can be provided to raise the safety threshold of all nuclear installations in the former Soviet bloc.

It goes without saying that any funds that are made available from the west must be spent in such a way that they can be supervised by the west to ensure that they are used for the purpose for which they are intended, which is to improve safety for the whole of the former Soviet Union and the surrounding countries.

As I see it, there are two main ways of dealing with the problems that I have illustrated—first, the efficient co-ordination of international efforts, with access to the top levels in the countries concerned, and, secondly, finance which will be needed from outside the former Soviet bloc. One estimate is that the current flow of funds would need to be increased tenfold if we are to bring all nuclear plants in eastern and central Europe up to international standards. It will take a skilful combination of the technical options and what is politically possible to achieve the safety levels that we must insist on, even if, in some cases, it leads to the shutting down of the most dangerous reactors and their replacement by other forms of power generation.

An encouraging move in that direction has been made by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, by setting up within the bank a multilateral nuclear safety fund which would be available to achieve the objectives that I have set out today. But that fund will need resources that are specifically earmarked for nuclear safety and sufficient supervision to ensure that the funds are used for their intended purpose. We need to make it clear that large sums of money are involved.

At the G7 meeting in Munich, to which I have already referred, it was suggested that $20 billion would be needed to cover the power stations in Russia and Ukraine, and approximately the same amount for eastern and central

[Mr. John Ward]

Europe and the other former Soviet republics. That is a long-term commitment, but, again, it has been estimated that $200 million needs to be spent on all first generation reactors and somewhat smaller sums spent on second and third generation reactors. We are talking vast sums, particularly when compared with the other needs of those countries. However, I believe that when hon. Members consider the figures that I have put to the House today and the potential danger to the whole of mankind, they will agree that the priority must be to establish safety in the nuclear power industry.

In summary, we need a careful analysis of all the problems, speedy discussions with the Governments of the relevant countries about the problems and proposed solutions, a respected international co-ordinating body —possibly the International Atomic Energy Agency—to oversee standards, and an international effort to provide the necessary funds and ensure that they are spent to achieve the standard of safety which we are entitled to expect.

I believe that there is much international acceptance of the problems, and there have been many calls at national and international level for progress. What we need now is action. Colleagues have only to read the national press to learn of one incident after another in which rules on nuclear safety have been broken either for experimental purposes or in an attempt to boost electricity production. I remind the House that, seven years after the Chernobyl incident, areas of the United Kingdom are still contaminated by radioactive fallout. We cannot let complacency or concentration on other matters of national and international importance lead us to ignore that huge danger to mankind. We are sitting on a powder keg of outdated nuclear installations.

The problems that I have described are just some of the challenges which the west has to face following the disintegration of the communist bloc, but those problems are potentially the most important and certainly the most dangerous that we have to deal with.

5.47 pm

Mr. Tom Cox (Tooting): I wish to speak about the present situation in Cyprus. Nineteen years ago, the island of Cyprus was brutually invaded by the Turkish army. That army is still in Cyprus and the island is still divided. The United Kingdom is one of the guarantor powers for Cyprus, and Cyprus is a member of the British Commonwealth.

Over the years, hon. Members have campaigned for an honourable settlement in Cyprus. We have always called for the rights of Greek and Turkish Cypriots to be fully honoured and respected in any settlement. We have always supported United Nations resolutions on Cyprus and we have supported the talks between the leaders of both communities. However, it is now 1993 and there has been no progress whatsoever in those talks over the years.

When one asks why there has been no progress, the answer is not hard to find. It is due, without doubt, to the attitude of Mr. Rauf Denktas, the self-styled leader of the Republic of Northern Cyprus. He is the man who, year after year, has presented every obstacle to progress in the talks that have taken place. Indeed, he is the man whom the Secretary-General of the United Nations indicted as the person whose action, once again, caused the recent breakdown of the UN-sponsored talks in New York on Cyprus.

It is interesting to read the speech of Mr. Denktas, given in Ankara on 10 June, when he criticised the talks that were held under the auspices of the United Nations. Yet it was agreed by the three guarantor powers—the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey—for the island of Cyprus and the representatives of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus that those talks should be held under the auspices of the United Nations. It was hoped that progress would be made towards a settlement. What is the attitude of the British Government to yet another collapse of those talks, given that the Government are directly involved in them? In particular, what is Britain's attitude to Mr. Denktas? How much longer must we put up with his tantrums? There have been many since the invasion in 1974.

It would be interesting to discover exactly when the British Government propose to take an active role in the tragedy of Cyprus. It is my belief, and that of many hon. Members, including many Conservatives, that the Government have never taken an active role.

Many hon. Members have questioned the trade between northern Cyprus and this country and the kind of products involved. I firmly believe that many of the goods that now find their way into the United Kingdom are produced on land stolen from Greek Cypriots. Hon. Members have tried repeatedly to obtain information about that, but without success. Recent events concerning an individual who has fled to Cyprus to avoid British justice may cause the Government to consider more closely exactly where goods from northern Cyprus are produced and on whose land. Many would welcome that.

Turkish nationals who come to this country now may have dual nationality because they have, at one time, lived in northern Cyprus. Many travel from mainland Turkey to the occupied area of northern Cyprus. They are then given documents by the northern Cypriot Administration which allow them to travel to this country. They gain entry to the United Kingdom when they have no right to do so. They are not citizens of northern Cyprus, but citizens of Turkey. The Government must address that problem because there is ample evidence of abuse taking place.

For many years, Cyprus has sought to be involved in the European Community and it is now actively seeking membership of it. The per capita income of Cyprus is already greater than that of some of the Community member states and its economic growth has been much faster than that enjoyed by other member states. It would be interesting to discover whether the British Government support the entry of Cyprus into the Community, because that could offer hope to the people of Cyprus, be they Greek or Turkish.

Another issue which has involved a great deal of recent discussion and which many hon. Members do not want to see drift relates to the future of Famagusta and Varosha, because a decision on them would benefit both the communities on the island. There has been talk of the possibility that Famagusta could be open once again. It is important to remember that it was one of the most popular areas on the island; it could be again.

I accept that the Leader of the House is not in a position to reply specifically to the points I have raised, but, after previous debates, I am aware that, to his credit, he has always ensured that the points that I or other hon.

Members have raised have been conveyed to the appropriate Ministers. It would, therefore, be interesting to discover the Government's view on the possible reopening of Famagusta, because that would benefit the people of Cyprus.

In October, the Heads of State of the Commonwealth countries will meet in Cyprus. The United Kingdom will be represented by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary. I have written to inquire whether it is their intention to ensure that the subject of Cyprus is discussed at that conference, especially given that that conference will be held in Cyprus. I shall be interested to know the answer.

It is 19 years since Cyprus was invaded. Greek Cypriots, whether they live in Cyprus or in the United Kingdom, have had enough. They have witnessed the division of their country, which is now partly occupied by a foreign army. They believe that the talks that have gone on for the past 19 years have achieved nothing. They look to the British Government, as one of the guarantor powers, to set in motion discussions that will lead to a meaningful settlement.

Young Greek Cypriots, whether they live in Cyprus or in the United Kingdom, as many do, are fed up with the lack of any meaningful progress in the past 19 years. I hope that that point, in particular, is conveyed to the Foreign Secretary. The time for excuses has now come to an end. The aim of those young people is shared by many hon. Members, irrespective of party, who have campaigned for the rights of Greek and Turkish Cypriots to be upheld in any settlement.

The time has come for meaningful action by the British Government. Any such action will be carefully scrutinised in the coming months. I hope that the Government appreciate that. I also hope that they will respond to the concerns I have expressed, which could have equally been expressed by Conservative Members, in a debate such as this.

5.59 pm

Sir Fergus Montgomery (Altrincham and Sale): I am glad that the hon. Member for Gordon (Mr. Bruce) is still here. I was rather amused to hear him say that his hon. Friend the Member for Caithness and Sutherland (Mr. Maclennan) had been hailed as a folk hero by the police. Some of us have long memories: the hon. Member for Caithness and Sutherland was a junior Minister in the pre-1979 Labour Government, when police numbers were dropping drastically because they were dissatisfied with their pay and conditions. It took the Conservative Government, elected in May 1979, to implement the Edmund-Davies report and to do something about police pay and conditions.

I am sorry that the hon. Member for Gordon was not present at business questions on Thursday, when he would have heard several of my hon. Friends ask the Leader of the House about the Sheehy report. We know perfectly well that nothing will be done to implement it until it has been fully discussed in the House so that we can make the points that have been made to us by police officers. It is better to wait until we have had a full debate to see what the Government intend before indulging in any more conjecture.

I always regard these debates as useful. I apologise in advance for being repetitious. My right hon. Friend knows well that, over the years, I have tried desperately hard to get a new community hospital in south Trafford. I shall continue to raise the matter in these debates until we have one. A community hospital in south Trafford is long overdue. If my right hon. Friend checks, he will find that since 1980 Trafford health authority has been the only district in the north-west not to have been given a large capital project.

When I last raised the matter in a debate on 18 May, I mentioned the disciples of gloom who make up the membership of the Broadheath Labour party in my constituency and who were pessimistic about our ever achieving a new community hospital. Because I chided them, they have had a go at me—perfectly fairly. A veteran party member and inveterate newspaper columnist attacked me. That, too, was perfectly fair, except that he misquoted me—although that is not unusual.

In my speech on 18 May I quoted a large chunk from a report by Trafford health authority, but my friend in the Broadheath Labour party attributed the words to me. He was not trying to be fair; he was trying to score cheap political points. That does not come well from a man who has twice stood in the ward and been soundly rejected by the electors of Broadheath.

It is sad that we cannot put up a united front on this issue, putting politics to one side and working as one to try to acheive something that would be a great asset to our area. The new community hospital would consist of 24 beds and 24 day places for the elderly mentally infirm. It would have 48 beds and 30 day places for the elderly and two 25-place mental illness day units. It would also have four out-patient clinic suites, two radiodiagnostic rooms, 10 investigation beds and one small pathology laboratory.

The community hospital, when we get it, will fill a desperate need in the constituency. We are all, regardless of party, well aware of the problems of an aging population. I therefore ask my right hon. Friend to warn our right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health that I am still on the warpath and will continue to be so until the hospital becomes a reality.

I have also raised my second issue before—I do not apologise for that. It concerns the worries expressed by housing associations because they are now the main providers of new rented housing. More help in this sector would be most welcome.

I should like to quote from a pamphlet just issued by the National Federation of Housing Associations, called "The case for housing: build homes and create jobs". It states:

> "The problems new tenants have paying their rents can be seen from the increased dependency on housing benefit: more than 70 per cent. are eligible for full or partial benefit. The NFHA fears that Government proposals to reduce housing association grant to 55 per cent. would increase this figure to 89 per cent. and cause great hardship to many tenants who would be pushed deeper into the poverty trap. Ministers should take heed of the House of Commons Environment Committee which recommended that 'the Government consider very carefully the consequences of allowing rates of HAG to fall below 67 per cent'".

The construction industry has clearly suffered badly during the recession. It is estimated that about 500,000 construction workers have lost their jobs in the past three years. If it is true—the figure has been bandied about a great deal—that each unemployed worker costs the Government £9,000 a year in increased benefit payments

[Sir Fergus Montgomery]

and lost income tax and national insurance contributions, any cut in the building programme would only make matters worse.

We desperately need more affordable homes; by building more, we reduce the number of unemployed and we rehouse people in urgent need, such as the homeless, young single people, people leaving institutions for care in the community, and the growing number of elderly people who need specialist housing.

To return to a problem that I have raised before, the system is a disincentive to thrift. Time and again I come across cases of people who have made no attempt to save. Then there are others who have scrimped and saved all their lives, only to find that their thrift is being penalised. Under our rules people with capital of between £3,000 and £16,000 find that interest is assumed at the rate of £1 a week for every £250 of capital. I only wish that someone would give me that rate of interest on my savings. It is, frankly, a ridiculous disincentive to save and it should be urgently re-examined.

My last issue is a local one. Earlier this year, Metrolink opened in our area. It is a great asset, giving us a marvellous system of transport from Bury in the north to Altrincham in the south. The system is widely used and it offers a convenient way of getting into Manchester. It also takes cars off the road, which is enormously helpful.

There are, however, plans to expand the system to the south Manchester and airport lines. The expansion is proposed by the Greater Manchester light rapid transport system. The new line, to be called the Olympic link, will connect Chorlton-cum-Hardy to Wythenshawe and, ultimately, Manchester airport. I question the suggested route that the line will take across the Mersey river valley. It is recognised that the plan seeks to use road corridors that have already been proposed in the urban development plans of Greater Manchester, Manchester and Trafford —that appears at first sight a logical step for the tram route.

What concerns me is the fact that in Trafford metropolitan borough council's urban development programme the Mersey valley is identified as an area of natural beauty and a recreational resource; a potential financial resource in the form of mining deposits; and the location for an eventual extension of Hardy lane as part of an orbital route into the city of Manchester. Permission for the proposed tram route will damage all three components of the UDP.

The current proposed route will also cut through a corner of Pimmcroft housing estate, an estate of homes built about five years ago. The plans would mean the demolition of eight houses that people have bought only recently. Originally the land was safeguarded for the western parkway road scheme, but it was abandoned some years ago. Its reservation is still largely intact and now forms the path of the proposed Metrolink line.

The developers of the estate will have bought the land for development with no idea of what the future held and will then have developed and sold the land in good faith. There are also problems to do with environmental damage. A couple of weeks ago, I met a group of local residents and I am due to meet the director-general of Greater Manchester passenger transport executive on Friday.

Local residents worry that their homes could be blighted. The housing market is difficult enough as it is without making it worse. Someone who suddenly finds that he has to move to another part of the country for work reasons and then discovers that his home is blighted is in a serious position. The local residents are asking for a public inquiry on the Metrolink extension and its viability. I should be grateful if my right hon. Friend could check the procedure and let me know.

Before the House rises for the summer recess, I hope that my right hon. Friend will be able to give me good news on the local community hospital, good news for housing associations and helpful information for residents of the Pimmcroft housing estate in my constituency.

6.9 pm

Mr. Andrew F. Bennett (Denton and Reddish): I am pleased to follow the hon. Member for Altrincham and Sale (Sir F. Montgomery), because this is one of the rare occasions on which I substantially agree with him. I am sure that he will agree that there are great possibilities for Greater Manchester in an extended Metrolink network but that, when the route leaves the old railway lines, it will cause problems.

I hope that Greater Manchester can negotiate with individual landowners to find a route that causes no disturbance. If not, as I understand it, any proposal for an extension of the line will have to go to a public inquiry. The Transport and Works Act 1992 removed the need for individual schemes to be promoted by private Bills, and gave local bodies the power to make representations to the Secretary of State, and gave the Secretary of State power then to arrange a public inquiry.

I also agree with the hon. Member's concern about grant levels for housing associations. I was a member of the Select Committee on the Environment which produced a good report, from which the hon. Gentleman quoted. I hope that the Government will soon issue a favourable response. The report emphasised that we are not building the 80,000 houses a year we need to build. By the turn of the century, 500,000 families who should be housed will not be housed because of the shortfall. As the hon. Gentleman said, about 500,000 building workers are out of work, so it is criminal that we are not building for the future.

I was not quite so happy with the hon. Gentleman's comments about the Sheehy report. He suggested that we could wait for a debate, but I believe that the Government should make it clear that they will shred or bin the report, and do so quickly, because it is already doing great damage to police morale. Until the Government state their views clearly, the issue will continue to fester within the police force.

What would be the attitude of the Leader of the House if he were a young constable, wondering whether to begin studying for his sergeant's exams? A constable takes perhaps 12 months to pass the tests, after which he has the opportunity to act as a sergeant for another 12 months. Now, he will be offered a new contract; instead of the security that he has now, he would have to ask himself whether he should risk accepting a short-term contract as proposed by Sheehy.

As long as such uncertainty rests in the back of a police officer's mind, he will wonder whether he should change jobs. That is not the way to ensure that crime is tackled.

The Government should be making it clear to the police force that they do not intend to put it through a continuous series of changes but want the force to be able to get on with the job.

The hon. Member for Gordon (Mr. Bruce) spoke of compensation to the poor when value added tax is levied on domestic fuel. We need a speedy solution to the problem; it could be a reason for the House to sit this week or to return early from the summer recess.

Clearly, part of the compensation can be granted through the benefits system, but it will be necessary for the Government to provide extra compensation to take into account the fact that some people live in properties that are hard to heat, or in cold parts of the country. The most logical solution is to provide insulation schemes for their dwellings, but such schemes will have to be implemented quickly in time for the first heating bills under the new system.

I stayed for this debate to express the disgust of people in the Manchester travel-to-work area about the removal of its intermediate area status. My right hon. Friends the Members for Manchester, Gorton (Mr. Kaufman), for Salford, East (Mr. Orme) and for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Sheldon) expressed considerable concern.

The Minister for Industry said glibly that unemployment in Manchester was not too bad. I remind him that one in 10 are still unemployed, but the much more serious figure for Manchester is that of the long-term unemployed. It is especially worrying for the people of Manchester that the Government seem to have washed their hands of the area and are no longer prepared to give any assistance to help it tackle the problem.

What effect will the loss of status have on Manchester's Olympic bid? As I understood it, some of the help for the bid was to come from grants which would be available as a result of the area's present status. If it loses that status, as the Government have decided it will, it will be that much harder for the area to get grants, and especially the passport to European Community money.

The Minister argued that there was not necessarily a link between EC grant status and intermediate status. It will be extremely difficult, however, to go cap in hand to the EC and ask whether an area can qualify for EC money when it does not qualify for assistance from our own Government. I should also be grateful for the Leader of the House's comments on the vast areas of east Manchester and the substantial part of Tameside which comprise derelict land. I should have thought that it was important to continue to assist in clearing those areas.

Apparently, the Government's thinking is that they will continue to give assistance to the Trafford Park area but not the rest of the Manchester travel-to-work area. I accept that, 30 years ago, 30,000 people worked at places such as Metro's in the centre of Trafford Park, which was the natural focus for people in the Manchester travel-to-work area. There were various works buses and a better rail network, and many people established car sharing systems to get to work.

With the destruction of Metrovicks and Trafford Park, the network for travelling into the area disappeared. Unless the Government can come up with new assistance for the area to make it easy for people to travel to Trafford Park—perhaps an extension of the metro system—it would be more logical to provide jobs near where people live than perpetuate a system under which people travel to Trafford Park.

I am very disappointed by the decision to remove the area's status, and I am sure that many people in the travel-to-work area will feel the same. We believe that the decision is simply political gerrymandering and that there is no logic in the Government's decision to remove intermediate status from the Manchester travel-to-work area.

Another issue that directly affects my constituents is the proposed closure of the Lancashire Hill post office. Many hon. Members have had a considerable number of letters from constituents who are worried about the long-term future of post offices after the Government's decision to encourage people to have benefits paid other than through post offices. It is ironic that the Government are encouraging people to have benefits paid through the banks, because banks have closed in Brinnington and in Haughton Green in my constituency, making it difficult for anyone foolish enough to ask for their money to be paid in that way rather than through the post office.

In advance of the general decline of post offices, which the Government are encouraging, it is proposed to close the Lancashire Hill post office in my constituency. It is in the centre of a council estate which was built in the 1960s. The estate consists of deck access flats and, although some flats are very attractive inside, some of the communal areas are appalling. The local authority, with much pressing from councillors and myself, suggested a regeneration scheme to the Government. The Government have given permission for the £12 million or so to be borrowed.

The authority is now halfway through the development scheme, but, because of the age of the postmaster, it has been proposed to close the post office. It would be crazy to close it, and I plead with the Government to use what influence they have with the Post Office. Although takings in the shop may be down because one half or one third of the estate is empty at present, within three years £12 million will have been spent on it, and the post office deserves to be kept open.

Mr. Newton: I cannot assure the hon. Gentleman that I will be able to get sufficient information to give him a detailed reply. I take it that he is referring to a sub-post office, not a Crown post office?

Mr. Bennett: I am referring to a sub-post office.

The usual argument by the Post Office is that there are other post offices relatively nearby. There is a Crown post office down the hill and another sub-post office some distance up the hill, but the Crown office, especially, does not offer the same service to pensioners as the one in the middle of the estate. I realise that it may be difficult, but I make a plea to the Government to assist me in persuading the Post Office to keep the existing post office open.

I wish to make two quick points before I end. First, I was in my constituency campaigning with Greenpeace recently to persuade people to boycott Norwegian goods. I hope that the Government will deliver a strong message to the Norwegian Government that we do not want them to begin whaling once more and that, if Norway wants to get into the EC, it must stop the practice. If only a small number of my constituents boycotted Norwegian products, the economic effect would outweigh the benefit that that country receives from whaling.

Secondly, the Norwegians could say that our environmeal record is not especially good, so will the

[Mr. Bennett]

Leader of the House explain why it is not possible for a Defence Minister to come to the House and make a statement about Britain's intentions for nuclear testing?

I understand that it is a little embarrassing for the Government that the Americans have said that they do not want any more tests and that we have been saying, until recently, that they are essential for the security of the country, but the House deserves clear statements from the Government. Do they accept that nuclear tests are no longer necessary? If we are not to have any tests, do the Government have any intention of developing the tactical air-to-surface missiles or a new free-fall nuclear bomb system?

Instead of trying to slip such information out during the recess, it would have been far better if the Government had had the courage to say that nuclear proliferation is one of the most appalling problems in the world. Britain ought to be prepared to give a lead and hope that everyone else will give up testing. We ought to say that we are not prepared to develop any new systems, and thereby give some impetus to the non-nuclear proliferation treaty, so that we can make the world a safer place.

It is a long recess, and the topics that I have briefly mentioned are ones for which the Government could find more time. I understand that we return in October, and that there are another couple of weeks' holiday before the Queen's Speech. There is surely time to settle the question of Sheehy and tell people what will happen about proposed compensation for VAT, and there is certainly time for the Government to find an opportunity to announce that they are reversing their decision to take intermediate status from Greater Manchester.

6.23 pm

Mr. David Amess (Basildon): Before the House adjourns for the summer recess, there are three points that I wish to raise. The first will be of concern and interest to my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House, because it is to do with Essex county council.

He will know that, in May, the Conservatives lost control of that county council. The election resulted in 32 Conservative councillors, 33 Labour councillors and 32 Liberal councillors. For some while, a great deal of posturing went on about who was to control the council. Hey presto, the decision was made that Labour would jump into bed with the Liberals. I do not know whether there are arrangements to impeach county councillors, but, if there are not, perhaps the House would wish to consider that issue at another stage, because in the past three months the two socialist parties have reneged on their policies in an absolutely disgraceful fashion.

Before the county council elections, those parties made all sorts of promises, on which I am reliably informed they have gone back in a disgraceful way. We should continue to remind them of how they have let down the good people of Essex. They said that they were going to spend more money on education and deliver nursery education. At the county council meeting in the past week, it was discovered that there has been underspend of £4 million. A Conservative county councillor proposed that the money be spent on primary education, and that suggestion was voted down by the two socialist parties.

Also during the county council election campaign, it was said that something was to be done about Pitsea tip in my constituency, where there had been continual protest about the movements of dumping. The socialists said that it was a disgrace, and held a public meeting during the run-up to the May election. When it came up in committee, nothing was done.

Finally, during the county council elections, the socialists castigated the Conservative-controlled county council about the meals on wheels and social service policy generally. When it came up at a committee meeting two weeks ago, the Conservatives wanted to do more, but the two socialist parties voted them down and wanted to do less. We shall never let them forget their treachery and the way that they have let down the people of Essex.

Moving on to my second point, on 23 February I asked leave to introduce a Bill to stop sex selection. That grubby practice goes on in the constituency of my hon. Friend the Member for Hendon, South (Mr. Marshall). It is basically a racket by which people come along, pay money and get roughly a 55 per cent. chance of correctly selecting the sex of their child.

I should have thought that the House would consider that such a grubby practice should be outlawed. Instead, my Bill was opposed, and it was opposed by feminists. Have you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, heard of anything so crazy as feminists opposing a Bill to outlaw sex selection, a practice which anyone with common sense realises works against women?

I was told during the debate that I should not have the arrogance to introduce such a Bill, that I should wait until the report of the committee overseeing those matters. Since then, that committee has reported, and it has recommended that sex selection should not be allowed in the country. Also, members of the British Medical Association are in favour of stopping sex selection.

I say to my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House that I and many other hon. Members are concerned about the cheapness of life, and that we cannot think of anything more degrading than choosing the sex of one's child. We want action from the Government, and we will not be fobbed off.

My final point concerns Pitsea post office—a serious matter that affects many of my constituents. I am outraged by the lack of courtesy of Post Office Counters Ltd. Up until now, it has not even had the good grace to telephone or write to me asking for my opinion about the threatened transfer of Pitsea post office.

Rumours started in my constituency on 19 June that Pitsea post office would be closing, that Post Office Counters Ltd. had done a deal with the Tesco superstore, and that the post office would be moved there. For 70 per cent. of the people who use the Pitsea Crown post office, that move would be wonderful, because the store would be open longer hours and that would be much more convenient. But I am concerned not about the people with cars, the young and middle-aged, but about the senior citizens who will have great difficulty in getting to the Tesco superstore in Pitsea.

I am concerned about the rumour of a fait accompli. Tesco has gone out to public consultation until 6 August, but I am told that it is a cosmetic exercise. Work has been done on building the new post office in the Tesco superstore. Counters are being installed and staff are being told that they will have jobs. It is a disgrace. More than

2,000 of my constituents have signed a petition to oppose the transfer, and many of them—elderly and disabled people—are outraged.

Mr. John Marshall (Hendon, South): May I give some hope to the people of Pitsea? Post Office Counters Ltd. used a similar ploy in Cricklewood, by means of which it managed to unite the hon. Member for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone) and myself. It decided that the union was so strange it should withdraw the proposal, and it may do so in my hon. Friend's constituency.

Mr. Amess: I am heartened by my hon. Friend's encouragement. Only this morning, as I opened Basildon playlink, one of the leaders of the protest group told me that training arrangements are appalling. Apparently, the training course used to last five weeks and the service was absolutely excellent, but now the proposal is for two seven-minute tests and only three week's training.

Hon. Members take their duties very seriously. I deprecate the lack of courtesy that seems to have crept in since the 1992 general election, because some hon. Members now visit other hon. Members' constituencies without dropping a note to inform them. That certainly is not the case with one Opposition Member, but I do not need the help of a Back-Bench Opposition Member who, I read from press cuttings, is holding a public meeting in my constituency. I am perfectly able to represent Basildon, as the chairman of Post Office Counters Ltd. and Tesco will find out next week.

6.32 pm

Mr. Bob Cryer (Bradford, South): May I deal, first, with the Minister's shocking excuse that the changes in assisted area status were presented so late in the parliamentary year because the Government had to consult an EC Commissioner about them? Are we so subservient to EC Commissioners that we cannot ask them to see our proposed changes at a date that suits the Government and that, if a highly paid bureaucrat on £130,000 a year plus expenses deems that he has not time to see a representative of the British Government, an order cannot be laid?

Parliament is entitled to 40 days in which to pray against the Assisted Areas Order 1993 during which the House could debate for an hour and a half the unfairness of removing Bradford's assisted area status, but if the House of Lords sits, even as the final court of appeal, our praying days are lost. If the House of Lords considers the Rees-Mogg case during the recess, we might lose as many as half of our praying days.

I hope that the Government will allocate sufficient time for debate. The number of hon. Members rising to put a question during this afternoon's statement showed widespread concern and deep suspicion of gerrymandering, on the basis not of need but of political convenience for the Government.

Bradford's removal from the list of assisted areas cannot be justified. There are 552 vacancies for 25,000 unemployed people in Bradford. Unemployment is almost 11 per cent. I mention that because of Bradford's heavy emphasis on manufacturing, particularly textiles and engineering, and because as a result of difficulties associated with the multi-fibre arrangement jobs are constantly being eroded.

Bradford has lost urban aid. The loss of section 11 grant from the Home Office particularly affects Bradford, which has a comparatively large ethnic minority population. Section 11 money was an important component of our assistance. I hope that the Minister will give an assurance that, if a prayer is tabled—rest assured that it will be—serious consideration will be given to providing more than one and a half hours to debate the issue after the recess.

I tabled an amendment to the Adjournment motion to allow an extra two days to debate changes in assisted area status. A debate would have been very valuable, and I hope that, if I decide to divide the House, hon. Members will join me in the Lobby.

We need time to debate the "Questions of Procedure for Ministers", paragraph 107 of which says:

> "Ministers must resign any directorships they hold when they give up office. This applies whether the directorship is in a public or a private company and whether it carries remuneration or is honorary. The only exception to this rule is that directorships in private companies established in connection with private family estates may be retained subject to the condition that, if at any time the Minister feels that conflict is likely to arise between this private interest and public duty, the Minister should even in those cases resign the directorship."

That is guidance from the Prime Minister. I believe that there should not be double standards between guidance from the Prime Minister to Ministers and legislation which the Government propose for the ordinary man or woman in the street. Tight rules apply to, for example, income support, social fund grants and loans. We should devote some time to debating those issues before the House rises. People who leave their employment without just cause can have their unemployment benefit cut by almost 20 per cent. for up to 26 weeks. The Bradford employment office—or unemployment office—invariably automatically chooses 26 weeks rather than one, two or three weeks, because the period for which it can deduct is up to 26 weeks and not a mandatory 26 weeks. Tight rules apply to ordinary people who are struggling to make ends meet week in, week out.

When I asked about four Ministers who were in breach of paragraph 107 of the "Questions of Procedure for Ministers", the Leader of the House told me that I was muck-raking—that I could not ask about Ministers, but Ministers could make rules to cut unemployment benefit for people who, for example, left their employment because of a dispute with their employer.

I take the view, and it should be on the record, that those rules should be kept. When the hon. Member for Richmond and Barnes (Mr. Hanley), as director of a company—he receives no remuneration—supplies the services of two members of his family as actresses, that is not part of the family estate. It is better if a Minister resigns the directorship. The Select Committee on Members' Interests says to all hon. Members that, if an hon. Member is in any doubt, he should declare a financial interest. On balance, it is better if Ministers resign.

I accept that that example could be regarded as a marginal case, but, on the other hand, the hon. Member for Suffolk, South (Mr. Yeo), who is also a Minister, is a director, not of one company but of several. I think that he is in breach of the rules. For example, he is a director of the Locana Corporation (London) Ltd., D'Arcy Stand Ltd., Tadworth Court Trust Ltd., Locana Nominees Ltd, General Securities Register Ltd. and Anacol Holdings Ltd.

[Mr. Bob Cryer]

Anacol Holdings Ltd. is a company that deals in securities. It may well be that the hon. Member has not received any remuneration, but he received a loan during 1992 of £75,000 by the Locana Corporation (London) Ltd., a subsidiary to TSK Yeo. The loan was repaid, but it has a value. The rules for Ministers—in paragraph 107—are laid down to avoid any conflict when Ministers make decisions. It seems quite qrong that Ministers can avoid or bend the rules, but if ordinary people try to bend the rules that the Government produce, a different set of standards is imposed.

Mr. Andrew Mackinlay (Thurrock): My hon. Friend referred to double standards for Ministers. Did he notice that when the right hon. Members for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont) and for Watford (Mr. Garel Jones) and others declined to stay in the Government they were entitled to generous severance payments despite the fact that they departed from the Government voluntarily, so we are told? When other people in the work force decide to give up their jobs, or are made redundant, they are not always entitled to the generous severance payments that are exclusively available to members of the Government.

Mr. Cryer: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for raising that point as it reinforces the question of double standards.

I shall now deal with Viscount Cranborne, who is also a member of the Government. He is a director of an organisation—a company limited by guarantee—called Stalbury Trustees. Its aims have nothing to do with private family estates. Its principal activity is the promotion of Conservative principles for the benefit of the Conservative cause or party.

Viscount Cranborne may regard the Conservative party as his private property, but not many others in the party do. It is not his family estate. It really should not be a matter for a Conservative Minister to be involved in a company that has investments valued in 1991 at just under £1 million, the interest of which goes towards the Conservative party. It seems to me that such a company could bring a Minister into conflict with some activities that he would undertake as a Minister.

The right hon. Member for Conwy (Sir W. Roberts) was a director of a company that provided secretarial and research services. He received remuneration. In 1992, when the turnover was £29,390, the profit on ordinary activities before taxation was £2,190. As the only two directors are the right hon. Member for Conwy and his wife, I assume that the surplus over activities, the profit before taxation, was distributed to the directors. It certainly was in 1991 because the dividend payable is listed as £4,500, and there was a distribution. In the provision of the services there, it is quite possible that, as a Minister, such company activity could come into conflict with his duty as a Minister.

I shall now deal with the hon. Member for Morecambe and Lunesdale (Mr. Lennox-Boyd). It is arguable that his extensive property interests could be counted as part of the family estates. The family estates include: Ince castle, Saltash; the ground floor flats, stable block; flats 1 to 8 Friary court, Saltash; flats 68a and 68b Fore street; flats 3 to 9 Regal court; flats in Culver road, Fore street and Tamar court, Saltash. The estate also includes shops at 67 and 67a, 67b and 68 Fore street, Saltash; shops 1 and 2 and a restaurant at Regal court; and shops at Fore street and Culver road, Saltash; and garages 1 to 8 at the rear; and a farm and estate properties at Ince estate, Saltash; Ince estate, woodlands; Ince farm; and Greeps, Saltash. With such an extensive estate, it is a straightforward property company involved in an ordinary commercial enterprise. It is not simply looking after the farm house with honeysuckle growing round the door.

When the Prime Minister—whom I know to be in some odium at the moment because of his off-the-cuff remarks—picks such people and gets them into the room at No. 10 and says, "Look, I want you to take up this job", they do not say, "I can't do it because of rule 107." They accept the document, as I did in 1976-78. Ministers have done much the same over the years. They accept the document "Questions of Procedure for Ministers".

In order to clarify the position, all those Ministers should be asked either to resign their directorships and get rid of their shareholdings or resign their posts and keep the company activity, if that is what they choose, although I do not take that view: Members of Parliament are paid well enough to enable them to rely entirely on a salary. Members should not have outside interests.

Ministers are in special position, and I hope that the Minister does not regard as muck-raking my defence of ordinary people facing difficult and stiff rules, which are imposed inflexibly on them, when I say that the standards for ordinary people should apply to Ministers.

6.45 pm

Mr. William Powell (Corby): There are some who think that these debates on the Adjournment are something of an acquired taste. My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House will be of the view that not only has the hon. Member for Altrincham and Sale (Sir F. Montgomery) acquired the taste, but I have as well.

I should like to reflect for a moment on the observations of my hon. Friend the Member for Basildon (Mr. Amess), who referred to some clearly appalling circumstances currently arising at Essex county council. He asked whether it would be possible to impeach a councillor. One disadvantage of the impeachment process is that it involves a trial by the House of Lords. In this day and age, that would be rather time consuming and possibly extremely expensive.

A better way to handle the difficulty that my hon. Friend identified would be to introduce a Bill of attainder, which, if it is enacted into law, instead of involving a trial, simply declares people to be guilty and imposes the penalty of Parliament as a consequence. An Act of attainder is a declaratory process and, if my hon. Friend would like to introduce a Bill that could have its First Reading, I shall be perfectly happy to join him as a sponsor of such legislation. It is several hundred years since it was last used, and the Bill may not make much progres on this occasion. However, it is a solution that I offer my hon. Friend.

Mr. Harry Cohen (Leyton): The hon. Gentleman was saying that a Bill could be introduced that automatically declared people guilty. Does the hon. Gentleman believe in civil liberties?

Mr. Powell: The hon. Gentleman knows me better than to ask such absurd questions.

As always, a fascinating collection of subjects has been raised. Those who listened to my hon. Friend the Member for Poole (Mr. Ward), who raised one of the most important questions facing the world today and covered it in an immensely interesting and comprehensive way, will know that his speech deserves to be read widely.

My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House will not be surprised to hear me say that I wish to return to the question of the prosecution of persons who may be guilty of war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. I have raised that matter again and again, as I see that the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, East (Mr. Brown) recognises. Since I last discussed the matter, there has been at least one item of good news. Under resolution 827, passed in June this year, the Security Council of the United Nations has voted to establish an ad hoc tribunal capable of trying those who can be brought before it for alleged war crimes.

Unfortunately, that is as far as the good news goes. No further progress has been made. When I raised that point not long ago with my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary—I asked him about the appointment of a special prosecutor, who is most urgently required, a point on which I shall base the substance of my remarks—he drew my attention to the undoubted fact that, until the special prosecutor was appointed, the special commissioners appointed last year under resolution 780 will continue with their work.

My right hon. Friend was absolutely right about that, but I am not sure that he understood how little work is being done by those special commissioners. There are five of them, from five different countries—Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Senegal and the United States. They meet every month or two, perhaps for two or three days at a time. Over the past nine months, they have met for only 15 days, and the chairman of the commission, who comes from Holland, has managed to persuade the authorities of the United Nations that he can act entirely on a part-time basis.

As a result of all that, very little work is being done and there are virtually no resources. At the United Nations in Geneva, there are three offices, with two secretaries and three professional staffers, at least up until this month. All of the work that is worth while is being done in the DePaul university in Chicago, because the rapporteur from the United States, Professor M. Cherif Bassiouni, has made available the resources of his law department.

It is outrageous that matters as important as this are not being properly funded and financed by the United Nations. Even though the Security Council and all the members of it have willed the process, they have failed to provide the means.

Some $1·2 million has been set aside but nearly all of it is for administrative measures. No more than $26,900 has been made available so that the special commissioners can travel to Yugoslavia and uncover what are undoubtedly, in Europe, the greatest atrocities of the past decade. The commission has made attempts to get expert teams in Vukovar to exhume bodies from the terrible atrocity of Ovcara. It has not succeeded, but an advance team went in December. It hired a non-governmental organisation in Boston to do a survey of mass graves in Croatia. The group went to Croatia for three days and inspected the Ovcara mass grave. That grave was being protected by UNPROFOR troops from Russia and help was generally forthcoming from the United Nations.

Some 200 bodies were estimated to be in the Ovcara grave and some eight other mass graves have been reported in Croatia. Perhaps 12 are known about in Bosnia, so that is 21 mass graves already believed to exist in former Yugoslavia, either in Croatia or Bosnia. No work whatsoever has so far been done on exhuming the bodies, or on identifying who might be involved, because no resources have been made available.

In February, the Secretary-General of the United Nations opened a voluntary trust fund for Governments to subscribe to so that prosecution work could be prepared. Canada, bless its heart, gave $250,000 in February, the United States committed $500,000 three months later, the Netherlands gave $200,000, Norway $50,000, New Zealand $26,000 and Denmark $20,000—and that is as far as it has gone. We have just over $1 million to fund the work to discover what has been going on.

Meanwhile, despite the call for the appointment of a special prosecutor, and despite what I believe to be the desire of the Secretary-General to proceed—resolution 827 nominates him as the person to appoint the special prosecutor—we have been bereft of resources for the special commission set up by resolution 780 and no appointment has been made. One of the reasons why that has happened—I know that my right hon. Friend will draw my remarks to the attention of my right hon. Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary—is the attitude of the British Government. I am afraid that I regard that as extremely regrettable.

As soon as resolution 827 had been passed, the non-aligned members and others in the United Nations advised the Secretary-General that the only suitable person in the world to do the job was the rapporteur of the commission set up by resolution 780, Professor Bassiouni. My right hon. Friend has heard me talk about his immense gifts. As the special rapporteur, and as the man who has made available all the resources of his university department, including computer facilities, he is the man who knows most of all about what is going on in Yugoslavia. He had been there to see for himself some of the matters that undoubtedly require investigation.

It has come to my attention that the Governments of Great Britain and Canada have been putting considerable pressure on the Secretary-General not to appoint Professor Bassiouni and instead to appoint somebody—a Canadian, as it so happens, which is why Canada is joining the United Kingdom—who is much less qualified for the job and who has no substantial experience as a prosecutor. As a Government official in Canada, he would return to his Government post as soon as was convenient thereafter. He is undoubtedly not the best qualified person.

The will of the world is that those matters should be prosecuted, which is why we have established the ad hoc tribunal. If the Secretary-General is now being told by a permanent member of the Security Council, Great Britain, that he should not appoint the most qualified person, that will undoubtedly lead to considerable delay in the necessary work that must take place.

Mr. Frank Cook (Stockton, North): I am always intrigued by the hon. Gentleman's contributions and listen to them with great interest—even more so on this occasion. What possible motive could there be for the

[Mr. Frank Cook]

collusion between Great Britain and Canada? Why do they want to appoint somebody other than the hon. Gentleman's preferred candidate?

Mr. Powell: Canada is anxious to secure the position of special prosecutor for itself and is seeking allies. There is, however, a more profound reason. Does the world community really want any cases to be brought before the tribunal? Having established the tribunal, might it not be the case that, the more deeply one goes into who might be prosecuted, the more embarrassing the names might become? Lord Owen, accompanied now by Mr. Stoltenberg, although he had Mr. Vance and others with him in the past, has said on a number of occasions that his mission would not be assisted if there were any question of putting Mr. Milosevic or any others on trial. War crimes become something of an embarrassment to those who are seeking a diplomatic solution.

The trouble is that serious crimes against humanity are being committed in the former Yugoslavia and diplomatic progress is slow. The situation is serious. Having established the tribunal, too many United Nations members do not wish to carry out what is implicit in its establishment—namely, to bring forward evidence so that indictments, where proper, can be laid.

The evidence that is being amassed in Chicago suggests that charges for serious crimes against humanity could not merely be brought forward against private soldiers and the small fry who have committed appalling crimes on the orders of others. Evidence is now emerging that increasingly involves the leadership of the Yugoslav army and the leadership of Serbia. We are rapidly reaching the point where evidence that would lead to charges against the leaders, not the foot soldiers, could be brought before an indicting chamber. That is the reason for war crimes tribunals. The more one brings charges against the leaders, the more one interferes in the work being done by people on the diplomatic front. I have referred to some of Lord Owen's comments.

A budget is being prepared for the work of the tribunal. About $35 million is sought, but $5 million only is being allowed for prosecutions. That is little short of outrageous. Resolution 827 mentions The Hague as being an appropriate site for the court, but leaves open the possibility that it may sit elsewhere. The Hague is not an appropriate site. It is too far away from the events. Witnesses would have to be brought too far and the plans that are being made for their protection amount to no more than bed-and-breakfast accommodation. That simply would not do. Those people have been the subject of the most fearsome and horrendous criminal acts. To offer them no more than bed-and-breakfast accommodation in Holland would be to make them extremely vulnerable to reprisals and much greater work to protect witnesses would have to be done.

The prosecution department has a planned budget of only $5 million. That will not take us very far. The special prosecutor will not only need a staff of trained lawyers, detective police officers and military policemen, but facilities that might have to last for more than two years, and $5 million simply would not cover that—$50 million would be a much more realistic sum. It is planned that most of the money will be spent to refurbish a building in The Hague. Nothing could be more inappropriate than spending large sums of money on refurbishing an unsuitable building in The Hague simply because the Government of Holland wished it to be done in that way.

The time has come for a realistic political grip to be taken on proceedings. I ask my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House to draw that point to the attention of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. The United Nations General Assembly should be asked to vote on realistic budgets, not only for travelling expenses and long weekends for people who work for the United Nations, but for the necessary work to be undertaken.

I beg my right hon. Friends to stop the nonsense of trying to appoint someone whom the whole world knows is not the best person for the job. I beg them to allow the one person in the world who knows about the job to get on with it, and to appoint him now. Each day lost means that witnesses are lost, making it more difficult to examine the evidence, which is bound to disappear the longer that we delay. We cannot wait for the United Nations General Assembly in September, as some people wish. We cannot wait for the clanking processes of international justice to start to grind—perhaps next year or the year after.

Above all, the world community must do what it has been prepared to do until now: to say that what has been going on in Yugoslavia is wrong and that we cannot allow it to pass without enforcing the United Nations' moral sanction and bringing prosecutions before the tribunal.

7.4 pm

Mr. Harry Cohen (Leyton): I will not continue on the same tack as the hon. Member for Corby (Mr. Powell), although I think that he is right to pursue the subject of bringing more criminals to justice. They should have to face justice, however long that takes, so I support him in that sentiment.

This House should not leave for the recess until an Education Minister has made a statement about blind pupils and other disabled schoolchildren being refused places at opted-out schools. That new, obnoxious and discriminatory policy seems to have come about as a by-product of Government education policies rather than as a deliberate result of them. I raised the subject on a point of order earlier and Madam Speaker encouraged me to mention it in this debate.

I have notified the hon. Member for Chingford (Mr. Duncan Smith), as Highams Park school is in his constituency. The school has just ended its 20-year-old agreement with a special school nearby to teach blind and partially sighted children. Highams Park has only recently opted out of the local government system. In an article in *The Guardian* of 24 July 1993 Mr. Andrew Lockhart, the chief education officer of the London borough of Waltham Forest, described what is happening as

"a particularly nasty kind of selection."

I shall quote from him again later. The article also stated:

"About 15 blind and partially-sighted children attended lessons and were integrated . . . into Highams Park"

school. The head teacher of the school has now said that that arrangement must be brought to an end, although he has imposed a couple of conditions, whereby he will continue the arrangement if he gets extra money—something like £26,000—from the local education authority, plus additional staff support from the special school that was feeding blind pupils into Highams Park.

To ask for money in those circumstances is to hold the authority, the parents of those children and the children up to ransom. Really it is blackmail.

The article goes on to say:

"The number of visually-handicapped pupils being integrated fell as Highams Park placed more emphasis on academic courses."

It quotes Mr. Frank Smith, the head teacher of the special school whose pupils fed into Highams Park, who said:

"It was difficult to negotiate with the school at the top level. We believe things were made difficult to squeeze us out. Children with special educational needs are not welcome."

That is a serious allegation. Indeed, a blind pupil who was integrated into Highams Park school has had to be taken out. The local authority has found her a place at Rush Croft school, another school with a good reputation in the Chingford area. I pay tribute to the local authority for preserving that blind girl's education within the main schooling sector—no thanks to the head teacher and the narrow-minded governors of Highams Park school.

The chief education officer of Waltham Forest, Mr. Andrew Lockhart, said:

"A grant-maintained school can refuse to accept a pupil with special educational needs. In the long term, it would seem to allow grant-maintained schools to select not to have pupils with special educational needs. It is a particularly nasty kind of selection."

I endorse those comments and ask the Government to comment on this serious matter.

It seems that the governors of opt-out schools are trying to grab as much money as they can from the local education authorities at the expense of the schools run by those authorities and that is quite wrong.

The article made it clear that Highams Park school was choosing not to take blind children or children who need special education because it has an eye on the Government's league table policy, which places emphasis on examinations and a school's academic record. That policy is not working properly when it means that schools do not take such children. For a start, there is a false assumption that blind children will not gain academic qualifications and are not intelligent enough to be in the mainstream of education. The Government should not contemplate such an argument.

Secondly, league tables based purely on examinations do not reflect a school's qualities or its achievements. Part of its achievements should be to deal with children who need special education. Plainly, the policy has gone wrong when Highams Park school and other opt-out schools can exclude such children. It seems that schools such as Highams Park are getting ready to go fully private and when that happens they will not want those children. There should be a rule that private and opted-out schools have to take children with special educational needs.

A Lords amendment to the Education Bill would have given local education authorities the power to direct grant-maintained schools to accept such pupils. However, last week the Government turned that down without proper debate. They should think again about their policy. What is the Government's attitude to blind and disabled pupils? Do they want them ghettoised, out of the mainstream, or do they favour my policy, which is that they should be properly integrated in the mainstream education system? If the Government agree, they should require opted-out and private schools to take those pupils and give them a proper education. There should not be an obnoxious discriminatory system of policy. I hope that the Minister will deal with that.

7.12 pm

Mr. Peter Temple-Morris (Leominster): I want to add to the gallery, if not the galaxy, of subjects that my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House will have to address. The single subject of my speech is the BBC World Service, an issue that I have raised before. In an Adjournment debate a month ago, my hon. Friend the Member for Bexleyheath (Mr. Townsend) dealt with the matter in detail.

Early-day motion 1780 is by far the best supported motion this Session. It has 378 signatures, the number is increasing, and the motion has not been off the Order Paper since it was put down some months ago. The aim is to obtain 400 signatures. The motion is in the top 10 of all time and its support ranges from right to left across both major parties. Almost all Liberal Democrat Members, including the leader of that party, who does not usually sign early-day motions, have signed it.

I shall not do a complete roll call, but I can say that it is also supported by the right hon. Members for Islwyn (Mr. Kinnock) and for Lagan Valley (Mr. Molyneaux), the hon. Member for Foyle (Mr. Hume) and the leaders of the Scottish and Welsh National parties. The motion has almost unique cross-section support because the BBC World Service does an outstanding job for Britain. It carries out a function that Britain performs best and in these times of challenge and change we should hang on to such functions.

In national budgetary terms, the money involved is minimal and out of all proportion to the job that the World Service does. The service has already taken a considerable cut. The early-day motion does not argue against the cuts, but points out that there has already been one in the current year of some £5 million and that the service is threatened with a further cut of 2·5 or 5 per cent. The service could not absorb such costs and it will suffer.

The Government should adopt a flexible view in imposing the cuts that will have to be imposed, bearing in mind our financial situation. There must be flexibility in dealing with low-cost functions which Britain does well and which do for Britain an amount of good throughout the world quite incommensurate with the minimal cost that is involved. A deputation representing the signatories of that motion intends to seek a meeting with the Chief Secretary before the recess is out.

7.16 pm

Mr. Harry Barnes (Derbyshire, North-East): I remind the House of the terms of the motion:

"That this House, at its rising on Tuesday 27th July, do adjourn until Monday 18th October."

That is 12 weeks less one day. The recess is excessive, and many problems arise because of that. My hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer) said that he was prepared to divide the House on his amendment to the motion. If he does, I shall certainly support him.

Who benefits from the 12-week recess? The main beneficiaries are obviously the Government, because any Executive benefits from not being harassed by a Parliament to which they are answerable. This Government particularly will benefit from such a recess in view of their difficulties and the fact that they had to force a vote of confidence on the House. Their only survival factor is the 12-week break, because they hope that in that time something will turn up to their benefit.

[Mr. Harry Barnes]

Perhaps some hon. Members benefit from such a long recess and some part-time Members with other jobs find it convenient. Perhaps overworked Members find it beneficial to get away from the Chamber and involve themselves in constituency and other work and have a change of scenery. However, our constituents do not benefit from Parliament being away for 12 weeks. Their only benefit is that the Government cannot press on us more anti-social legislation.

Hon. Members use the House to probe the Government on behalf of their constituents, but answers often come from civil servants rather than Ministers who may not particularly care about the issues that are being raised. Civil servants protect their Ministers. The well-understood avenues for hon. Members are written and oral questions, questions on statements, debates and early-day motions. The hon. Member for Leominister (Mr. Temple-Morris) spoke about an early-day motion that has been used in an excellent way because it has been fully extended and a campaign has been organised around it. Even with minor early-day motions, during business questions on a Thursday we can ask whether a particular early-day motion will be discussed. The PPS to the Leader of the House will pass to him details that have been prepared and in that way we can learn the official response.

Some hon. Members may have more access to information than others to pursue their constituents' interests. Various avenues are open to a Minister; a prominent Opposition Member will be listened to. But what happens to Opposition Back Benchers? What they have available to them is attempted contact with Ministers —through letters, telephone conversations and perhaps persuading their hon. Friends on the Opposition Front Bench to harry Ministers into a meeting to discuss a particular subject—but they do not have the ready responses that come from being able to conduct a campaign on the Floor of the House.

We should not have 12-week breaks. Parliament meets long enough over the year and half that 12-week period could be used throughout the year for early-day motions and the like. The absence of early-day motions and such options would not matter much for a week—people can survive that—but their absence for 12 weeks can leave many difficulties and many of the issues that constituents wish to raise are not seriously considered. Last year many hon. Members tried to telephone the Benefits Agency during the recess in order to push particular cases, but they did not have the avenues available in the House to supplement that activity.

We should oppose the motion for the sake of our constituents so that we can represent them better. I hope that, in time, the spread of business of the House will be organised in such a way as to enable us to serve our constituents more effectively.

7.22 pm

Mr. Richard Page (Hertfordshire, South-West): I should like to make a brief contribution before the recess and before hon. Members disappear with their buckets and spades to the seaside for 12 weeks minus one day.

The House knows that the size of the public sector borrowing requirement is huge and that the Government have the problem of addressing it. Currently, the Government have the worst of both worlds: they must address both the deficit and the public perception that they have been cutting public expenditure for years. That incorrect public perception started in 1979, when the then Prime Minister, Baroness Thatcher, and her Ministers announced that they were going to be tough on spending. That misconception has grown over the past 14 years.

The truth is that, in real terms, public sector expenditure has soared, although the public believe that there have been cuts. Anyone who disbelieves that need only hold a survey on national health expenditure, which will show that the majority of the public think that there have been cuts. We know that there has been an increase, in real terms, of over 50 per cent.

The Government must deal with both expenditure and income. Cutting public expenditure will help, but I believe that it is easier to increase income. Perhaps that is not a fashionable view in the House. I have noticed that some hon. Members are very good spenders, but not good earners.

Let me draw my right hon. Friend's attention to an aspect of the legislation concerning property leasing which could be detrimental, in some cases, to industry and commerce, especially small businesses. That aspect—which is currently under scrutiny—is the growing practice of upwards-only rent reviews and the liability that remains with the original leaseholder of a property if subsequent leaseholders default.

I know that solicitors are supposed to be responsible and point out the pitfalls, especially to people entering such agreements for the first time, but that does not always happen. Many small business men starting their first business do so with starry eyes. We should remove some of the pitfalls, which I believe should not be there in the first place.

I am fully aware that the value of property has a particular niche in public consciousness, but I sometimes wonder whether we have an excessive obsession with property. Once property has been built, it is the use to which it can be put that is of value to the nation.

The two aspects that I have mentioned damage the mobility of companies, their growth and, in some cases, their very existence. If we have consistently high inflation, the upwards-only rent reviews do not matter so much; however, in a stable economy with low inflation—or even during recessions—true rents may drop. I do not see why rents should go for ever onwards and upwards. Companies face varying circumstances over the years. Some companies may want smaller premises—they may be losing money and want to get out of their larger premises —but they are locked in. Some companies may disagree with the rent review and want to move to cheaper premises. Too bad; they are locked in.

Arbitration can create further pressure on a business. Often a company has built up a successful business, it has grown and their customers know where it is; but the cost of location is high. The natural tendency when there is a rent review, if it goes to arbitration, is for the arbiters to say, "That is a successful business; it can afford an upward move." In that way, the rent can unfairly reflect the success of the company to the advantage of the landlord.

As for the liability of the original leaseholder when a lease is disposed of, again there is a locked-in element. If the landlord refuses to lift the liability, it is possible that, several years later, the original leaseholder will be liable for any defaults. The landlord can go back to a company or

person through, literally, several changes of ownership of the lease and receive payment, perhaps several years later. The original person or company will have no influence whatever on the management of the failed company. A limit on liability should be introduced to help such companies, perhaps based on time—for instance, the period to the next rent review.

I will not develop the ways in which the two aspects might be further improved, because of the time restrictions operating this evening. We make great play of the mobility of labour; I think, in turn, we should have a degree of flexibility as regards companies. Small businesses are affected and it is in small businesses that we will see a growth in employment and the profitability of our nation. We put that at risk at our peril. I hope that my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House will take this on board when reviewing the legislation for the forthcoming year.

7.30 pm

Mr. Tony Banks (Newham, North-West): I will be extraordinarily brief. I wish to raise the issue of Norwegian whaling. The cause is close to my heart, and is close also to the hearts of hon. Members on both sides of the House. It is quite outrageous that, since the ban on commercial whaling imposed in 1986 by the International Whaling Commission, the Norwegians—under the guise of scientific whaling—have slaughtered 1,000 minke whales. That is unacceptable. They have used the word "science" as a way of getting around the ban on commercial whaling.

They have now gone further. At the most recent IWC meeting in Kyoto, Japan, the Norwegians announced that they would completely ignore the renewal of the commercial whaling ban, and that they would resume commercial whaling. They have now done so, and have slaughttered 100 minke whales in the north Atlantic this year. They intend to slaugher another 200 of the whales.

The whales belong to all of us. They are migratory creatures, and are not the property of Norway. Mrs. Bro Harlem Brundtland calls herself a socialist, and goes around the world talking about her green credentials. She has acted like a stinking hypocrite in the way in which she has flouted an international agreement on whaling. This country, and indeed the Government, must take a strong lead: they must make it clear to the Norwegians that their behaviour is unacceptable and that, while they continue to slaughter those beautiful creatures, there is no place for them in any civilised family of nations.

The Government should tell the Norwegians that they should not be allowed to join the European Community until they give up whaling. This country should also take appropriate sanctions against Norwegian goods. If Norway continues whaling, I must say on behalf of many Londoners that the traditional Christmas tree erected in Trafalgar square will not be welcome. If the tree is erected, it will become the focal point of a number of demonstrations. Those demonstrations will, of course, be peaceful, as those of us who love and believe in the rights of co-existence of all living creatures believe in peaceful demonstrations.

I hope that the House and the Leader of the House will join me once again in utterly condemning the actions of the Norwegians.

7.32 pm

Mr. Nicholas Brown (Newcastle upon Tyne, East): I am happy to join my hon. Friend the Member for Newham, North-West (Mr. Banks). I hope that we will be able to send a message to the Norwegians that we want to save the whale. Whales are beautiful creatures, and should not be hunted and killed.

There has been a range of calls during this short debate for statements and debates. If one thing is completely predictable, it is that the range of topics covered in our little debate this evening will be exceeded by the range of announcements that will come from the Government immediately after the beginning of the summer recess. My hon. Friend the Member for Derbyshire, North-East (Mr. Barnes) pointed out with uncharacteristic cynicism that the Government are convenienced by our removal from this place over the summer.

The Leader of the House's more usual role is to announce what is to happen in the next week or the week after. I wonder whether he could give us a list now of the statements that we can expect from the Executive in the next fortnight. Those statements will cover topics that the Government would be slightly more hesitant in covering were the House still in session. Experience suggests that there will be a range of statements. Can we expect, for example, a supplementary statement on assisted area status? A number of my right hon. and hon. Friends have expressed dissatisfaction with the announcement made earlier today.

My hon. Friend the Member for Alyn and Deeside (Mr. Jones) spoke of the hurt suffered by his former steel industry community. He felt that his area had been treated unfairly. A common theme in the speeches by Opposition Members was that, in making their decisions on assisted area status, the Government have concentrated on what they deem to be political advantage, rather than considering issues on their merits alone.

The hon. Member for Gordon (Mr. Bruce) mentioned the purchase of the stories of criminals by newspapers, and the hon. Member for Corby (Mr. Powell) agreed with that view. Both hon. Members should sign the early-day motion that has been tabled by my hon. Friend the Member for Warley, West (Mr. Spellar), which addresses that question.

My hon. Friend the Member for Tooting (Mr. Cox) brought to our attention the continuing scandal of the lack of progress over Cyprus. He pinned the blame where it clearly belongs—with the leadership of the Republic of Northern Cyprus. That country is now acting as host to Mr. Asil Nadir. My hon. Friend hoped that Mr. Nadir's present position would focus attention on northern Cyprus. I do not think that it is likely that the Conservative party will pursue the issue with any vigour.

One of the saddest documents I have read in the past year was an article in the July/August issue of *Business Age* on the funding of the Conservative party. Among a number of major donors named in the article was Mr. Asil Nadir. [HON. MEMBERS: "You don't believe that."] Some hon. Members may say that I do not believe that. I have not, however, heard a convincing refutation of the points contained in the article. Were such a refutation of those thoroughly researched points ever produced, I would consider it in my usual fair-minded way.

I remind Conservative Members of the concluding words of the editor and publisher of the magazine:

[Mr. Nicholas Brown]

"Britain's ruling party is riddled with corruption. It's time to clean up government. Now."

That is a damning indictment of the Conservative party, and does not suggest any vigour in following the affairs of Mr. Asil Nadir.

The hon. Member for Altrincham and Sale (Sir F. Montgomery) expressed concern at the rising support for the Labour party in his constituency. Clearly, his rejection by the electorate of Newcastle, East has had a lasting and searing effect on him.

The hon. Gentleman then went on to make a Labour party speech. He advocated state intervention to revitalise the construction industry and public transport in the form of urban light railways. Both are sound Labour party policies, and I congratulate him on his belated conversion to some of the causes we favour. If that conversion has been produced by electoral pressure from the Labour party in Altrincham and Sale, the Conservative party is probably in even more trouble than the newspapers say.

The hon. Member for Basildon (Mr. Amess) followed an excellent speech by my hon. Friend the Member for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennet). My hon. Friend denounced the Sheehy report, spoke about the imposition of VAT on domestic fuel and regretted the loss of assisted area status for Manchester. He said that the outcome had been gerrymandered, which was a constant theme during the debate.

The hon. Member for Basildon spoke with some expertise about broken election promises. He could have referred to the promises to maintain the value of the currency, to retain membership of the ERM, not to impose tax increases and not to increase or extend VAT. Those were not, however, among the broken election promises to which he drew our attention.

My hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer) drew our attention to the guidance for Ministers in the declaration of their directorships. He compared that —helpfully, I thought—with the rules for those who claim state benefit. It did seem that those claiming state benefit are treated more harshly than the four Ministers that my hon. Friend mentioned. I hope that the Leader of the House will take note of the serious point in my hon. Friend's speech. If Ministers are in breach of the guidelines, that matter should be drawn to the Prime Minister's attention and rectified immediately. It is a serious matter, and should be treated as such.

The hon. Member for Corby echoed the hon. Member for Basildon in asking what control we have over local councillors. The subject is often raised in the House, but the truth is that hon. Members cannot exercise any direct control over councillors, either members of their own party or of others. The call to introduce a Bill of attainder or to impeach them seem to be rather wild remedies. They were not an appropriate trailer for the serious content of the hon. Gentleman's speech, dealing with war crimes.

My hon. Friend the Member for Leyton (Mr. Cohen) raised the disgraceful case of the blind pupil who has been refused a place at an opted-out school. That is a direct consequence of money following the pupil, which means that some pupils are more expensive. Therefore, schools say that they cannot afford to have them unless they get extra money. According to my hon. Friend, the head teacher has made it clear that the row is about money. That is a disgraceful state of affairs and one which I hope will be remedied quickly.

The hon. Member for Leominster (Mr. Temple-Morris) made a plea for the World Service. I agree with him: the BBC World Service is an institution much respected among hon. Members on both the Opposition and Conservative Benches. I, too, make a plea for the World Service. On that bipartisan note, I wish the Leader of the House a happy recess.

7.39 pm

The Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Tony Newton): The speech of the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, East (Mr. Brown) was a good deal more emollient than the speech that he made in our last such debate. I welcome the spirit in which he spoke. I noted his reference to Government announcements. All I can do is assure him that Her Majesty's Government remain as assiduous in their activities on behalf of the citizens of Britain when Parliament is not sitting as when it is.

The hon. Gentleman quoted *Business Age*. If I remember aright, the magazine to which he devotes so much credence described Brunei as a small desert kingdom. He also referred to Bills of attainder. Given the record of some Labour local authorities, I can well imagine that he does not believe that anyone should be in a position to take effective action against malpractice.

Mr. David Shaw (Dover): Is my right hon. Friend aware that an excellent programme on Scottish Television tonight revealed some of the scandal of corruption and nepotism in Monklands district council? As a result of the investigations by Scottish Television, no fewer than four agencies are investigating the wrongdoing that has taken place in that council—the Inland Revenue, the fraud squad, the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Government.

Mr. Newton: If all those investigations are taking place, that is probably a good reason for me not to comment from the Dispatch Box. The investigations certainly conform with my hon. Friend's assiduous activities in raising the matter over the months. In due course, we shall undoubtedly see a report of the television programme.

I apologise for the fact that I shall not be able to comment in detail in the eight minutes remaining to me on all the speeches that have been made. In particular, I simply pick up the kind invitations of the hon. Member for Tooting (Mr. Cox) and of my hon. Friend the Member for Corby (Mr. Powell) to note their remarks and make sure that they are transmitted to the relevant Ministers for consideration. I shall certainly do so.

I also apologise to the one or two hon. Members whose speeches I was not able to hear. I had intended to mention the hon. Member for Derbyshire, North-East (Mr. Barnes), but as I understand that the main burden of his remarks was that the House should go on sitting and sitting, perhaps almost everyone else present in the Chamber is happy that I was not present to lend an ear to his plea, lest I should respond favourably.

My right hon. Friend the Member for Shropshire, North (Mr. Biffen) kindly warned me that he would not be able to stay for my reply. He made several important

points and asked me three specific questions about matters affecting the standard spending assessment of Shropshire and elsewhere.

He asked me whether the paper had been received. I can inform him that a representative from Shropshire presented a paper on behalf of the Association of County Councils on the area cost adjustment to the SSA sub-group and the settlement working group earlier this month—I hope that the House has digested all that. All the points that have been made will be taken into account by Ministers before they make their provisional decisions on the 1994-95 revenue support grant settlement later this year. I hope that my right hon. Friends in the Department of the Environment will write further, as need be, to my right hon. Friend the Member for Shropshire, North.

The hon. Member for Alyn and Deeside (Mr. Jones) made several points principally about what had happened to his constituency under the proposed new assisted areas map. I understand that the level of assistance has been reduced because the position has improved since the previous map was drawn. The intermediate area status takes into account the assisted area status of the neighbouring travel-to-work area. The hon. Gentleman also made some points about steel and the actions of the United States, which I shall draw to the attention of the relevant Minister.

My hon. Friend the Member for Cornwall, South-East (Mr. Hicks) made important points about water quality and cost, generally and in the south-west, and about the important link between Plymouth, Newquay and Heathrow. He described the way in which the link could best be protected. I know that he has corresponded with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport, who has said that he regards the acquisition by British Airways of Brymon Airways as a reassuring development. I shall make sure that the attention of my right hon. Friend is drawn to everything that my hon. Friend has said on the matter tonight. I shall also draw the attention of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment to what my hon. Friend said about water quality and costs.

The hon. Member for Gordon (Mr. Bruce) raised four important issues. The first concerned some reports about money that might be paid to Karyn Smith and Patricia Cahill following their return to Britain. I shall confine myself to saying that the hon. Gentleman is well aware that the Government deplore the exploitation of criminal activities for gain. I am sure that the feelings that the hon. Gentleman expressed will be shared by hon. Members from many parties. I shall draw his comments specifically to the attention of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister.

The hon. Gentleman also touched on objective 5 status for his constituency. The criteria for objective 2 and objective 5(b) status were agreed in the structural funds regulations adopted on 20 July. My right hon. Friend the Minister for Industry will announce in the near future the arrangements for drawing up the list of areas which Her Majesty's Government will propose to the Commission for that status, and the arrangements for any representations that regional and local bodies wish to make.

The hon. Gentleman will perhaps not expect me to comment in any depth on his remarks which trenched right into budgetary policy, especially in the immediate aftermath of my announcing the date of the next Budget.

He and several other hon. Members on both sides of the House also made extensive reference to the Sheehy report. I emphasise, as I did in business questions, that it must be understood that the Sheehy report is a report not by the Government but to the Government, which the Government will consider. There will be full consultation with the police and other interests before any decisions are made on the implementation of the recommendations.

My hon. Friend the Member for Poole (Mr. Ward) raised the important issue of nuclear safety in the former Soviet Union. He will know that the Government share his anxieties and continue to play a full part in the multilateral action programme agreed at the Munich summit. He made a considered and extensive speech, to which I am sure my right hon. Friends will wish to reply more fully in other ways, as I have said about the speech of the hon. Member for Tooting.

My hon. Friend the Member for Altrincham and Sale (Sir F. Montgomery) must count as an Adjournment groupie. Few hospital projects can have been pursued more assiduously by a Member of Parliament for so long, certainly with this Leader of the House and, for all I know, with earlier ones, than the South Trafford community hospital.

As I am sure my hon. Friend is aware, North Western regional health authority will discuss tomorrow the desirability of a major refurbishment there. I am not sure whether it is proper for me to say from the Front Bench that my fingers will be crossed. I at least hope that my hon. Friend gets what he wants, even if only because it might cut by one the number of speeches in future Adjournment debates.

My hon. Friend made some other important points about housing associations and about the Metrolink. In that, he was supported by the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennett). I have taken those points on board.

The hon. Member for Denton and Reddish made other points about the Manchester travel-to-work area and the assisted areas map. The basis of the Government's thinking is that the TTWA as a whole is not in the worst third for current unemployment. We do not expect the Olympic bid to be affected by the new map. A great deal of other money is going into the area, including in connection with the Olympic bid. Up to £75 million of Government money has been promised.

I cannot add to my implicit comments about Lancashire Hill post office, although I am sure that the Post Office will carefully consider the hon. Gentleman's remarks. As Lancashire Hill is a sub-post office, it is in effect a private venture, and the Post Office cannot compel people to undertake it.

My hon. Friend the Member for Basildon (Mr. Amess) invited me to engage in Essex local political controversy on a scale that I am not sure would be proper, and for which there certainly is not time. I noted his remarks about Pitsea post office, and will draw them to the attention of the Post Office.

I will pass over the latter comments of the hon. Member for Bradford, South (Mr. Cryer), but as to assisted area status——

It being three hours after the commencement of proceedings on the motion, MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER *put the Question necessary to dispose of proceedings, pursuant to Standing Order No. 22 (Periodic adjournments).*

The House divided: Ayes 136, Noes 52.

Division No. 362] **[7.50 pm**

AYES

Alexander, Richard
Allason, Rupert *(Torbay)*
Amess, David
Ancram, Michael
Arnold, Jacques *(Gravesham)*
Arnold, Sir Thomas *(Hazel Grv)*
Ashby, David
Atkinson, David *(Bour'mouth E)*
Atkinson, Peter *(Hexham)*
Banks, Robert *(Harrogate)*
Bates, Michael
Bellingham, Henry
Beresford, Sir Paul
Blackburn, Dr John G.
Booth, Hartley
Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia
Bowis, John
Brandreth, Gyles
Brazier, Julian
Brown, M. *(Brigg & Cl'thorpes)*
Browning, Mrs. Angela
Burt, Alistair
Butler, Peter
Carlisle, Kenneth *(Lincoln)*
Cash, William
Clappison, James
Clark, Dr Michael *(Rochford)*
Clifton-Brown, Geoffrey
Colvin, Michael
Congdon, David
Conway, Derek
Coombs, Simon *(Swindon)*
Cope, Rt Hon Sir John
Cormack, Patrick
Couchman, James
Cran, James
Davies, Quentin *(Stamford)*
Day, Stephen
Dover, Den
Duncan, Alan
Dunn, Bob
Evans, Jonathan *(Brecon)*
Evans, Nigel *(Ribble Valley)*
Evans, Roger *(Monmouth)*
Fabricant, Michael
Fenner, Dame Peggy
Forman, Nigel
Forth, Eric
Fox, Dr Liam *(Woodspring)*
Fox, Sir Marcus *(Shipley)*
Freeman, Rt Hon Roger
French, Douglas
Gallie, Phil
Gill, Christopher
Gillan, Cheryl
Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Gorst, John
Greenway, John *(Ryedale)*
Griffiths, Peter *(Portsmouth, N)*
Hague, William
Hamilton, Rt Hon Archie *(Epsom)*
Hamilton, Neil *(Tatton)*
Hampson, Dr Keith
Hawksley, Warren
Heald, Oliver
Heathcoat-Amory, David
Hendry, Charles
Hicks, Robert
Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas *(G'tham)*
Howell, Rt Hon David *(G'dford)*
Howell, Sir Ralph *(N Norfolk)*
Jack, Michael
Jenkin, Bernard
Kirkhope, Timothy
Knight, Greg *(Derby N)*
Kynoch, George *(Kincardine)*
Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Legg, Barry
Lennox-Boyd, Mark
Lester, Jim *(Broxtowe)*
Lidington, David
Lightbown, David
MacKay, Andrew
Maclean, David
McLoughlin, Patrick
Malone, Gerald
Marshall, John *(Hendon S)*
Martin, David *(Portsmouth S)*
Merchant, Piers
Mitchell, Andrew *(Gedling)*
Mitchell, Sir David *(Hants NW)*
Molyneaux, Rt Hon James
Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Neubert, Sir Michael
Newton, Rt Hon Tony
Nicholls, Patrick
Norris, Steve
Page, Richard
Patnick, Irvine
Pattie, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey
Porter, Barry *(Wirral S)*
Powell, William *(Corby)*
Rathbone, Tim
Richards, Rod
Riddick, Graham
Robertson, Raymond *(Ab'd'n S)*
Shaw, David *(Dover)*
Shepherd, Colin *(Hereford)*
Skeet, Sir Trevor
Smith, Tim *(Beaconsfield)*
Spink, Dr Robert
Sproat, Iain
Steen, Anthony
Sweeney, Walter
Taylor, Ian *(Esher)*
Taylor, John M. *(Solihull)*
Temple-Morris, Peter
Thomason, Roy
Thompson, Patrick *(Norwich N)*
Thurnham, Peter
Trend, Michael
Twinn, Dr Ian
Walker, A. Cecil *(Belfast N)*
Waller, Gary
Ward, John
Wardle, Charles *(Bexhill)*
Wells, Bowen
Whitney, Ray
Whittingdale, John
Widdecombe, Ann
Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Wilkinson, John
Willetts, David
Wolfson, Mark
Wood, Timothy

Tellers for the Ayes:
Mr. James Arbuthnot and
Mr. Robert G. Hughes.

NOES

Adams, Mrs Irene
Banks, Tony *(Newham NW)*
Bayley, Hugh
Bermingham, Gerald
Boyes, Roland
Bruce, Malcolm *(Gordon)*
Caborn, Richard
Callaghan, Jim
Campbell-Savours, D. N.
Clapham, Michael
Clarke, Eric *(Midlothian)*
Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Cohen, Harry
Cook, Frank *(Stockton N)*
Corbyn, Jeremy
Cox, Tom
Dafis, Cynog
Dixon, Don
Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Eastham, Ken
Godman, Dr Norman A.
Gunnell, John
Hall, Mike
Hanson, David
Harvey, Nick
Hughes, Simon *(Southwark)*
Illsley, Eric
Johnston, Sir Russell
Jones, Barry *(Alyn and D'side)*
Jones, Lynne *(B'ham S O)*
Loyden, Eddie
Lynne, Ms Liz
McAllion, John
McAvoy, Thomas
McKelvey, William
Mackinlay, Andrew
Madden, Max
Mahon, Alice
Marshall, Jim *(Leicester, S)*
Michie, Bill *(Sheffield Heeley)*
Miller, Andrew
Morris, Estelle *(B'ham Yardley)*
Mullin, Chris
Pendry, Tom
Pike, Peter L.
Powell, Ray *(Ogmore)*
Rogers, Allan
Simpson, Alan
Skinner, Dennis
Spearing, Nigel
Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Wareing, Robert N

Tellers for the Noes:
Mr. Bob Cryer and
Mr. Harry Barnes.

Question accordingly agreed to.

Resolved,

That this House, at its rising on Tuesday 27th July, do adjourn until Monday 18th October.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY DOCUMENTS

Motion made, and Question put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 102(9) (European Standing Committees).

Residues in Meat

That this House takes note of European Community Document No. 6654/93, relating to the control of residues in meat, including the proposal that the current Community-wide controls in this area should be strengthened; and supports the Government's aim of ensuring that any further steps should take into account the effective measures already in operation in the United Kingdom to control the level of residues in meat in the interests of consumers and producers and to protect animal welfare.—*[Mr. Andrew Mitchell.]*

Question agreed to.

Motion made, and Question put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 102(9) (European Standing Committees).

Human Rights

That this House takes note of European Community Document No. 9909/92, relating to human rights, democracy and development; and welcomes the Conclusions adopted at the Development Council on 18th November 1992, which take full account of United Kingdom interests in this field.—*[Mr. Andrew Mitchell.]*

Question agreed to.

Orders of the Day

CONSOLIDATED FUND (APPROPRIATION) (No 2) BILL

Order for Second Reading read.

Question, That the Bill be now read a Second time, *put forthwith pursuant to Standing Order No. 54 (Consolidated Fund Bills), and agreed to.*

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Question, That the Bill be now read the Third time, *put and agreed to.*

Bill accordingly read the Third time, and passed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, pursuant to Standing Order No. 54 (Consolidated Fund Bills), That ths House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Andrew Mitchell.]*

Latin America

8.2 pm

Mr. John Wilkinson (Ruislip-Northwood): It is an honour to open the Consolidated Fund debate this evening with a debate on Britain's relations with Latin America. At the outset, I must declare an interest. My company, which is listed in the Register of Members' Interests, does business with Latin America.

Owing to the accident of family circumstances, I take an intense personal interest in the region. When democracy was restored in Chile, I was instrumental in restarting the Chile all-party group in Parliament, which I now chair. The cause of improving relations between parliamentarians of Latin America and of the United Kingdom is well served in the House by the various parliamentary groups for the region, and especially by the umbrella British-Latin American parliamentary group, under the chairmanship of my hon. Friend the Member for Wycombe (Mr. Whitney), who is an old Argentina hand from his days in Her Majesty's embassy in Buenos Aires.

The British-Latin American parliamentary group holds, in June, an annual parliamentary seminar at Canning house and hosts visits to Parliament of distinguished high officials from Latin America, the next one of which will be tomorrow morning by His Excellency Senor César Gaviria, the President of Colombia, whom we warmly welcomed to the United Kingdom today.

Dr. Charles Goodson-Wickes (Wimbledon): May I heartily endorse my hon. Friend's welcome to President Gaviria of Colombia. The House will recognise that his visit could hardly be more appropriate, following that of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister to Colombia, the first visit ever by a serving British Prime Minister to a south American country.

Will my hon. Friend join me in welcoming proposed visits by the Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, my hon. Friend the Member for Wells (Mr. Heathcoat-Amory), who is on the Front Bench tonight, and other Ministers, and, above all, the proposed visit by Madam Speaker during the recess to endorse this country's long friendship with Colombia, its long tradition of democracy and the new constitution that was initiated by President Gaviria?

Mr. Wilkinson: I am most grateful to my hon. and gallant Friend, who knows Colombia particularly well. I am sure that right hon. and hon. Members will have taken note of what he said.

My hon. Friend the Member for Gravesham (Mr. Arnold), who lived and worked in Brazil and travelled through most of Latin America before being incarcerated in this place, organises an active programme of meetings and lunches with Latin American ambassadors, Ministers, parliamentarians and officials.

We have the closest links with the other place, too, through the distinguished patronage of Lord Montgomery of Alamein, the president of Canning house, Lady Hooper and many other Latin American experts, some of whom, like Viscount Torrington, have led trade missions to the south American sub-continent.

The link with Canning house is of great importance to us in Parliament. Canning house is a unique forum for the study of the politics, business, society and culture of Latin America. Less specialist than the International Institute

[Mr. Wilkinson]

for Strategic Studies and more focused than Chatham house, it is an invaluable source of information about Latin America, fulfilling, above all, a unique commercio-diplomatic role which is of inestimable value to London as a centre of Ibero-Latin American interests.

Ministers, to their credit, recognise this as well. The Minister of State, my hon. Friend the Member for Wells, whose presence I welcome on the Treasury Bench, made a particularly well-received debut speech to our parliamentary seminar at Canning house on 30 June.

Canning house has been directed by a succession of distinguished former ambassadors to the region, the present incumbent being Sir Michael Simpson-Orlebar, who served as British ambassador in Portugal and Mexico. Funded jointly by individuals, corporate subscribers and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, it fulfils a quasi-diplomatic role at minimal cost to the Exchequer and represents outstanding value for money to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British business community. As its 50th anniversary approaches, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office would do well to confirm that the grant to Canning house is not at risk.

When addressing a theme as broad and deep as Britain's relations with Latin America, it is easy, when describing British policy towards a region that is not given to understatement, to get carried away by the grandiloquent treatment of what are necessarily inspiring themes, like the blue of the Pacific, the white of the snow on the Cordillera and the red blood of the heroes, as symbolised on the flag of Chile.

The heroics of the founders of the independent republics of south America may inspire us, but we must address the future of the United Kingdom's relations with the region in the context of British history and the development of British trade with the area.

From the ending of the Napoleonic wars to the great war, Britain played a key role in the south American liberation struggle with Spain and dominated the development of the Latin American sub-continent economically and, in many senses, industrially. British capital and entrepreneurs opened up the pampas of Argentina, laid down the railways throughout the southern cone and were active in shipping, insurance, banking, mining and the export of wool, meat and a wide range of primary products to Britain. In return, British manufacturers had a predominant position in south American markets.

Today, although the United Kingdom is still the leading European investor in Latin America, our exports to the region have remained fairly static over the past few years at £1·2 billion. However, probably as a consequence of Britain's leaving the exchange rate mechanism last September, which allowed a realistic valuation of the pound, Britain's exports to the region have risen by more than 22 per cent. in the first quarter of this year.

To my knowledge, the Latin American trade advisory group, local chambers of commerce like the London chamber of commerce, and national chambers of commerce like the British Chilean chamber of commerce all do an excellent job in furthering growing trade between the United Kingdom and Latin America, and so do our embassies throughout the region.

Ministers have also played their full part in increasing British awareness of the importance of the region as my hon. Friend the Member for Wimbledon (Dr. Goodson-Wickes) so rightly reminded the House. As my hon. Friend told us, the process began with the visit of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister to Colombia and to the Earth summit in Rio. There were also visits by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary to Argentina and Chile and by my right hon. Friends the President of the Board of Trade and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury to Mexico, Argentina and Chile.

My right hon. Friends made it clear, and this has always been the Government's consistent policy, that there is no incompatibility between British insistence that the sovereignty of the Falklands islands is not an issue and the maintenance of Britain's interests throughout the region. On the contrary, I believe that our presence in the Falkland islands is an important strategic interest which physically demonstrates our concern for the region. It provides a counterbalance to international relationships in the southern cone, it protects passage around the horn and it demonstrates our concern for Antarctica, its resources and for the environment of the southern seas.

However, British exporters must overcome their obsession with markets in the EEC, where we have a trade deficit with all the member countries except Ireland, Spain and Greece, and turn to the growth regions such as Latin America and the Pacific basin. Latin America is well placed to trade with Europe and the Pacific nations. We must ensure that Latin America looks more to Europe, its traditional focus, than to the Pacific basin exporting nations—although we would not think that it did when we see the number of Japanese cars in Santiago

The growth of the leading economies of south America far outstrips that of the EEC nations, although the economies of south America are, of course, much smaller. For example, the rate of growth in Chile last year was 10·4 per cent. For the region as a whole, even including Brazil which suffered recession, recorded growth was 2·6 per cent. last year. Without Brazil, growth rose by 4·3 per cent. There were growth rates of above 5 per cent. in Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela.

An engine for growth in the region has been domestic investment which increased by more than 10 per cent. in six of the aforementioned countries in 1992. Furthermore, net capital inflows to the region from abroad have grown from $8 billion in 1989 to $54 billion last year. At the same time, the burden of external debt has generally diminished.

The regional ratio of interest payments to exports fell from 37 per cent. in 1986 to 20 per cent. in 1992. Only six countries in the region registered increases in inflation last year. In short, with the notable exception of Brazil, most of the principal nations of Latin America, which are significant potential markets for the United Kingdom, saw sustainable growth for the third year running allied to reasonable price stability. Only terrorism remains a nagging problem, especially in Peru and, to a much lesser extent, in Colombia. It is a scourge of contemporary humanity that mercifully appears to be coming gradually under control.

It might be assumed that, with European and north American markets so depressed and with Latin American markets buoyant by contrast, and with no regime in the region seriously out of line from the democratic free enterprise model apart from Cuba, British exporters

would be falling over each other to exploit the trade opportunities of the region. Those opportunities are indeed considerable, as I have explained.

We should take into account, especially in this connection, the British experience of privatisation and of financial services and the commercial efficiency of our privatised utilities such as water and gas. Those experiencies enhance the business opportunities for British exporters throughout the region.

When George Canning proudly wrote, upon the liberation of Spain's south American colonies and their emergence as independent states, that:

"The deed is done. The nail is driven. Spanish America is free and, if we do not mismanage our matters sadly, she is English",

we could not have a better example, even 150 years or so on, of the opportunities that present themselves today to the United Kingdom throughout the region—that is, if Her Majesty's Government do not interpose obstacles or impediments to the development of this potentially extremely fruitful trade.

I can list some potential stumbling blocks which should be discreetly removed. The first is the elimination of Portuguese from the GCSE syllabus. That seems crazy. Brazil accounts for 40 per cent. of the Latin American economy.

Mr. Jacques Arnold (Gravesham): My hon. Friend may be interested to learn that, following much pressure by Canning house, members of the British Latin American parliamentary group in this House and many others, the London examining board has restored the examining of Portuguese at GCSE level.

Mr. Wilkinson: I am grateful to my hon. Friend and I am sure that everyone will appreciate his personal efforts in the matter. He is the leading Portuguese speaker in the House and I am sure that he campaigned especially hard.

Another potential stumbling block is the elimination of key posts in British embassies such as that of defence attaché at our embassy in Ecuador or the downgrading and paring of British missions which militates against Britain's interests to strengthen diplomatic and commercial efforts throughout the region. In addition, the process militates against the provision of the maximum assistance to British business men in what is all too often for them still unfamiliar territory. If reductions in diplomatic manpower are necessary, they should occur in EEC countries with whom we are supposed to be moving towards ever-closer union.

We must also consider the malign effects of the European Community's common agricultural policy. I will let others address the current EC banana regime. However, curtailing European imports of Chilean apples seems daft to me as is the CAP policy which militates against our importing succulent cheap Argentine and Uruguayan beef in favour of expensive, scrawny European meat.

However, I regret to say that every now and again a cause celebre erupts out of a blue sky to prejudice years of political and commercial effort and it does so in a way which could seriously damage the normally outstanding good relationships between the United Kingdom and a Latin American country. A case in point is the orimulsion issue, whereby Her Majesty's Government are seeking to impose duty on the import of Venezuelan-produced bitumen transported in suspension with water, and to persuade the European Community to classify it as a mineral oil. Coal and water slurry does not become something different just becasuse a water-based suspension is required to transport coal down pipelines, nor does bitumen lose its qualities as bitumen if mixed with water. The British case is, I regret, disingenuous to say the least. I have seen the minutes of the relevant EEC committee, and the United Kingdom is unnecessarily in the minority of one on the issue.

Mr. Allan Rogers (Rhondda): Does the hon. Gentleman accept that orimulsion is considered by many to be an extreme pollutant when burnt in power stations, as is proposed?

Mr. Wilkinson: That is not the case. It produces more suphur dioxide, but, in every other aspect, the combustion of orimulsion produces fewer noxious emissions than that of oil or coal.

The issue is potentiallly prejudicial to a British-Venezuelan joint venture company, BP Bitor, which makes the product, and to our trade with Venezuela, which the Department of Trade and Industry, following an admirable initiative of my right hon. Friend the Member for St. Albans (Mr. Lilley), the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, has been a target country for British exporters. The United Kingdom should accept European Community proposals on the matter and come to an accommodation with Venezuela, or I fear that the United Kingdom will risk the widening and deepening of a wholly unnecessary dispute.

I now refer to Export Credits Guarantee Department cover. To his credit, the previous Chancellor, my right hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont), announced an extra £1·2 billion for ECGD cover in his last Budget statement. However, the ECGD's portfolio management systems criteria for local risk and premium pricing do not accord with present south American realities.

Rightly, Chile has competitive ECGD premium rates, under the Government of President Aylwin, as under their predecessor, and the country has maintained essentially sound economic policies. However, in markets of immense potential for British exports, such as Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Argentina, British ECGD premium rates are far higher than those for export credit guarantee cover available to firms in our competitor countries. The matter should be rectified, and I hope that my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will do so in his Budget statement of 30 November.

The House has always taken an interest in Latin America. It might be a minority interest, but on occasions it can be of great influence, as was the role of a former Member for Westminster, Lord Cochrane, who was wrongly expelled from the House, from the Navy and from the Order of the Bath, for fraud in 1816 and who went to Chile and founded the Chilean navy. His capture of the Spanish flagship Esmeralda in Callao harbour contributed largely to the independence of Chile and Peru. In the House of Commons of those days, his contemorary, James Mackintosh, said:

"There has never been a major demonstration of judgment, wisdom and action capability than the one demonstrated on that occasion."

Few of us have such a eulogy addressed to anything that we do, but few of us are in Admiral Lord Thomas Alexander Cochrane's league for originality and for

[Mr. Wilkinson]

courage. However, if we share but half of his love of liberty, we will have served our country well and, I hope, south America, too.

8.24 pm

Mr. Jeremy Corbyn (Islington, North): I am pleased that we are debating Latin America, as we seem to do every July. It is a good tradition, because that area of the world is not sufficiently discussed. My problem with the speech of the hon. Member for Ruislip-Northwood (Mr. Wilkinson) is that I do not agree with the philosophy behind it. The problem is that, in his heroic moves to liberate Latin America from the clutches of the Spanish, what George Canning was about was liberating people from the Spanish in order to put them under another colonial power. He was not talking about the liberation of Latin America.

Indeed, the regimes that followed the George Canning liberation movement were essentially elitist regimes of the settler community. They did much to oppress the indigenous population. Indeed, many practised wholesale genocide against the indigenous population of south America. The Spanish conquistadors and their move into Peru and what was later to be called Bolivia were unbelievably brutal, but the regimes that followed were also brutal towards the indigenous population. Indeed, that brutality continues today towards large numbers of indigenous peoples living in the Amazonas region, in particular. We should remember that. The reason why it did not become a massive British colony was that the British and the United States agreed on the Monroe doctrine and then calmly divided up that part of the world, largely in the interests of the United States.

The other aspect on which I disagree with the hon. Gentleman—he will not be surprised, because we have had this discussion many times—is his glib description of democracy and free enterprise as synonymous, equal and mutually dependent. Many Opposition Members simply do not accept that. When we saw the brutality of the free enterprise model under General Pinochet, there was not an awful lot of democracy in Chile at that time. There was great free enterprise. There was also great brutality in the promotion of the free enterprise model, supported by the World bank and the International Monetary Fund in many other parts of Latin America.

Indeed, it is 10 years or so since the great debt crises of the early 1980s, when the Latin American Parliament as a whole voted for a process of refusing to pay the interest on debts, and that sent a shiver down the spine of the United States and world banking systems. That crisis was averted by a series of bilateral deals and buy-offs and, indeed, in the United States nationalisation and subsequent resale to the private sector of some banks by the Reagan Administration to prevent the collapse of that banking system. But the way in which the overseas debt burden has been reduced in Latin America has had some truly horrific consequences.

The debt burden came about basically because of the increase in world oil prices and the underpricing of primary products produced throughout Latin America. The debt-for-equity swaps that have been imposed upon one economy after another have had some horrendous consequences in terms of social infrastructure, privatisation of former state-owned institutions, cuts in public spending and the laying off of state employees, with some truly horrific consequences for the education and health services of the countries concerned. That is not the equality of free enterprise and democracy; that is the brutality of the private sector saying that it is not prepared to spend anything on public services and public infrastructure. We should be aware that many social problems of Latin America are closely related to those issues.

The other general problems throughout Latin America include enormous population movements away from rural areas into the shanty towns surrounding major cities. That is a consequence of changing agricultural systems and practice. In the case of Chile, it is a consequence of wholesale land purchases—indeed, in some cases, by multinational capital to develop high-intensity fruit farming which requires fewer workers than the previous farming practice did—and still higher levels of unemployment in the shanty towns around many capital cities of Latin America. Surrounding every capital city in Latin America is a smoking cauldron of extremely poor, extremely bitter and extremely angry people.

It might be strange for those in western Europe to note that Latin American countries have refused to pay the foreign debt because it is unpayable, unjust and uncollectable. However, those reasons are common parlance among liberal and left-wing parties throughout Latin America. It is a feature of normal political debate.

The development of the Latin American economies has caused some serious environmental and health problems. The frightening spread of cholera throughout Peru just two years ago was a consequence, in part, of the cuts in health programmes and in the development of water purification plants. That was done to please the wishes of the bankers of the north. Serious environmental concerns have been expressed about the extraction of minerals and the construction of roads throughout the Amazon rain forest and the destruction of that forest.

It would be wrong in a debate about Latin America not to mention some of the people who are truly heroic, such as Chico Mendes, who stood up for the rights of indigenous people within the Amazonas region. In effect, he was murdered by the interests of multinational capital; its future for the Amazons region was different from that envisaged by Mendes.

In the past decade things have changed considerably in Latin America. Most of the military regimes are no longer in government and there is a civilian or quasi-civilian regime in most countries. The human rights abuses that took place under the military regimes of Argentina, Chile, Honduras and Nicaragua, as well as in other countries, have not, however, ceased. The disappeared have not returned. The graves of thousands and thousands of people have not yet been discovered. They died because they were not prepared to support military regimes and because they believed in a genuine form of liberty.

Although no one can be happy with the current situation in Peru and Bolivia, there is an economic dimension to the terror. The poverty in many of the rural areas and the lack of decent prices for the primary products produced by the campesinos, particularly those in the Andean region, have turned those people to the cultivation of drugs. Drugs, quite simply, are far more profitable than the returns on maize. It is possible to make

a living from growing drugs, but it is not possible to make a living from growing normal crops. Until pricing and poverty are addressed, the attempts to wage war on drugs will not be successful. I do not condone the production, distribution, sale or use of drugs—it is an evil and vile trade— but one must recognise that it has an economic logic of its own which we cannot ignore.

The hon. Member for Ruislip-Northwood referred to Chile, which I have visited on a number of occasions. In common with him, I have family connections with Chile, but I have no commercial interests in that country, or anywhere else for that matter. The situation in Chile has changed dramatically, but we should not forget that President Salvador Allende was brutally murdered in 1973 —20 years ago this year—for leading a Government who sought to oppose the power of multinational capital. He was assassinated by the forces led by General Pinochet. Some 20,000 people were killed at the start of the coup and, over the next 17 years of Pinochet's total control, 50,000 lost their lives. One million Chileans were forced into exile as a result of the terror that was wrought upon them by that brutal, fascist regime.

That regime had its apologists in Britain. It had its apologists in the House. It was one of the most brutal regimes that the world has ever known. Although the situation in Chile has dramatically improved, it is faced with serious constitutional problems. General Pinochet is still the head of the armed services and members of the armed services are still protected from any type of judicial process taken against them for denial of human rights, murders or for taking part in the disappearance of people. For example, the murder of Orlando Letelier, in Washington in 1980, led the United States authorities to call for General Contreras to be extradited. That cannot happen because he is protected by the constitution, which protects the military. It is a serious matter when someone who is known or is believed to have murdered Letelier cannot be extradited to face the judiciary in the United States.

There are still 80 political prisoners in Chilean gaols, who have been there since the Aylwin Government came to power. Since that time, another 120 people have gone to prison. They believe that they have been sent there for political reasons and that they should be released.

Although six secret prisons and cemeteries have been discovered by the human rights commission in Chile and some state compensation has been paid, all human rights abuses should be uncovered. At least those who have lost family and friends—I know those who have gone through the horror of wondering what happened to a person who was taken away in the middle of the night—would then know what had happened to the bodies of their loved ones after they were murdered by the secret police in Chile during that horrific and vile period.

During that time a Conservative Government in Britain happily supplied arms and traded with that regime. We should not forget that—it is not forgotten by many in Chile.

At the time of the Falklands war it was quite correct to criticise the appalling human rights record of the Galtieri Administration in Argentina and that of previous and subsequent Administrations. Because we are now trading with Argentina and because it was part of the coalition force in the Gulf war, there is now, apparently, much less concern in western Europe about the fate of those who disappeared.

I still receive letters and a magazine from a wonderful group of women known as the abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo. They are the grandmothers of the disappeared of the Plaza de Mayo. Those children were taken away during the Galtieri regime and it is believed that they were given to the families of officers of the Argentine army. It is horrific to think of those women looking for their families. I do not know why the hon. Member for Wycombe (Mr. Whitney) seems to find this so amusing.

Mr. Ray Whitney (Wycombe): I do not find it amusing. What I find extraordinary is that, year after year, the hon. Gentleman replays the battles of the 1960s. He seems to have no idea what has happened since then and no interest in what has happened in the 1990s.

Mr. Corbyn: I raise this subject year after year and I shall go on doing so.

Mr. Whitney: I will be here.

Mr. Corbyn: I am glad that the hon. Gentleman will be here to listen. I shall continue to raise this subject because I believe that the issue of human rights abuses does not go away just because a different person is in Government house. If one has lost family, one has lost family. If one does not know what happened to a person, one does not know. It is perfectly reasonable that those people should want to know what happened.

We are, apparently, also concerned about human rights and so we have some responsibility to bear. All that I am saying is that those people should not be forgotten. I am not reliving all the battles of the past, but I have recognised that there is still a need for human rights and human justice. It might be convenient for Conservative Members to say that we are in the 1990s and can forget about the past, but I remember those self-same hon. Members apologising for the Pinochet regime, year after year, in debates on Chile. I intend to keep reminding them of that because that is necessary.

It is worth considering what has happened in Nicaragua since the Chamorro Government took over in 1990. The rate of unemployment in that country is now at an all-time high, as is the level of external debt. Apparently the serious environmental and economic problems are getting worse. The United States promised aid once the Chamorro Government took office, but most of that aid has not been forthcoming. Most of the European Community aid that has been earmarked for Nicaragua has been tied to specific development projects. I understand that only half that aid is now capable of being spent because there has been such a cut in Government agencies that they are now incapable of administering such aid.

Nicaragua is suffering, as almost no other country in the region has suffered, from the type of quack economics that we thought had been forgotten about with the Chicago school. Unemployment is now reaching an all-time high and there is great poverty in Managua and the other cities. We should consider giving more aid to Nicaragua to help those people to get out of poverty. They suffered enough during the civil war from the United States bombardment. If the United States would just spend a fraction of the money on development aid that it spent on bombing the Sandinistas out of existence, the people of Nicaragua would be considerably better off.

Some of us have seen at first hand the horrors of years of conflict in El Salvador. I am glad to say that it is no

[Mr. Corbyn]

longer being fought and elections are due to take place. But questions have been asked in another place about the size of the disfranchised electorate, the number of serious spelling mistakes and double entries on the electoral register and the need for vigilance during registration and preparation for the election. The Foreign Office has been asked to send delegations from this country to assist and observe during the electoral registration period and the election itself. If democracy is to mean anything in El Salvador, everyone must have the chance to take part in the electoral process. I hope that the Minister will tell us the British Government's response to these requests.

On 30 August Honduras will hold a commemoration day in honour of the disappeared who vanished under former military regimes, thanks to the secret police. Before we embrace any new Government or regime we should always ask them about their human rights record and about the fate of the many people who stood up for human rights, for dignity and for trade unions and who were murdered or spirited away for their pains.

On Saturday last week the fourth meeting of the Sao Paolo forum ended. It represents more than 100 political movements throughout the Caribbean and Latin America. The last meeting took place in Havana; the first was held in Brazil three years ago. The forum brought together people who are concerned by the fact that the whole continent is in thrall to neo-liberal economics, with its attendant unemployment and obsession with market economics. They believe that there must be a better way of organising society, as do many other people all over the world.

Mr. Wilkinson: I do not want to enter into a long argument with the hon. Gentleman, but may I point out that Chile, the real forerunner of free market reforms throughout south America, has only 4·4 per cent. unemployment? No ne can say that free market economics engenders unemployment. If organised properly, free enterprise engenders prosperity; and the new Government seek to share that prosperity much more widely.

Mr. Corbyn: Granted, economic growth in Chile has been fast by any standards, but I question the basis for the 4·4 per cent. statistic. The hon. Gentleman should ask some of the voluntary agencies working near Santiago and in the poblaciones about the high unemployment there and about the informal economy. There is still serious poverty in Chile, even though unemployment there is not as high as elsewhere. There is also bad housing and bad health care —and, in any case, it was never the poorest country in the region.

Today, 26 July, is an historic day for Cuba: an important national day. In 1959 Cuba was one of the poorest countries in the region, with the highest degree of illiteracy and the most serious social problems. Today illiteracy has been conquered and Cuba has a low infant mortality rate and high standards of educational achievement—despite a rigorous blockade by the United States throughout the period. Owing to the break-up of the Soviet Union and the Comecon trading block, and Cuba's inability to trade as before with eastern Europe and the USSR, it faces serious problems, as my hon. Friends who have visited the country more recently than I have can testify.

It cannot be right that the blockade should include food, medicines and fuel, aimed at breaking up the very infrastructure of life. The British Government have always allowed trade with Cuba but never encouraged it. I hope that they will at least recognise that it is wrong to starve the population of Cuba unti they agree to a change of political course. There is not much sign of the people of Cuba wanting such a change; there is every sign that they would like to live in dignity and independence. So I hope that the British Government will bring what pressure they can to bear on the United States Adminstration to lift the blockade so that the Cubans can at least enjoy a reasonable standard of living.

Running through many people's attitude to Latin America is the belief that western Europe and the United States can impose an economic system and way of life on the continent. They fail to understand the anger beneath the surface, not among the political elite of the region but among people who will no longer tolerate the impoverishment of parts of the continent, particularly of those living in the shanty towns around major cities.

I welcome trade with Latin America. We should recognise that, for a long time, many workers in farms and factories there have been grossly underpaid for their efforts. If there is any justice in the world, much more debt must be written off and much fairer trading arrangements with the continent must be agreed.

I believe that poverty, oppression and human rights abuses go together. We should do what we can to alleviate all three horrors, which for too long have been visited on the people of Latin America.

8.46 pm

Mr. Jacques Arnold (Gravesham): I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Ruislip-Northwood (Mr. Wilkinson) on initiating the debate, which is becoming something of a tradition in the House every July.

This has been a good year for Latin America: democracy has been sustained, despite the pressures sweeping the world. In Brazil, the impeachment of President Fernando Collor de Mello on corruption grounds has been carried out in a constitutional manner with his replacement by Vice-President Itamar Franco. In Venezuela the same progress has happened, with the suspension of President Carlos Andrés Perez to face charges of corruption. He has been replaced as an interim measure by Senator Ramón José Velásquez.

In Peru the duly elected President suspended the Congress in what has been termed a new process of self-coup. In the face of pressure from within Peru and from the international community he has backed down and the Congress has been superseded by a newly elected Congress, thereby restoring democracy to Peru. That example may have caught on. Indeed, President Serrano in Guatemala did likewise, suspending the Congress and the constitution, following which rapidly applied pressure led to his resignation and replacement by Ramiro de Léon, the human rights ombudsman of his country. So democracy, despite all the pressures, is safe and well in Latin America —with the notable exception of Cuba.

Mr. John McAllion (Dundee, East): The hon. Gentleman will be aware that before and during the election in Cuba last February a widespread campaign organised by Cuban exiles in Miami and by American-owned television and radio stations urged the Cuban

people to destroy their ballot papers or not to vote. In the event, 80 per cent. of those entitled to vote came out and supported the regime run by Fidel Castro. The hon. Gentleman should reflect for a moment on the fact that the Government whom he supports have never had the support of more than one third of those entitled to vote. He should be hesitant before decrying Cuba's lack of democracy—it has more democratic legitimacy than this Tory Government have.

Mr. Arnold: I should have been much more impressed if candidates other than those approved by communist party committees had been allowed to stand. I shall return to that issue in a moment.

Mr. Whitney: Will my hon. Friend also invite the hon. Member for Dundee, East (Mr. McAllion) to consider why, if that is the case, at the recent conference in Brazil every other Government leader in Latin America, and the presidents of Portugal and Spain, urged President Castro to introduce democracy to Cuba at last?

Mr. Arnold: The reason is that what is continuing to happen in Cuba—the only unreformed Marxist communist regime in the world, other than one in Asia, I believe —is a blot on the democratic escutcheon of Latin America and is a disgrace.

On the question of economics in Latin America, it is notable that, after a decade of stagnation, recovery is under way. My hon. Friend the Member for Ruislip-Northwood catalogued the impressive growth in gross domestic product throughout the continent. Trade liberalisation has led to far greater activity and markedly increased imports, which has to be good for Britain's opportunities, but only modest increases in exports. The resultant trade deficits could, indeed, cause an economic crisis in Latin America.

The growing protectionism in the United States and Europe is dangerous, which is why this country's efforts for a successful completion of the Uruguay round of GATT is so appreciated in Latin America and is also vital to it. It would be a tragedy were there to be a return in Latin America to the tried and failed policies of import substitution.

It has been a good year for Britain's relations with Latin America. Our right hon. Friend the Prime Minister visited Colombia. He visited Cusiana, one of the largest oil discoveries of recent years, and he also visited Brazil for the Earth summit and held bilateral meetings with the Brazilian Government. Our right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary recently visited Argentina and Chile, and our right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade has been to Mexico and Argentina and spoke of his impression of the development and sophistication of both countries.

Other Ministers have also visited Latin America in recent months or are due to be visiting it during the recess, joined by Madam Speaker. Ministers have been ably supported in their visits by our embassies. I counsel my hon. Friends at the Foreign Office not to impose false economies by closing or reducing our diplomatic and trade missions in Latin America.

In the other direction, we have been visited by President Lacalle, a splendid anglophile friend of this country. We are honoured this week by the visit of President Gaviria of Colombia, who will visit the House tomorrow morning for discussions with members of the British-Latin American parliamentary group and other right hon. and hon. Members. There have been visits to this country and to this Parliament by delegations of parliamentarians from Mexico and Brazil and countless Latin American Ministers and political leaders.

The greatest credit for the improvement in our relations goes to my right hon. Friend the Member for Watford Mr. Garel-Jones), who, until his retirement, gave three great years to strengthening British-Latin American relations. His greatest strength has been his natural empathy for Latin Americans, derived from his command of the Spanish language, which greatly enhanced our relations with the Hispanic countries in particular. I wish the new Minister, my hon. Friend the Member for Wells (Mr. Heathcoat-Amory), well in his task, not least in following my right hon. Friend the Member for Watford.

However, if my right hon. Friend the Member for Watford had a fault, it was his propensity to give to the only non-hispanic major country in Latin America—Brazil—far less weight than it deserves. For that reason, the remainder of my remarks deal with the importance of Brazil.

Of the 24 countries of Latin America, Brazil covers more than one third of the area. It is the ninth largest economy in the world. Its annual GDP is US$500 billion, which is three times that of Mexico and more than twice that of Belgium. The economy of the state of São Paulo alone is one and a half times that of the entire Republic of Argentina. We must put Brazil's importance into perspective.

Although concerns are rightly expressed about the high rates of inflation suffered in Brazil, they are not a new phenomenon. Over the decades, Brazilians have learned to live with them and, indeed, how to prosper. In recent years, Brazil has resumed the servicing of its foreign debt and has built up current foreign currency reserves of almost US$25 billion. For many years, it has run a significant trade surplus. Recently, its trade surplus was exceeded only by those of Japan and Germany. This year, it is expected to reach US$20 billion—if only we had such a surplus. Brazil's growth this year is forecast to be 3·5 per cent. which, in real terms, is a very significant increase in such a vast economy.

How is Britain participating in such vast growth? We have a long tradition of co-operation with, and investment in, Brazil, going back to independence early in the previous century. Brazil's public utilities owe much to their British founding fathers. We have long been a supplier of capital goods and technology, but we must continue to participate in great projects in that country.

I draw to the House's attention some projects currently under consideration: the Bolivia to São Paulo state gas pipeline, which is worth billions; the cleaning of the Tietê river, which serves the state of São Paulo; the development of the Tietê-Paraná waterway, which links up to the whole waterway system which descends to the River Plate; and the modernisation of Brazil's ports.

British industry's difficulties in competing for a part in such projects is the lack of cover from the Export Credits Guarantee Department, in competition with cover available to our competitors from their national credit insurance agencies. Companies can compete, as Westland showed by achieving the contract to supply eight Lynx helicopters to the Brazilian navy and to recondition its current fleet of such helicopters. It could only be done,

[Mr. Arnold]

however, with the financing support of the Banco do Brazil. We cannot rely on its being achieved on each and every occasion.

These difficulties are not confined to Brazil alone. The new ECGD criteria are hampering British trade throughout Latin America. The ECGD has announced cover for Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay and Venezuela but, even then, small British exporters cannot obtain access to that cover due to ECGD's need for bank guarantees and the lack of existing lines of credit. In particular, it works against small exporters pursuing credits of between £50,000 and £250,000. There have been too many examples recently of British groups having to source through foreign countries to obtain credit cover. I cite two examples.

The first involves GEC Alsthom. Due to the better deal offered by Coface, the French Government export credit department, its recent project to supply electricity generating units to Mexico had to be channelled through its French associate. Secondly, the project by Biwater at Puerto Vallarta in Mexico had to be sourced from Spain due to the better conditions offered by its Government's export credit agency. High on our Government's European Community agenda must be the standardisation of terms by Community Governments' export credit agencies.

I point out to the hon. Member for Islington, North (Mr. Corbyn) that it is indeed true that General Pinochet remains head of the armed forces in Chile and that he has behaved himself in that position. However, Humberto Ortega, the brother of the former Sandinista president of Nicaragua, remains head of the army of Nicaragua. The hon. Gentleman failed to mention that sauce for the goose and sauce for the gander.

Mr. Corbyn: Is the hon. Gentleman seriously trying to——

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. Is the hon. Member giving way?

Mr. Arnold: In view of the time, I shall finish my speech.

9.2 pm

Mr. Allan Rogers (Rhondda): Due to the shortage of time, my remarks will have to be brief, but I hope to deal with some of the matters that have arisen in the debate. I pay tribute to the chairman, the secretary and the members of the Latin American group for the work that they do on behalf of fostering relationships with Latin America. It is appreciated on both sides of the House. I also pay tribute to the work that is done by and through Canning house to develop business, cultural, academic and social links with Latin America. There is a great deal of cross-party support for, and a desire to restore, our historical relationship with the area. That is why I especially regret the remark just made by the hon. Member for Gravesham (Mr. Arnold), and I shall return to the point of attitudes towards south America and some of the obnoxious regimes that have existed there.

One of the things that have struck me since taking this job is that so many people in this country simply see the continent of south America as a business opportunity. That is why I am pleased about the work that has been done by Canning house that tries to extend the relationship with Latin America beyond that. The hon. Member for Gravesham implied in last year's debate that the area is simply a business opportunity. He quoted the fact that the ex-Minister the right hon. Member for Watford (Mr. Garel-Jones) had

"emanated a clear vision that Britain is missing out on business opportunities."—[*Official Report*, 9 July 1992; Vol. 211, c. 589.]

Business opportunities are important, but I hope that developing south America is not simply seen as that, or even as an extension of our colonial rule, which did not last all that long, thank goodness.

Latin America is in a promising phase. I use that word advisedly because, although the continent holds promise of democratic and economic development, both are fragile and could be easily reversed or eliminated. Labour Members are delighted, as are all hon. Members, to see democracy develop in the region and it was pleasing to see Mr. Ramiro de Leon Carpio, the human rights activist, become president of Guatemala with an absolute commitment to rebuilding democracy.

However, all is not good news in Latin America. Although some economic growth has been achieved, it has varied from country to country. Progress is patchy and sometimes non-existent. As my hon. Friend the Member for Islington, North (Mr. Corbyn) said, the vast debts that were accumulated in the 1970s and 1980s have resulted in a reversal of the policies of protecting industries. Under the instructions of the World bank and the International Monetary Fund, countries now have to throw open their economies to encourage foreign investment and expose their domestic industries to foreign competition. That process has been in operation long enough for us to see some of the effects of liberalisation—they are not all good as Conservative Members would like us to believe.

In previous debates, Conservative Members have talked at great length, as they have today, of free-market economics. The right hon. Member for Watford said in a prescriptive mood on 22 July 1991:

"it is the combination of freedom provided by liberal democracy together with market economics that will deal with the cardboard cities and with the appalling poverty"—[*Official Report*, 22 July 1991; Vol. 195, c. 858.]

Since then, as hon. Members need scarcely be reminded, the shanty towns of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro have not gone away. Only last weekend, we saw the appalling crime of child murder on the streets of Rio de Janeiro.

To try to create the impression that all is well and progressing is fundamentally wrong. As with domestic and European matters, the ex-Minister got it wrong here. To think of Reaganomics and Thatcherism as a solution to the ills of Latin America is as foolish a proposition as it was and is in this country.

The debt crisis is over, but only for the banks. The United Kingdom banks have used the tax laws and financial markets to cut their losses, but the debtor countries of south America still owe what they did before and are still spending one third of their export earnings paying interest on debts. They are still trying to earn more abroad and spend less at home to repay debts. It is wrong and misleading to suggest that all is well and that the debt problems of those countries have been resolved. In addition to putting the market first, Governments have been forced to sell state-owned industries and cut health, education, other domestic needs and import taxes.

Most hon. Members would agree that it is arrogant to generalise on Latin America because each country has its

unique problems. The time that the hon. Member for Gravesham devoted to Brazil showed the uniqueness of that country, but some issues apply to many south American countries: the fragility of democracies, the issue of human rights, the exceptional level of poverty, which my hon. Friend the Member for Islington, North mentioned, and the undue influence and participation of the military, which although not in government is seemingly waiting in the wings.

Although Chile, Mexico and Argentina performed well, in other countries, such as Brazil, reform has juddered to a halt and in Venezuela, partly as a consequence of political crises, progress is intermittent. In Ecuador and Paraguay, the process is only just beginning.

The opening up of economies is likely to boost consumption rather than production, and unless indigenous industry is developed, promoted and invested in, countries will retreat into being primary producers with their people receiving only the trickle down benefits from an elite group of people. In last year's debate, the hon. Member for Gravesham spoke of the republics'

"enthusiastic adoption of the free market system"

giving

"great inspiration, which this House should duly recognise."

—*Official Report*, 9 July 1992; Vol. 211, c. 589.]

Unlike him, I believe that it is vital that the continent is not left to the mercy of market forces. State participation is essential, and there is a mood among Latin American people for change and for a rejection of harsh market economics.

Although greater economic stability in civilian government has become the norm for most of Latin America, the majority of its people have not shared in the economic growth. The 1992 Economic Commission of Latin America reported that 183 million of Latin America's 450 million people already live below the poverty line. The Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Cooperation showed that, of 27 million people in central America, 19 million live in poverty and 13 million live in extreme and abject poverty. That is hardly a success story for free enterprise.

As a result, millions of people have been forced to work in the informal economy. People who once worked together on farmers' and workers' co-operatives are now having to sell sweets and cigarettes in the city, competing with each other just to get enough to eat. *[Interruption.]* I do not know whether the hon. Member for Gravesham thinks that poverty and starvation is a laughing matter, but Labour Members certainly do not. Half of Peru's population—12 million people—earn only enough in a week to buy food for two days. Chilean apple pickers received $3 dollars a day in 1987; in 1991, although living costs had doubled, they received the same. That is part of the "economic miracle".

As larger estates expand to produce more crops and beef for export, poor people are forced off the land into either ecologically fragile areas or to the sprawling shanty towns that surround most urban areas.

Government measures to curb inflation and to meet foreign debt commitments have led to cuts in services and high unemployment. People leaving rural areas and moving to the cities face unemployment and inadequate housing and services. They are denied credit, their environment is deteriorating and their incomes are declining because they are paid unfair prices for their produce.

The continent is paying a high cost for free market economics, not only by the destruction of parts of its economy, but by the pollution of its environment, which is under considerable pressure. Although Chile is a success by most neo-liberal standards, and foreign investment has topped £3 billion in the past year, as the world's second fastest growing economy, there are still areas of environmental pollution that need to be looked at urgently.

Coming to my present job from the defence team, one of my first tasks was to read last year's debate on Latin America. One thing that surprised and disturbed me—I was not really surprised—was the way in which the hon. Member for Wycombe (Mr. Whitney) used what should have been a constructive opportunity to indulge in his partisan rantings about far-left organisations. Such a one-eyed view of the world will never be in danger of disappearing as long as the hon. Member for Gravesham follows on the hon. Gentleman's tailcoats.

Mr. Whitney: The hon. Gentleman described my "partisan rantings". Is he referring to my attack on the Sendero Luminoso, because no other "ranting" took place? If the hon. Gentleman calls that ranting, I accept the charge. Is he seeking to defend Sendero Luminoso? Is that what he is saying?

Mr. Rogers: No, not at all. The hon. Gentleman is using a typical ploy. He tried the same ploy last year against my hon. Friend the Member for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley (Mr. Foulkes). I will not fall for it. The hon. Gentleman's prejudices came through. I suggest to him that he reads his speeches.

The inability of both hon. Members to recognise that terrorism is not exclusive to any side of the political spectrum is disturbing, and we have seen a manifestation of it this evening. Terrorism is utterly condemned by decent politicians wherever it comes from, especially by those who might condemn the right-wing neo-fascist dictatorships, about which the hon. Gentlemen seem to be such experts. Pinochet is one example.

It is important that the opportunity for debating Latin America is not used year after year in the way that it has been in previous years. I hope that what I am saying tonight will stop that happening. People of all democratic persuasions, or even of no particular persuasion, suffer when the generals and their business men colleagues repress, starve, torture and imprison.

The same ordinary people suffer when the so-called liberation movements do exactly the same. There is no refuge for criticism of terrorism. The only decent and proper way to conduct a debate on democracy and human rights is to remember that terrorism is an absolute evil which has no qualification whatever.

One serious concern that I should like to mention briefly—I shall sit down immediately afterwards to be fair to the Minister, as I have slightly overrun my time—is the issue of drugs. It is a problem. We should do more for the people who are being forced into the drug economy because of their inability to sell their products abroad. It is a great shame that economists, for example, in Peru can say that the Peruvian economy is addicted to drugs.

Britain's continued involvement in Latin America is crucial. We must not allow ourselves to be isolated from the region. The all-party group, to which I and most of the hon. Members present belong, has a vital role to play in it,

[Mr. Rogers]

but it has to be a non-partisan, cross-party role. We should support increased human rights, environmental protection and the development of the regions. There is no intrinsic reason why Latin America should be poor. It has immense natural resources and we should all try to help it to achieve its potential.

9.14 pm

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. David Heathcoat-Amory): I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Ruislip-Northwood (Mr. Wilkinson) on securing the debate and on describing our relations with Latin America with such knowledge and understanding. I believe that the debate has become something of an annual event and, as a newcomer to the job, I welcome that. I hope that I shall take part in many future such events.

Even in my few weeks in these responsibilities, I have become aware that something of a new chapter is opening in our long-standing relations with Latin America. At least some of the credit for that belongs to my predecessor, my right hon. Friend the Member for Watford (Mr. Garel-Jones). I join in the generous tribute paid to him by my hon. Friend the Member for Gravesham (Mr. Arnold), who put on record the energy and enthusiasm that my right hon. Friend brought to that part of his job. His commitment enabled Britain to strengthen her relations with a number of those countries, and the benefits of that will endure for many years.

Latin America has long been regarded as having exceptional potential, both in its natural and human resources. The problem is that, too often, that potential has not been realised, but the recent changes that have been described by many hon. Members justify our optimism about the future. The most important overall fact is that democracy is established in the continent as the normal form of government. There are exceptions, but they are few in number. The most noticeable is Cuba, which has been alluded to by hon. Members on both sides of the House.

The hon. Member for Dundee, East (Mr. McAllion), who is not in the Chamber now, made the remarkable claim that Cuba's democratic credentials were secure because its Government received 80 per cent. of the vote in the last elections there. That was not very difficult to achieve, as no candidate who did not have the consent and support of the ruling party was permitted to stand. I dare say that the hon. Member for Dundee, East would have received 80 per cent. of the vote in his constituency if only the Labour candidate had been allowed to stand; but that hardly amounts to democracy.

The reason why Cuba's economy is on the edge of collapse has less to do with the American embargo and much more to do with the fact that the former Soviet Union has turned off the subsidies and that Cuba is still trying to run its economy along centralised state-run communist lines. That is why the people of that unhappy island are suffering.

Mr. Corbyn: Should not the Minister concede that the United States blockade of Cuba from 1959 onwards, and the diplomatic and financial pressure that it used on the whole of Latin America, prevented Cuba from selling its produce—sugar, fruit or anything else—in the region? The only area with which it could trade was the Soviet Union and eastern Europe. Is it not time for the United States to grow up, withdraw the blockade and permit the Cuban people to have medicines and food and to be able to sell their goods in the rest of Latin America, as they wish to do?

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: I am sure that the United States would be willing to review its embargo if Cuba improved its deplorable human rights record and held free and fair elections.

The crucial thing about the rest of Latin America, however, is that those countries are now governed by constitutional means, by civilians, and from that fact all other reforms can flow. As my hon. Friend the Member for Gravesham reminded us, there have been political crises in south America recently—in Brazil, Venezuela and Guatemala—but the significant and new fact is that they have all been dealt with constitutionally and not by military intervention.

I emphasise that we take seriously the question of human rights, which was mentioned by the hon. Members for Rhondda (Mr. Rogers) and for Islington, North (Mr. Corbyn). I disagree with the rest of the latter's old-fashioned sub-Marxist analysis of political developments in Latin America, but I do not dismiss his concerns about human rights.

Violence, including political violence, is still too common in some of those countries. Some of it is drug-related, some perpetrated by guerrillas or paramilitary groups and, regrettably, in some cases the security forces are implicated. But there is a new determination to bring those responsible to justice. That is true of the President of Colombia, who is visiting this country as our guest at the moment. Colombia is still a violent country with a weak judicial system, but I applaud the progress that is being made by the President and the Colombian Government to counter the drug menace and to bring a number of guerrilla groups back into civilian life.

Mr. Jacques Arnold: My hon. Friend referred to the weak judicial system in Colombia. It is worth bearing in mind that the system may be weak because murder threats are made against the judges, magistrates and their families. Our country has supported the Colombian judicial system by providing technical expertise and the like.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: I certainly accept that we must recognise the difficulties of enforcing laws in a country where intimidation is rife.

Another new feature is that Latin American countries are pursuing the policies of the open market and encouraging international trade and investment. No longer do they seek state-owned, state-run solutions to all those problems. So in many ways, the government and administration of those countries are improving, and have improved out of all recognition during the past decade or more.

Serious problems remain. I have mentioned human rights. I also endorse the comments of the hon. Member for Rhondda about the drugs problem, which is serious and must be dealt with. We are playing our part. Last year, the Prime Minister visited Colombia and the Home Secretary visited Colombia, Peru and Venezuela to assess the drug situation and see what we can do to help.

Another encouraging feature that has been mentioned is that those countries now seek to play a responsible role

on the wider world scene. The hon. Member for Islington, North was rather dismissive about the help given by Argentina during the Gulf war, but Conservative Members welcome the fact that those democratic countries are now willing to make their own contribution to United Nations peacekeeping efforts throughout the world. We wish to encourage them to do so.

I shall now say a little more about this country's relations with Latin America. Many hon. Members have drawn attention to the visits—at a political level and to assist in bilateral trade—of Latin American statesmen to this country and of our Ministers to that continent. I mentioned the visit of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister to Colombia and Brazil last year. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary went to Mexico in 1992, and more recently went to Argentina and Chile. I have already spoken about the Home Secretary's visits in connection with the drugs menace.

My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade recently visited Mexico and Argentina, and my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury recently returned from a successful trade promotion visit to Mexico and Chile. I hope to visit the region during the recess, and I shall make a particular point of visiting Brazil. I know that that will please my hon. Friend the Member for Gravesham.

I welcome visits to this country. The President of Uruguay came to London last month as a guest of the Government, and President Gaviria of Colombia is here at the moment.

I cannot miss the opportunity in a debate about Latin America to refer to Argentina. It is more than three years since we restored diplomatic relations with that country, and we attach a high priority to returning to as near a full and normal relationship as possible. There are deep and historic links between the two countries that should draw us together, but in discussing political links and developing trade, we must never forget the Falklands aspect. Diplomatic relations were restored only on the basis that we leave the sovereignty issue to one side while discussing other practical matters.

I regret that the Government of Argentina continue to press their claim. President Menem, who has in many ways done much for Argentina, nevertheless repeatedly asserts that the Falklands will be Argentinian by the year 2000. I reject that, as will every hon. Member. We have no doubts whatever about our sovereignty over the islands. I hope that the Government of Argentina will reconsider their continuing claim.

My hon. Friend the Member for Ruislip-Northwood rightly praised Canning house. In its 50th anniversary year, I am also pleased to pay tribute to the work of Canning house. It was founded during the second world war and was a visionary undertaking at that time. It has become a crossroads and a meeting place in London for Latin American presidents, Ministers, academics, business men and, of course, parliamentary colleagues.

Visiting presidents from Uruguay and now Colombia always make a point of meeting at Canning house. Its reputation remains high because of the quality of its staff and the way in which it has always been led. It makes a vital contribution to British-Latin American relations. I heard what my hon. Friend the Member for Ruislip-Northwood said about his perception of the need for continuing financial support. I hope that all hon. Members will continue to avail themselves of its facilities, and that they will join me in wishing Canning house success during the next 50 years.

Several hon. Members mentioned trade with Latin America. It is too low. We want to increase our exports, and I am glad that last year we achieved a 20 per cent. increase. In 1992, exports to Latin America were worth some £1·3 billion. I expect that trend to continue in view of our continuing efforts.

Some hon. Members emphasised the need for Export Credits Guarantee Department cover. That is under constant review, but it has not been available in a number of countries for some years because of previous defaults on debt. We want to resume cover as soon as possible. Cover in Argentina resumed in June and in Paraguay it resumed in July. I hope that that list will be extended as economic reforms, open markets and a liberal trading system take hold in other countries as well.

My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade gives a great deal of emphasis to trade with Latin America. A number of export promoters have been appointed, and we have two business-led trade facilitation groups, one for Colombia and one for Mexico. The Government's export services have produced a marketing plan for Latin America, concentrating initially on the top six countries.

Aid is also important. In 1990, we announced that we would double the aid programme, though admittedly from a low base. It is focused primarily on technical co-operation, training, health programmes and the importance of encouraging management of sustainable natural resources.

I must emphasise that, although aid is important, the resources released by freer trade are much more important in the long term. My hon. Friend the Member for Ruislip-Northwood criticised the CAP. Even so—and despite our continuing efforts to reform the CAP—it is worth noting that 65 per cent. of Latin American exports to Europe enter the Community duty free. We are in the vanguard of member states pressing for a successful conclusion to the Uruguay round. If we can achieve success in global free trade, it will release far greater resources than any conceivable aid programme.

I thank all hon. Members who have contributed to the debate. Our relations with Latin America are enormously assisted by the presence in the House of a group of hon. Members with knowledge, expertise and interest in that region. If any hon. Members will be visiting that region during the summer recess, they should let the Foreign Office know, and we will endeavour to give them all the assistance and briefing that may be required.

Yugoslavia

9.31 pm

Mr. Calum Macdonald (Western Isles): I am heartened by the number of hon. Members who are present and who, presumably, hope to speak during the debate. It is testimony to the intense and continuing dismay felt by hon. Members on both sides of the House at the degeneration of the position in Bosnia, and the continuing lack of international will to do anything about it.

The Minister often claims that there is no political or domestic will in the House or the country. I genuinely think that he is utterly wrong to make that claim. I think that there is a huge groundswell of opinion among ordinary people in the country that the United Kingdom should be doing much more than it has over the past two years. That opinion is widely reflected in many newspapers —certainly among the journalists reporting from Bosnia —and it is widely felt in the House. I have no doubt that the Government could secure a broad consensus in favour of a stronger stand, if they wished to take that initiative.

A number of my colleagues have been most eloquent on this subject for what seems to be a depressingly long time, notably the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack). I first spoke in the House on this subject as long ago as 13 November 1991, when Dubrovnik and Vukovar were being bombarded and flattened. I called then for military measures to be taken to halt Serbian aggression, but unfortunately, as we all know, nothing was done. Resolutions aplenty were passed but never implemented, or never implemented with sufficient force. The aggression continued in Croatia, as it then was, intensified and inevitably spread into Bosnia, with all the horror that we now know.

I went to the Library to see how many resolutions have been passed. I was given the weighty collection of paper that I have with me—I might almost say, "I have in my hand a piece of paper." The collection happens to be the 41 resolutions that have been passed during the past 23 months. They have been passed but never fully implemented and, in essence, have changed nothing in former Yugoslavia.

I shall emphasise that point by referring to one of the 41 resolutions. It was passed on 6 May this year and concerned safe areas. In the resolution, the UN declared that Sarajevo, the capital city of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and other threatened areas—in particular the towns of Tuzla, Zepa, Gorazde, Bihac and Srebrenica—should be treated as safe areas by all parties concerned, and should be free from armed attacks and from any other hostile acts.

The resolution went on to demand the immediate cessation of armed attacks and any hostile act against the safe areas and demanded free and unimpeded access to all the safe areas in the republic of Bosnia. Since that resolution was passed, 400 people have been killed and 2,500 wounded in Sarajevo alone, one of the supposed safe areas.

The Minister should reflect seriously on the long-term consequences of the debasement of the prestige of the UN, on the currency of international diplomacy and on the prestige of the west—particularly the liberal democracies —by the continued and constant failure to implement and enforce the resolutions the UN has passed.

The Minister has chastised hon. Members for raising inflated expectations of what can be done in former Yugoslavia. The Government, however, have put their signatures to all the resolutions. They have helped to draft all the resolutions, including the resolution on safe areas. The Government have sadly failed to do anything to implement their declarations.

The message that I hope will come out of tonight's debate is that, despite the delay and despite the pattern of appeasement, it is not too late. Europe can still rediscover its will and its conscience. By taking action now, we can still turn back the tide of nationalism and neo-fascism that is welling up in the Balkans and which threatens to spread across central and eastern Europe.

The Government often give the impression that they are playing for time. They give the impression that, if they can stretch out the endless series of resolutions and play out the endless sequence of conferences and negotiations for long enough, the public will eventually become disinterested. Those of us in the House and elsewhere who want to see stronger action taken will also become disheartened and will accept or reconcile ourselves to what Ministers like to call "realities on the ground." That is not what is happening, however. As Sarajevo has teetered on the brink of collapse, the calls for stronger action have become louder and more numerous.

On Friday more than 80 American congressmen signed an open letter to President Clinton calling for a 72-hour ultimatum to lift the siege of Sarajevo and the other besieged towns, and advocated the use of force if it was not complied with. General Morillon, released finally from the leash of his political masters, has called for military action and air strikes to lift the siege on Sarajevo. He made it plain that in his view that was feasible.

Last week several of us listened upstairs in a Committee room to Larry Hollingsworth, the United Nations special representative for humanitarian aid in Bosnia. He stated his view that we should have been firm with the Serbs from the outset of the delivery of humanitarian aid and that if we had been firm and decided that aid should be delivered on our terms without negotiating and compromising with the Serbs, the aid could have been much more effectively delivered. He added that it was time to stop bargaining and negotiating with the Serbs and time to start using force to deliver that aid.

Bit by bit, the Government's claims that all the expert advice from humanitarian workers, the military and the diplomatic corps is against intervention are being shown to be grossly and gravely misleading. A group of us visited the NATO headquarters recently. We left there with the clear impression that the most senior officials in NATO were satisfied that intervention was not only feasible and advisable but urgently required. We received a clear impression that there was intense frustration at the failure at the political level to take the steps necessary to resolve the crisis.

When Ministers search for an excuse for non-intervention, they often say that there is a civil war in former Yugoslavia and Bosnia and that we cannot become involved in a civil war. Of course, communities and civilians are caught up in the war. In that sense, it is civil. Indeed, the main brunt is being borne by the civilian population as it is deliberately targeted and terrorised by Serbian and other forces. However, it is not a civil war in the sense that its primary source and inspiration is internal and domestic—absolutely not.

It is contradictory for the Government to continue to trot out that claim as an excuse for their lack of action.

Last December, at the summit of the European Council in Edinburgh, it was plainly stated by the Heads of State who gathered there that, although there were civil aspects to what was happening in former Yugoslavia, the primary responsibility lay with the Serbian Government in Belgrade. They stated that plainly in the communiqué from the European Council, in which they made a declaration on former Yugoslavia. That was in December last year. Paragraph 2 of the communiqué reads:

"The primary responsibility for the conflict, and its brutality, lies with the present leadership of Serbia and of the Bosnian Serbs . . . The Serbian authorities in Belgrade bear an equal responsibility for fomenting the conflict."

So the argument that it is a civil war in which we cannot intervene simply cannot be used with consistency by the Minister. He can search and grope for that excuse in desperation, but he cannot use it consistently because it has been rejected by the European Council.

Nor can the war be confined to a particular local area or its consequences restricted to the Balkans—another frequent excuse for inaction. Sometimes it seems that it is Government strategy to cordon off the war in Bosnia and to allow it to burn itself out. I firmly believe now, just as I did in November 1991, that that is an utterly false hope. The Bosnians will not stop fighting. In the short term, they may be forced to accept some kind of ethnically based settlement—but that will not last.

A radicalised and embittered rump state in Bosnia will not accept the so-called reality on the ground, any more than the Palestinians have accepted the so-called reality in the middle east since the last war. The Croats will not accept either the effect of annexation of one third of their territory. The recovery of what are viewed as occupied lands will remain the overriding goal of future Croatian policy and of any rump state created in Bosnia.

It is not just the Bosnians and Croats who will not desist in the long term. The more that sanctions threaten economic collapse in Serbia, the more that President Milosevic will be compelled to continue his policy of ethnic cleansing and territorial consolidation. Carving out a greater Serbia is about the only means of economic growth and the only source of political credibility and legitimacy available to Milosevic's regime.

There can be no doubt that when the fighting in Bosnia subsides, Kosovo will be next. As Serbian policy there gradually escalates from intimidation to terror and to ethnic cleansing eventually, at what point will we draw the line—or will we simply wait for a general Balkans war?

I cannot emphasise too strongly that the belief that a carve-up of Bosnia into territorial spheres of influence between Tudman's Croatia and the Serbia of Milosevic and Arkan, with a small rump Muslim statelet crushed between, is a recipe for any kind of stability and long-term settlement in the Balkans is dangerous nonsense and a delusion.

Today's issues of *The Independent* has an article explaining what needs to be done now. The immediate need is to lift the sieges of safe areas. The wider political objective must be to restore a plural, intercommunal, political and civil society in the whole of Bosnia—if necessary, in the way that the allies reconstructed German society after the second world war.

Two measures are necessary to enable that wider political role to be achieved efficiently. The United Nations must declare the whole of Bosnia as being under its protection. That would be welcomed not just by the Bosnian Government, who have already suggested that possibility, and by the population of that country, but by the majority of the people of Croatia and by many in Serbia as well. The UN must make it absolutely clear that its purpose is to guarantee the civil and social rights of all the communities equally within Bosnia under an impartial UN-administered interim Government.

The second measure necessary to ensure the efficient achievement of the wider political objective is for the UN to delegate to NATO, and primarily to its European members, the military task of lifting the sieges and of disarming the warring forces within Bosnia.

The maximum tactical and strategic freedom should be allowed to NATO forces to fulfil those missions. Anything short of that formula will make the overall task that much more difficult. For example, to restrict the political objective simply to protecting the safe areas is a recipe for a second Gaza and an endless stalemate, while inhibiting the tactical freedom of NATO in its ability to respond to events on the ground will mean having to deploy many more soldiers to accomplish the same task.

The figure of 70,000 to 80,000 troops to implement the Vance-Owen plan, for example, was a deliberate overestimate by NATO commanders, intended to compensate for the variable quality of UN troops, their lack of common training and the lack of an efficient command and control centre at the United Nations. Delegation to NATO would dramatically reduce the number of troops required and increase the efficiency of the operation. That is not to criticise the United Nations, or those involved in trying to implement UN peacekeeping missions. It is not their fault that the member Governments of the United Nations hve not supplied the resources and the wherewithal to allow the UN to carry out these missions effectively and properly.

Ms Clare Short (Birmingham, Ladywood): Does my hon. Friend agree that when we visited NATO we were told that all it took to enforce the safe areas strategy was the commitment of 8,000 troops and a change in the rules of engagement? Does he also agree that we were told that NATO had done the work and felt that this was a European responsibility and that European troops, at that very small level, should be committed? Furthermore, does my hon. Friend agree that we were told that, although Bangladesh and Pakistan had committed troops, Europe had not committed enough troops for the strategy to be implemented? Does not all that symbolise a lack of political will?

Mr. Macdonald: It represents an appalling abdication of the responsibility of European Governments, as my hon. Friend points out, that they have absolutely failed to fulfil the request for the minimum number of troops required to enforce the safe areas policy.

Of the 23 observers or monitors that the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe said that it would be putting into Kosovo to monitor the situation there, I understand that only eight or nine have been put in place and that some of them are Americans, not Europeans. The Serbian authorities are making difficulties and are refusing to co-operate with European Governments in Kosovo over the monitoring of the situation there.

The sad fact is that the entire United Nations peacekeeping budget for 1992, covering its tasks in the Balkans, Cambodia, Angola and elsewhere, was less than

[Mr. Macdonald]

the combined budgets of the New York city fire and police departments for the same year. It is no wonder, therefore, that problems have arisen in Somalia and difficulties in Bosnia. The lesson is that the onus is all the greater upon the Governments of Europe and the Governments who comprise NATO to take a lead.

There are now 4 million people who depend upon humanitarian aid in Europe, 3·5 million of whom are still in the Balkans. Half a million of them are now outside the Balkans. Of those 500,000, 300,000 are in Germay, 80,000 in Switzerland, 73,000 in Austria and 40,000 in Hungary. In Britain, there are only 4,424. We do not need to look much further for an explanation of the British Government's complacency regarding the position in the former Yugoslavia. They have repeatedly insisted that British interests are not directly involved. There is no doubt that we should not be adopting that attitude if we, like Germany, had not 4,000 but 300,000 refugees living among us.

It is deeply ironic that a Government who have spent more than a year of parliamentary time on ensuring the ratification of the treaty of European union still, apparently, have no idea, no concept, of the significance of that to which they spent a year trying to persuade us to put our signature. The treaty of European union should at least signify or recognise the existence of a new Europe: a Europe without barriers and of common citizens. It should recognise a Europe in which Britain is no longer an island apart and a Europe in which Germany's refugee problem is also our refugee problem.

Right up to 1940, British Governments considered the fate of the Low countries of the Netherlands and Belgium as being of vital national interest to Great Britain. The trouble with the Foreign Office is that it still thinks that way. It has still to adjust to the new Europe which was created after 1945. The Balkans are to the European Community today what the Low countries were to British Governments in the past—an area of vital and immediate interest and importance on which British Governments simply cannot turn their backs.

Sadly, we can have no great expectation that action will follow this debate. Most of us in the Chamber today are just junior Back Benchers and we are ranged against a Government who claim to have the weight of diplomatic and military opinion on their side—and they claim that falsely, I would add, for the reasons that we have been given by the Government.

We will not accept what the Government try to tell us is now inevitable. We will not accept the extinction of a democracy and multi-cultural civilisation in Bosnia. We will never accept a settlement that is based on the principle of apartheid in the middle of Europe.

The American Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, has described Bosnia as a problem from hell. He is wrong. Bosnia is a problem not from hell but straight from the pages of European history. The way to solve the problem can also be found in the history books. The lesson to be learnt from the history books is something that we should all have learnt 50 years ago: one cannot pacify aggression by appeasement. The only way to stop aggression is to stand up to it.

9.57 pm

Mr. Patrick Cormack (Staffordshire, South): It is a privilege to follow the hon. Member for Western Isles (Mr. Macdonald) who made an excellent speech and who outlined with controlled passion and lucidity the situation that we are debating this evening. I simply regret the fact that the Chamber is so empty even though, for a Consolidated Fund debate, I acknowledge that it is quite full.

The contrast between last Thursday and Friday and tonight is stark, yet the relative importance of the subject discussed, if we think about it for a moment, is also in stark contrast. What we are discussing this evening is, in its far-reaching consequences as well as in respect of its own intrinsic importance, a far graver situation than that which exercised us last week.

I have been a Member of the House for 23 years. During that time, I have felt, as every hon. Member feels from time to time, frustrated, elated and bored. However, until this past year, I have never felt deeply ashamed. I do feel ashamed about what has happened in the Balkans and about the lack of will and resolution displayed, particularly by the European powers, in the face of this catalogue of misery, crime and depravity. Two hundred thousand fellow Europeans have been slaughtered in Bosnia in the past 16 months, about 40,000 women have been raped, about 750,000 people have been wounded, many of them children and many of them badly mutilated, and 2 million of our fellow Europeans have been displaced —uprooted from their homes. The monuments and buildings which symbolised their culture have been wantonly destroyed or vandalised.

That is an appalling catalogue of desecration which impoverishes and shames us all that it should have happened. That it should have happened as the first great repercussion of the end of the cold war makes it even more shaming and shameful.

For a long time, the hon. Member for Western Isles and I have been involved in seeking to draw attention to those problems and to urge action. He and I were among those who, when Dubrovnik, a world heritage site, was being shelled—that alone was a reason for the rest of the world to take an interest—urged that a naval patrol and an air patrol should be put in place. I firmly believe, although I could never prove it nor could anyone disprove it, that had resolute action been taken then, we would probably not be having this debate tonight and many thousands of people would still be living in Bosnia in peace, accord and amity, as they had lived for generations.

I recently stayed with some friends. The wife was a Serb —from Mostar—and she said to me that in her childhood there was no more peaceful society. People got on well together, they lived side by side, they enjoyed each other's company, they respected each other's cultures, and they had a common culture, too. The word "multi-ethnic" is often tossed around without much thought or regard, but Sarajevo was a multi-ethnic city. Its mosques were among its most glorious monuments, but its churches also were revered and respected by people of all persuasions and name, yet in the past 16 months we have seen a city and a country destroyed.

What makes it so appalling is that Britain recognised that country as an independent nation. Last April, about 65 nations recognised Bosnia as an independent nation. It was given and still has a seat in the United Nations. That

country was not a Muslim country but one with a united presidency—Muslim, Croat and Serb—which it still has, and with a Government who reflected those three cultures and symbolised the one that Bosnia was. We recognised it and we have stood by while it was being destroyed.

Of course, I yield to no one in my admiration for the bravery and skill of British troops. I do not gainsay for a minute the value of the humanitarian aid and the enormous courage that has been needed to take that aid to people, nor do I deny that many tens of thousands of people would have died of starvation and malnutrition had it not been for the aid that was taken to them, but we must not shelter behind praise for the troops because there has been a political vacuum.

I do not say these things easily. I have a high regard for my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and his ministerial team, including my right hon. and learned Friend the Minister of State, who will reply to the debate. I kept him up in the small hours in December 1991 during the Consolidated Fund debate, when we first debated the former Yugoslavia. I called for action at the time when Dubrovnik and Vukovar were attacked.

The west, collectively, has failed, as have the institutions that we created to guarantee the world order. What has happened in the former Yugoslavia is an indictment of the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and every other institution to which we have all paid, from time to time, enthusiastic lip service. Above all, it is an indictment of the failure of NATO and the European Community to respond.

There is no point in saying that the British public did not want action to be taken. What sort of leadership is that? "Those are the people, I will follow them because I am their leader." If the Prime Minister had come to the House and said that a fundamental British and European interest was involved and that it was necessary to take certain action, what would have been the response? I suggest that it would not have been dissimilar from the response at the time of the Falklands war or the Gulf war. British people are not slow to recognise national and international interests.

In this country and other European nations there has been a craven refusal to measure up to the enormity of the challenge. I am ashamed.

Ms Clare Short (Birmingham, Ladywood): I agree with the hon. Gentleman's analysis that this is a European failure, but does he agree that two nations, Britain and France, take supreme responsibility? They are the two European members of the United Nations Security Council and they have the armed forces capable of taking action. Those countries, of all countries, are the most guilty. The evidence of opinion polls reveals that, way back from the time when Lady Thatcher first spoke about the need for action, the majority of British people have called for action.

Mr. Cormack: The cannon should be pointed at Britain and France, and at Germany, too, because its precipitate action in another context is also responsible for the failure.

Mr. David Howell (Guildford): It is much more responsible.

Mr. Cormack: I note what my right hon. Friend the Chairman of the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs says. Be that as it may, at no time, either individually or collectively, did we convince the Serbs that we were prepared to take action.

I have talked to soldiers, diplomats and journalists. I do not want to break confidences or embarrass people, but suffice it to say that I am not persuaded—how shall I word this carefully—that what has been said in the House entirely reflects the advice that I am told has been given at a lower level. Perhaps that advice has not permeated to the top and, if that is the case, there is something wrong with the system. There is an appreciation among diplomats and those responsible in NATO and elsewhere that there is something that should and could be done.

Nobody in the House who has taken close interest in this subject has, in irresponsible and gung-ho fashion, recommended vast ground troop involvement.

We should pay tribute to the bravery of the journalists in Bosnia, among whom Martin Bell is perhaps the most outstanding. He said at a meeting in the House a couple of weeks ago that he was convinced that the Serb gun positions could easily have been taken out. They were not as mobile as some would have had us believe. If just a quarter of the resolve to teach Saddam Hussein a lesson had been applied to Bosnia, we would have turned the Serbs back. The technique of precision bombing is not restricted to one part of the world.

When we say these things we are told that there would be civilian casualties, but have there not already been tens of thousands of those? We are told that some soldiers would be killed, possibly British ones among them. I am reminded of the visit that I paid in April to the young men of the Staffordshire regiment who were celebrating their reprieve. They asked the hon. Member for Walsall, South (Mr. George) and me, "Why do you think we joined the Army? What is the Army for? Of course we have to go into action sometimes."

Had there been any resolve or determination the Serbs would have backed down. As Martin Bell reminded us, Karadzic recently signed the Vance-Owen plan because he thought that at long last the west would take action. When it became apparent that we would not, he reneged.

So much for the sorry history of the conflict. What of the future? If the end of this terrible episode is the extinction of a sovereign nation from the map of Europe, that will be a dire portent for the next century. If the message goes out that, having recognised a state, we were neither prepared to defend it nor to give it the means to defend itself so that it vanished in carnage from the map of Europe, that message will be heard in the former Soviet Union.

I do not want to be told that there are many other conflicts in other parts of the world. We do not refuse to help our neighbour just because we cannot help someone who may be in even worse trouble in a far-flung land. And we are talking about the centre of our continent; our neighbours.

If we finally fail—we have failed badly enough hitherto—and this nation disappears, that will be a most damning indictment. Today I was glad to see that *The Independent* devoted the whole of its front page to a call to save Sarajevo. Colleagues may have seen and read it. I am persuaded by those to whom I have talked in the military and elsewhere that even at this late stage it would be possible to save Sarajevo, that great European city—to employ black humour at its most grotesque—whose citizens have been reduced to conditions worse than those

[Mr. Cormack]

suffered by people in the middle ages. Sarajevo is still there; it has not fallen. It need not fall and, if we are to rescue any vestige of honour from this appalling catastrophe, it must not fall. Even now, it would be possible to halt the Serb aggression by delivering an ultimatum, as suggested by the 80 congressmen to whom the hon. Member for Western Isles (Mr. Macdonald) referred.

Let us not balk at placing the responsibility where it belongs most—with the Serbs. In recent months, awful things have been done by all the communities involved, but, as was said at Edinburgh where we also held a Bosnian summit, which the hon. Gentleman and I attended—not that it did much good—the prime responsibility lay with the Serbs. They started it and they fuelled it from Belgrade, literally and metaphorically. Although we criticise some of what Croatia has done, we should not forget that, in defiance of some of those 41 United Nations resolutions, vast tracts of Croatia are still occupied by the Serbs. A couple of weeks ago, a senior diplomat said that, if we started by enforcing those resolutions, in Croatia, we would send out the right signal.

We cannot allow the situation to continue. If we do, it will not end there. Sooner or later we shall be sucked in anyhow. Will the Serbs end with Bosnia? No. Will they end with Kosovo? No. Unless this rampant belligerent aggression is halted, and unless the Serbs who believe in democracy—many do—are given a lifeline, we shall have in the Balkans the smouldering beginnings of a war which could become a conflagration at any time and could involve not only Bulgaria and Albania but Greece and Turkey. Two NATO nations could be fighting each other.

Let us also consider the signals that we are sending to the Muslim world. Some in the Muslim world are already beginning to show their disfavour in quiet ways. Do we want to enter the next century not only in a Europe in which a cancer has taken hold but in a Europe in which we are regarded as enemies by those in the middle east? Do we want to enter the next century with a Europe which, if it is not a cohesive continent, will not be in a strong position when the balance of power inevitably moves from the Atlantic to the Pacific? This debate covers all those problems.

You, Madam Speaker, have done the House a service in allowing three hours for this debate. The hon. Member for Western Isles has done us a service in choosing the subject matter. A number of us did likewise and we are grateful to you, Madam Speaker, for recognising its importance. I wish, however, that the debate could have been awarded a full day and a full House because if, when we return in October, Sarajevo has fallen and Bosnia is no more, we shall have written one of the most appalling chapters in European history and we shall reap the consequences. What is worse, our children and our grandchildren will do so, too.

10.18 pm

Sir Russell Johnston (Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber): The hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) ended his excellent speech by saying that he wished that this debate was not being held with such a limited number of hon. Members here, although among those present are many, like him, who have been committed to the issue for a long time. He thought that it would perhaps have made a difference. Sadly, I do not think that it would. Like the hon. Gentleman, I read the front page of *The Independent* this morning. It caused me to look back at my papers and read:

"In Sarajevo, people are in their cellars without electricity, water or food. If you have children, think what that would be like. Soon, those who have escaped the shells will starve. Only force can be understood, and force should be used, and we should also give air cover for food and medical supplies. We can, of course, also do nothing and just let people die."

That was a broadcast that I did on Channel 4 on 10 June 1992—a year ago. I mention that not to say, "Look how clever I was saying that on 10 June 1992", but to say to the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South that I am afraid that we have been looking at the present situation for a very long time. The situation has simply become worse, but intrinsically it has been very bad for a long time.

I agree with the hon. Member for Western Isles (Mr. Macdonald) about NATO. I remember visiting the headquarters of Action Rapide in Paris about a year and a half ago. During the briefing, the general was asked specifically what he thought about the military implications of lifting the seige of Sarajevo and he more or less said, "If you give me proper notice and 36 hours, I will do it". I do not think that the head of Action Rapide was given to exaggeration. It was possible; what was lacking, as has been repeated several times, was the will.

Two or three nights ago, a scrap of news on the television showed a man sitting behind an enormous gun, which appeared to have an enormous number of shells. He was just pumping them out into the air towards Sarajevo —to whatever it may have hit. We allow that to happen and we say that we cannot take any risks. Without some military action from the west, Sarajevo will ultimately fall and all over Bosnia there will be some sort of Srebrenica defeat. I am not looking for a military solution—none of us is—but without the threat and almost certainly the use of some military force, and with a threat of more, negotiation will not succeed. That is essentially what the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South said.

The hon. Members for Staffordshire, South and for Western Isles concentrated on Sarajevo and on the particular problems of Bosnia. Since many hon. Members wish to speak, I shall spend a little time on other related questions in the former Yugoslavia.

The hon. Member for Staffordshire, South was right to say that the Croats have problems with the occupied areas in Croatia, but what they are doing at Mostar is indefensible. They are clearing out all areas on one side of the river, preparatory to doing it on the other, with a view to making it the capital of Croatian Bosnia. I gather that there are between 6,000 and 8,000 Muslim men in camps on the edge of Mostar with a view to being transported goodness knows where.

I should like the Minister to say what action the Government have taken with the Croatian Government. He may find it difficult to answer all the questions, so I hope, therefore, that he will answer in writing. I ask questions only because I want to know the answers; that is what these debates are supposed to be for.

There is no doubt that economic sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro have been a considerable success. One needs only to look at the position of the dinar to realise that the collapse of the currency is nigh. I readily accept that it is an exceedingly difficult issue, and I am not being critical.

The question is, what are we trying to do with sanctions? Presumably, we are trying to put maximum pressure on Milosevic so that he, in turn, will do the same to Karadzic and General Mladic. That is the straightforward position. I understand that, when Lord Owen was here, he was saying sotto voce—rumour goes around in the House—that Milosevic was being quite co-operative, and we should be thinking in terms of progressively reducing sanctions. I would not wish to do that without four things—first, an agreement in Bosnia; secondly, an agreement in Kosovo; thirdly, an agreement in Vojvodina, which we must not foget, as it has a substantial Hungarian population; lastly, we have to look at somehow disarming Serbia. It is an enormous military power squatting in the region.

We have to face the fact that some in the House will say that sanctions are bad. I listened to the views put by the right hon. Member for Chesterfield (Mr. Benn) and the hon. Member for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell) about Iraq. They say that our sanctions there are punishing women and children and making the population poor. If that argument can be applied to Iraq, it can easily be applied to the former Yugoslavia. That is a difficulty which all of us who think that sanctions are an effective and relatively peaceful way to bring pressure to bear have to face up to.

Mr. Harry Barnes (Derbyshire, North-East): Is not the problem with sanctions that they are put forward as an alternative to engaging in military action? The hon. Gentleman has already spoken of the devastating economic effects; sanctions work in Kosovo as well and cannot be doing anything to help the situation there.

Sir Russell Johnston: Supposing I accept everything that the hon. Gentleman says, what else can one do? There is only the military action that we have been talking about, but there is a lack of will to do that.

Owen is wrong on Kosovo. I heard him say in the plenary session of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg that he thought that the people of Kosovo ought to accept that they are part of Serbia, and that should be the end of the matter. I understand that he has said that elsewhere as well. However, that cannot be the end of the matter.

There is a population of 1·75 million, which is relatively homogenously dispersed in a compact geographical area, 90 per cent. of which is Albanian. It is all very well saying that there was a great battle in 1300-odd against the Turks which was lost and the area is now part of the soul of Serbia. I understand that and I understand nationalist feelings, but, in the 20th century verging on the 21st century, we cannot listen to such an argument.

We must look at the disarmament of Serbia—I have mentioned Vojvodena. That is a major issue, to which sufficient attention has not been devoted. Even if we got peace in Bosnia and an agreement in the areas that I mentioned, we would still be left with an embittered population. Milosevic could still be in charge, and we know what he did with the opposition within Serbia. If he has to hand powerful military forces, he may well use them.

I have two short specific questions that have not yet been properly mentioned. If the Minister has a proper opportunity to reply, I hope that he will. First, what is going on with the war crimes tribunal which was proposed in the United Nations? What has happened about the inquiry into the rapes which was instituted following the summit in Edinburgh with Dame Anne Warburton, who produced a report? What has been the follow through to that and how does it relate to the war crimes issue?

Secondly, the economic situation in Macedonia for a period was awful, because she was obeying sanctions and there was a problem with Greece. Of course, Macedonia has no forces of her own, but I understand that there are some American forces there. What is the up-to-date position about Macedonia? I think that the hon. Member for Western Isles spoke about CSCE monitors in Kosovo. I think that they have all been cleared out. Did not the Yugoslavs say that, because they had been put out of the CSCE, all other CSCE monitors were to be put out?

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Douglas Hogg): The hon. Gentleman tempts me to interbene. The position is unsatisfactory. The Government of Servia have stated that the mandate of the CSCE to keep the monitors in Kosovo has been withdrawn. That is profoundly unsatisfactory. Some of the monitors are still there, because some are on leave and have not had their visas renewed. We are seeking to persuade the Government of Serbia to agree to a renewal of the mandate.

Sir Russell Johnston: I thank the Minister for that helpful intervention. It clarifies the position which, as he says, is highly unsatisfactory. We need a firmer basis.

I agree with the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South that this has been a test of European will and our humanity. We have shown some humanity: our troops and French troops have done enormous good. General Morillon and people of other nationalities have done well within the narrow confines of the United Nations mandates under which they had to operate. The lack of will and the absence of any capacity to take risks have been saddest. Neil Ascherson who writes so well in *The Independent on Sunday* described it some months ago as "a policy of non-intervention disguised as humanitarianism." So far, the outcome has been to our shame, but, as the hon. Member for Western Isles said, it is not too late; it is never too late. If we begin by lifting the siege of Sarajevo, all things can become different.

10.32 pm

Mr. David Howell (Guildford): The hon. Member for Western Isles (Mr. Macdonald) has rendered the House a service by introducing this debate at this late stage just before the recess. The situation will grow much grimmer and much worse, and before we sit here again many more terrible and dangerous things will happen. My hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) has also done the House a service by articulating his views with great eloquence.

I do not totally agree with the analysis or the conclusions of hon. Members who have spoken. The issue has dark and expanding consequences for us all. That cannot be in doubt for a moment, although some people think that it can all be shut away in a box and put aside as it is happening in far away countries of which we need know nothing, and that it has nothing to do with us.

I join with as much feeling as I can muster those who praise the humanitarian work of the relief workers, the non-governmental organisations, the UNHCR and our troops who are protecting those relief workers. They are offering a superb and abnormal degree of protection. No words are adequate to praise what they are doing, and I

[Mr. David Howell]

hope and pray that they will not be forced to withdraw because conditions have become impossible. That threat is always present, but we have the assurance of my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence that if the risks become too great or the mission impossible our troops will be rapidly withdrawn. I hope that that will not happen.

The humanitarian operation is right. The conscience of the world is rightly outraged by the horrific medieval atrocities that this terrible saga has revealed. It would be impossible, uncivilised and equally barbaric for us to stand back and say that we can do nothing. It would be impossible for us to say, "Leave them to fight it out, starve and die." My right hon. and hon. Friends have acted positively and constructively throughout in recognising that something must be done.

On the politico-diplomatic side, however, it is far less easy to see the positive aspects—the good that has been done by the policy-making efforts of the European powers. It may be said that we are now in such a miserable situation, with Sarajevo about to die, that to look back is to rake over the ashes and to cry over spilt milk; but I do not think that that is entirely right. Unless we can trace the way in which we got into this quagmire with more precision than we sometimes use in the emotion of the moment, we shall not find a way out of it, or guard against falling into equal chaos in the next crisis.

That applies particularly to Macedonia. People remember the parts of history that they choose to remember, but it is worth remembering that Macedonia is behind the present circumstances, which began to unfold when the Turks withdrew about 120 years ago. The motives born of that moment still drive the present horror. In the 1870s, Macedonia was the boiling point—the potential Bosnia, or killing field—that led to the Balkan crisis of the time. It is waiting to fulfil the same role, and it will do so unless we learn our lesson and do not follow the same miserable path.

Why is the world so critical of what has happened on the diplomatic front? The source of the beginning of failure is clear. At the outset, when it became clear that the old federation was going to break down in the familiar slaughter and the ancient ethnic quarrels would all be raised again, there was a choice for the international community. It was between saying, "We will not intervene in military or political terms; we will help relief workers, and intervene in a humanitarian context, but we will not intervene in a decisive policy way", and saying, "We will now embark on this operation, fully aware that one thing can lead to another; fully aware that we may have to intervene with increasing decisiveness, commitment and force. We are ready to do that, so that, from the outset, our threats will carry credible weight: they will have behind them the threat of full intervention".

The international community's first act was to step aside from that choice. It did not follow either of those routes, although either one of them might have led to greater coherence and less bloodshed; I do not say that either could have prevented what has occurred. Instead, the international community chose the option of uncertain, wavering half-intervention, adopting a number of dangerous options, each of which has made the horrors worse and prolonged miseries, dangers and, probably, the incidence of death. I believe that, looking back; some commentators, including hon. Members, think the same, looking forward.

First, we said that we would not intervene militarily but we had some diplomatic solutions to the problem. That was a dangerous first step. Again, a study of history would have shown—here I disagree with some hon. Members who have spoken—that no outside influence could ever have stopped the wish of the Serbs to regain their lands, after all those hundreds of years of being suppressed by Turkish and Ottoman rule. Any idea that that could have been stopped by plans, arrangements or diplomatic solutions was absurd vanity—unless, as I say, people were prepared to support it with massive military intervention.

The first half-baked semi-intervention, which has done more harm than good, was the attempt to impose diplomatic solutions, or detailed maps, on the unfolding agenda of greater Serbia and the greater Croatia—which were there and remain there—and on the hope and belief, now dashed and destroyed, of the Bosnians, including those sometimes called the Bosnian Muslims——

Mr. Cormack: They are not all Muslims.

Mr. Howell: As my hon. Friend says, they are by no means all Muslims—that they would have a whole area of Bosnia which they could rule.

Once the international community began to say that it did not accept that and had some better ideas, maps, plans and diplomacy, we began, even at that early stage, to fly in the face of, instead of working with, mitigating and redirecting the unfolding reality. We pretended that we did not understand that reality. We did not have the historical insight to see what would happen. That was the first of the fatal interventions. I shall come to the others in a moment.

Mr. Jim Marshall (Leicester, South): I listen to the right hon. Gentleman's argument with increasing incredulity. He has made two assertions—one about greater Croatia and the other about greater Serbia. He speaks as if those nations had existed within a known time scale. But then he dismisses Bosnia out of hand. If he looked a little more closely at Balkan history, he would know that Bosnia existed as an independent state 500 years ago. Most of its current borders have been internationally recognised for the past 120 years. If that is the case, why does he go along with the appeasement of Serbia, and to a lesser degree of Croatia, at the expense of Bosnia?

Mr. Howell: That is the danger of mixing analysis of what is happening with what the hon. Gentleman would like to happen. He draws certain lessons from a particular point in history. One could go with a microscope over the history of the area and draw different lessons. We all try to draw the best lessons to see that we do not make mistakes in the future. I am not saying what I want to unfold; I am merely describing what is happening. I am not saying what I wish or plan it. I am not saying what I would impose on the area if I was king of the world. I am merely describing the unfolding reality. When politicians and diplomats plunge into a situation and try to defy it but deny themselves the force, machinery and equipment to do so, they end up in some sticky situations. As my argument unfolds, the hon. Gentleman may understand more what I am trying to say.

The second half-baked intervention was the diplomatic act of recognising Bosnia at the beginning of last year. It

was against the advice of the Badinter commission, which said that Bosnia did not satisfy the conditions for an independent state. It is ironic that Mr. Badinter said that Macedonia qualified and yet we did not recognise Macedonia as a state. Bosnia, which he said did not qualify, has been recognised.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: My right hon. Friend said that we had not recognised Macedonia. By voting for the admission of Macedonia to the United Nations, we have accorded recognition to Macedonia.

Mr. Howell: We have recognised it now, but all last year, when the Macedonians sought recognition, they were told that they were not on the list because of the Greek problem, with which we are familiar, whereas Bosnia had passed through the hurdle and become a recognised state. Many people said that that act of recognition would lead to more hideous bloodshed. The renewed intensity of the horrors, the adjectiveless killing that took place, and the new and ugly drive of the Serbian Bosnian forces as they moved against the Muslim strongholds was a terrible and predicted sequence. Recognition was not the only reason why the events that followed unfolded, but it was a diplomatic intervention which made the situation worse.

The third intervention was the decision to continue maintaining the embargo on the movement of arms in a way that discriminated against one of the combatants. Whatever else one says, clearly that was intervention. I must be careful in saying what might be the way forward. Some argue—and we may be close to this—that the answer is not to give more arms to the area to foster more killing but to reduce, if this is realistic, the arms available to the other combatant forces. Others say—as did my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary the other day—that if we cannot see any other way forward, we may in due course have to consider lifting that arms embargo. There are those in the Washington policy-making machine who think that that point is near.

Whichever way one slices the argument and goes from here, the international community has intervened by holding the situation as it is. Whether one likes it or not, true non-intervention, and true military and political stand-off—and I am totally against humanitarian stand-off, because involvement there is right—would mean a lack of consistent and pursued implementation of the UN resolution that in effect denies the Bosnian Muslims the means to defend themselves.

The big lesson of half-intervention, the implications of which some of us in the Select Committee tried to set out in our recent report on the UN's expanding role, is that when the United Nations or a more regional grouping, such as the European Community, seeks to move into and grasp some horrific situation of conflict, it should first pause and ask itself a basic question.

It should first accept—and this is the theme of the Select Committee's report—that one thing will always lead to another, and that the smallest toe in the water of involvement in intervention is likely to lead to greater things. When it does, all the intervening nations or parties concerned must have the political will, resources and equipment to see the matter through. If they do not, they should not get involved in the first place.

I may be too idealistic, but that seems a necessary line of reasoning and test, to ensure that we do not see again the half-intervention—the realisation that it will lead to more promises, the raising of high hopes of intervention, backing down, a feeling of betrayal, bitterness, and the increasing sense that the international institutions have lost their authority.

In the Bosnian Muslim case, the disaster is wider—as my hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, South warned. The signal has been sent to the ever-sensitive and rather divided Islamic world that moderate Islamic leaders who believe that co-operation with Europe, the west, the Christians—whatever term one likes to use—is the right way forward in bringing stability to the whole Islamic world, in the middle east, have got it wrong. It will be said, "Look at what these people have done. We put our trust in them, and that trust has been belied, undermined and destroyed."

Extremist, subversive and terrorist Islam—in total contrast to the moderate, wise Islam with which we need to work closely and befriend—has received an almighty boost. There are further sinister developments to come. The idea that the system would settle down under a greater Croatia and Serbia and a crushed Muslim Bosnia and that there would be equilibrium is false. It is more likely that we shall see an increasingly agitated Islamic interest. There has already been an offer of 10,000 Iranian troops to save Sarajevo or to maintain another area, and of Pakistani and Malaysian troops. Other countries have raised the banner of Islamic military intervention. It has not happened yet. I shall be fascinated to hear from my right hon. and learned Friend the Minister of State, who struggles nobly and with vast skill with these issues, whether that was just a straw-in-the-wind suggestion, or faint bravado, or whether that plan is going forward. Either way, it is exactly what policymakers said at the beginning must not happen.

Mr. Max Madden (Bradford, West): Would not the spectre that the right hon. Gentleman raises be laid to rest if Britain, France, Germany and other NATO countries said today, "We are prepared to put in sufficient forces to lift the siege of Sarajevo and to give full protection to the so-called protected areas"?

Mr. Howell: That is a solution one can come to, but I am not sure that I have sufficient confidence to think that it is happening. In the past, there were many suggestions that it might happen but it did not, and that led to an even worse situation. I see no sign that the NATO powers are prepared to act in that way. If they were, it might have a beneficial effect on the Islamic attitude, but at the moment I see no sign of it.

Mr. Chris Mullin (Sunderland, South): We on this side of the House are listening with bated breath to find out what the right hon. Gentleman suggests is the solution to this terribly complex problem. As he is Chairman of the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, we treat his views with particular respect. He has been speaking for nearly 20 minutes, but we still do not have a clue.

Mr. Howell: The hon. Gentleman says that, because I am the Chairman of the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, I must have a wonderful solution that rises above the efforts of diplomats and all the others who have failed to find a solution. I cannot do that; I cannot deliver a miracle. I can only suggest that if we analyse what has happened clearly, we may, just possibly, be in a better position to halt the still downward slide and prevent the

[Mr. Howell]

war spreading into, for instance, Macedonia, where at least we have taken the first right move. Preventive diplomacy has been followed by preventive deployment.

There are now, which I greatly welcome, American soldiers there—only a few hundred of them—but I hope and pray that, this time round, preventive deployment, or the beginning of intervention has behind it a credible threat: that there will be no question of ever withdrawing those troops, should they be attacked, should borders begin to be messed about with and should we begin to see the horrors in Bosnia translated on to the Macedonian map. I hope that that is what it means. It is important that we should make it clear that that is what it does mean so that we do not see Macedonia going the way of Bosnia.

No, I cannot at this late stage produce wonderful solutions out of a hat. I can, like every other right hon. and hon. Member, speculate on whether Sarajevo can be saved and whether that can be done either by some NATO force, which I do not believe will be forthcoming, or by——

Mr. John Gunnell (Morley and Leeds, South): Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Howell: No. I am about to end my speech. I have kept the House too long already.

Alternatively, we can speculate on whether Sarajevo can be saved by strengthening the Bosnians, perhaps even with the support of those Islamic forces, and by weakening the endless Serbian drive, incentive and determination to try to smash Sarajevo which at present the Serbs feel is necessary because they do not understand any other settlement and can see no prospect other than that, somehow, they must seize Sarajevo.

Mr. Gunnell: Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Howell: No. I am about to finish.

That is the grim prospect that we face as the House goes into recess. I do not offer cheap solutions or, indeed, expensive ones. The dangers are very great. It is possible to save Sarajevo if there is a whole combination of measures, not just the pouring in of NATO troops. That is what may occur. However, I see nothing other than blood and misery following on from the errors of the past. I pray and hope that those errors are not repeated on the Macedonian scene.

10.53 pm

Mr. David Young (Bolton, South-East): The former Yugoslavia is one of the greatest challenges that faces not only the United Nations but each and every one of us.

Various reasons are given as to why we cannot intervene. We are told that it is a civil war between neighbour and neighbour and that it is a war with no front line. It is a war similar to that in which guerrilla-trained people defeated Hitler and put him to flight.

When we hear all the reasons why we cannot act, I sometimes wonder whether it is time to consider some reasons why we should act. Perhaps action would have occurred long ago if Bosnia had oil. We find that action occurs quickly from surrounding countries in respect of oil-bearing states.

What perturbs me is that ethnic cleansing smacks of the holocaust. From our not too distant history, we know the penalty that was paid by ignoring the slaughter of the Jews in Germany. Reasons were given then for why we could not act.

No one is entirely guiltless in the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. However, the Serbs—above all—have consistently thumbed their noses at the United Nations. Yesterday, only seven minutes after a truce, the United Nations forces were attacked. I do not argue easily for the engagement of British land forces. However, if we are to abide by the United Nations, we must act together with a United Nations force. In respect of this issue, the United Nations has acted too little and too late.

Let us consider the growing request of the Muslims to be allowed to be armed. That would not have come about had there been an attempt to make an even playing field from the start. However, sanctions were never implemented enthusiastically and no thought was given to the point made by the right hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Howell) that if we could not supply the Muslims, we should effectively have disarmed the Serbs.

There are many Bosnian Muslims in my constituency. One Muslim said to me, "We appreciate your food and we appreciate the bravery and dedication of your soldiers in getting it to us, but are we just going to be kept alive so that eventually we can be raped and butchered?" That is the challenge that we in this House face.

Will the United Nations eventually secure peace only on the aggressor's terms—the terms of a raped Bosnia and a butchered Bosnian Muslim population? If that is the case, the United Nations will be the principal loser—a latter-day League of Nations. Is the United Nations going to stand by while its authority is flouted and its troops attacked?

Also, we can and must embrace more enthusiastically the problem of former detainees and refugees and the sick and injured. We said that we would accept 1,000 ex-detainees and their relations. Germany agreed to take 2,000 and France agreed to take a meagre 385. Little Switzerland agreed to take 1,500. However, we have not yet taken a quarter of our promised quota. We can hardly set ourselves up as a world leader on humanitarian issues if we cannot, even now, fulfil that quota.

The situation is too fluid, too dangerous and too unstable to talk just about quotas. We should produce a policy that will react enthusiastically and quickly to the situation. As the slaughter continues, the casualties will increase and there will be a greater need for medical help for those who are injured; it calls for a policy of humanitarian support for our Bosnian neighbours.

It worries me when we consider what the United Nations did in the middle east, yet it is only now considering taking in only 300 ex-detainees. It is by one's deeds, not one's words or resolutions, that one is eventually known. There is growing evidence that the aggressors are determining play in the war. The League of Nations failed because its policy became one of appeasement. The United Nations is on trial. It is a test of every member country.

If the Serbs and other warlords win, the ideals of the United Nations will have been sacrificed, and the United Nations will founder on the rock of appeasement, just as the League of Nations did many years ago. The principles of the charter of the United Nations will be flouted if we do not act. The rising nationalism throughout the world will regard the conflict in Bosnia not as the end but as only the beginning of a world holocaust.

11.1 pm

Lady Olga Maitland (Sutton and Cheam): This debate is an emotional affair, principally because of my own Serbian background. It might be assumed that, because of that background, I could be enormously supportive of Milosevic and try to excuse him or take a deeply critical and horror-struck view of all that has gone on in the name of so-called Serbia. Milosevic might be their leader, but he does not represent all his people.

Interestingly, during the election in December, despite the enormous, one-sided campaign that Milosevic conducted against his opponent, Milan Panic, who had been scorned and derided and had not been allowed access to the media, people who heard Milan Panic's message turned out to vote. It is remarkable that, despite enormous pressure—for example, names slipping off the electoral roll, jobs being lost, double registrations, and no registrations—34 per cent. of the electorate voted against Milosevic.

I say that with tremendous feeling for that beleaguered community. If there is any chance of bringing the terrible slaughter to an end, we must do everything in our power to back the opposition.

A few weeks ago, Vuk Draskovic, the leader of the Serbian Renewal party, was savagely beaten. It was interesting to note that the outcry that followed put more pressure on Milosevic than anything else that the international community had done. It shamed him. I was proud of the fact that our Prime Minister sent a letter of protest—quite right, too. The way in which Madame Mitterrand went to Belgrade and badgered Milosevic was also impressive, and quite right, too. It was interesting to note that, ultimately, he yielded to the pressure where it hurt, because, frankly, he was made a fool of. He did not like the reality that, at long last, some opposition had risen up. He did to the opposition the only thing that the butcher of the Balkans could do—he wiped it out. He closed down the Serbian Renewal party and made it impossible for other parties to function.

We can learn many lessons from that incident—and I hope that we will—because, for once, Milosevic had been challenged on his territory and he backed down.

I share the anguish expressed in the Chamber. I congratulate the hon. Member for Western Isles (Mr. Macdonald) on initiating the debate. I also support the remarks of my hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) and my right hon. Friend the Member for Guildford (Mr. Howell).

I have watched the events of the past year with horror. I have tried to put my point of view to our Government. I accept that they are genuinely anguished and it is unfair to accuse them of complacency. I do not believe that that is right. The Government could protest, quite rightly, that they have spent more man hours on this issue than on many other topics and with less clear answers. I am sorry that the Government have encountered that difficulty.

I do not put all the blame on the British Government, because I accept that they have made a positive contribution in terms of humanitarian aid. The fault lies with international dithering—I use the word international deliberately. The European Community has failed. I believe that the countries that make up the UN have failed. The crisis over Sarajevo confirms that. Even as we speak, the shelling, the mortars and the sniping continue. That is the result of non-intervention. I find it humiliating that yet another ceasefire has been turned into a mockery after seven minutes.

It is humiliating to learn of the shelling of the French UN protection force in Zetra, just outside Sarajevo—a Serb snub if there ever was one. Mercifully no one was killed in Zetra, but 38 people were killed elsewhere. I find it depressing to read in the newspapers today of Barry Frewer, the UN spokesman, who said of the shooting:

"It is not being respected by either side. It is very disappointing."

I find it disappointing that we seem to have difficulty accepting that defenceless people have a right to protect themselves. We should reconsider the whole question of lifting the arms embargo. I am encouraged by the fact that the Foreign Secretary has not ruled out the idea. At present these people are using what few weapons they have to hand; we are offering them no human protection. We are thereby exposing them to far greater dangers, because they are so vulnerable.

What is the definition of a safe area? In these areas residents and security forces alike are being killed. Spanish forces, for instance, are under fire from the Bosnian Croats. The other day two Canadian UN soldiers were wounded. And the British aid convoys are continually under fire.

The United Nations has said that it will launch air strikes if its troops are fired on. When will the allies take such action? What is the breaking point? If we continue to do nothing, it is hardly surprising that we are never believed.

There are dangers associated with inaction, too. The United Nations is no longer respected as a world authority. That could have dangerous repercussions across the globe. It sets a precedent. I am worried because the authority of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe process has been grossly diminished, even though it has been instrumental in activating monitors.

Scorn has been heaped on all the declarations of the past 50 years designed to improve the lot of the beleagued human race—the 1948 universal declaration of human rights, the 1950 United Nations human rights convention, and the 1960 United Nations covenant on civil and political rights. Is it really right to ignore them all? I believe that we ignore them at our peril.

I feel uncomfortable when I hear that this is not our war, or that we have no interests at stake in it. I do not accept that. Bosnia is at the heart of Europe and it is no good pretending otherwise. Greece is regarded as a healthy member of the European Community. Italy, Austria and Germany, all near Yugoslavia, are of course regarded as European nations. After all, where is the heart of Europe? Some people might not regard the Shetlands as exactly at the heart of Europe, but they are certainly part of it.

Yugoslavia and Bosnia are our prime responsibility. I do not accept the argument that we should exercise our responsibilities in Cambodia or Somalia but not in Bosnia. Certainly, if we can afford to send our troops there, we should do all we can—but surely not at the expense of a country and a people who are our own kind.

I do not condemn the Vance-Owen efforts, or those of their successors, to find a solution.

I know that the Minister has spent many hours meeting the leading personalities in the Balkans and I know how difficult and frustrating it has been. None the less, I do not believe that we should back off because of the difficulties.

[Lady Olga Maitland]

I do not believe that appeasement has ever paid; I cannot think of an example of where it has done so. The price will be tomorrow's account of bloodshed. It could begin in Kosovo. We could see the inexorable spread of a war that no one bothered or had the heart to stop in time. The danger now is that it has become unstoppable. Territorial ambitions may almost have been satisfied in Bosnia. Regrettably, Greater Serbia has come about and the Serbs could now turn their attention to Kosovo.

I was in Kosovo last December as one of the monitors of the election. It was eerie and uncomfortable to be in that silent town, with a people cowed, knowing that a bombshell would drop at some stage although they could not tell when; it was like the silence before a storm. Do people realise that all the schools there are closed, that children are not being educated? Do they realise that the people there are not getting jobs? The town is already under siege. I saw for myself that the warlord Arkan had his camps in the vicinity. It is hard to believe that anyone could say that it was hard to take action when the camps were so visible.

Undoubtedly, Milosevic will feel that he has unfinished business. I was disappointed to find that, in the mind of the socialist party, there seems to be a question of Kosovo being allowed to return to the 1974 constitution established by Tito. To give that autonomy seems like common sense when one is sitting in this country, but, regrettably, I found that the socialists and Milosevic take a wholly different view. That is why I fear that reason will, yet again, go out of the window.

As soon as Bosnia has been cleared up, the Albanians, then the Bulgarians and the Greeks will become involved. The Macedonians will also be under tremendous pressure. I congratulate the United Nations on deciding to put in a token force as a deterrent which, I hope, will be increased. Nevertheless, a widening of the war to embrace Turkey is a possibility. Anything could happen. We have a moral responsibility to decide when we should do something other than our very important humanitarian aid—although I do not denigrate the marvellous aid, which has saved many thousands of lives.

I have a particular interest in our aid convoys because they were organised through the Crown Agents, which are based in my constituency in Sutton. They told me about the morale of the drivers. They are not military men, trained for war; they are civilian truckies who decided to offer, at great risk to themselves, to carry out the important driving work. They sent a message back to the Crown Agents saying that, if the British troops are withdrawn because of fears for their safety, they will carry on driving because they believe that they should. I am proud of them for taking that action.

I am proud of our British troops. I have not heard a word of complaint about the dangers to which they have been exposed. They are a highly professional fighting force with a job to do. If anything, we hear of their frustrations at being unable to do more or to respond as their instinct tells them. I wonder to what degree they give debriefings to Ministry of Defence officials; and do officials listen and learn from their lessons?

We must take great care about the future of the Muslims in Bosnia. The Geneva talks get going yet again this week and some unsatisfactory partitioning will take place. If a viable area of country with access to the sea is not given to the Muslims, the price that we shall pay will be a Palestine for the next 40 or 50 years.

Furthermore, as my right hon. Friend the Member for Guildford (Mr. Howell) said, we must watch the Islamic community. The Arab world is intensely following events on television. It is remarkable that they have not been more involved, but if in the long term the Muslims, or what is left of them, are left besieged and hopeless, they will turn to guerrilla warfare, aided and assisted by Islamic fundamentalists, and we shall be helplessly at their mercy until land is given to them. If the Geneva talks do not define clearly the Muslim territory and put in United Nations forces physically to protect them from the Serbs or Croats trying to take an extra bite, the price that we pay could indeed be terrible.

Ultimately, the real challenge and, I believe, the only way to bring this terrible war and fighting in the Balkans to an end is to concentrate more on President Milosevic. He is the inspiration for Serbian expansionism. The buck stops with him. The warlords do not act alone; they are sustained by Belgrade, where they return for more assistance. Milosevic is rightly known as the butcher of the Balkans. I find it difficult to accept that he is regarded by the international community as the only means to peace. I do not believe that we can achieve peace by accepting every word and promise that he makes, because since these terrible tragedies began he has been empty, cold and calculating. He has broken promises and has been determined to mislead and to try to get away with it.

Let us look again more closely at this man. The one moment when he was under genuine pressure was at the Athens summit because the Americans supported the concept of air strikes, which he believed were imminent. That is why he buckled down on Karadzic, went off to Pale and pressured Serbs by saying, "You must now accept a peace deal". What happened? We all suddenly leant back with a huge amount of relief and said, "Great, the deed has been done; we can now relax our vigilance." That may not have been the message that we intended to convey, but that was the impression that Belgrade got.

We had fine words from Milosevic. He would close the frontier; no more vehicles, assistance, weapons, oil or armaments would go from Belgrade to Bosnia. That did not happen. One or two roads were closed and eight remain open. The no-fly zones are continually breached. From a parliamentary answer, I discovered that of the 800 breaches, the allied forces had been able to intercept about eight, because of all the short helicopter flights ferrying personnel, the wounded and weaponry.

In his own land, Milosevic is tightening up his totalitarian rule. He is becoming a more skilful, intelligent and charming Saddam Hussein, who seems more acceptable but who somehow or other manages to have his hideous way. He sacked the president, Cosic, the man with whom he had worked closely, because he dared to question his methods.

Now, we must give all the support that we can to the opposition parties. We must assist Studio B so that it can extend its transmissions to the rest of Yugoslavia with the message about the kind of man that its leader is. If the hope of the international community is to rely on internal dissent, we must facilitate that and encourage the people who have the means and the will to stand up to him.

We should bear in mind just how Milosevic is tightening the ratchet in his country. Some 1,000

journalists were sacked from the state radio and television for daring to be politically incorrect. People in leading jobs —whether in universities, in medicine or the arts—lose their jobs if they are not politically correct and their places are taken by socialists at Milosevic's behest. We should also bear it in mind that he is taking action to purge the army, for the second time, of any leadership about which he feels doubtful. Some 40 officers are due to go within the week, to be replaced by younger officers who are compliant and who will assist Milosevic in his terrible work.

We are seeing a country that is moving dangerously towards a totalitarian state that will push wherever it can. I urge the international community to seize the political will and follow through UN resolutions by saying that if those resolutions are broken, we shall take action—and then do it. The Serbs are cowards when they are attacked, as we can see from what happened when Vuk Draskovic stood up to Milosevic. We have reports about cowardice in the field. They are not the great fighting men that people believe them to be. They just have heavier weaponry.

We should not be so awed by the Serbs. It is important that we take stock and realise that this Balkan monster will never stop until he is challenged by the will of the international community.

11.34 pm

Mr. Chris Mullin (Sunderland, South): It is not every day that I find myself on the same side as the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Lady Olga Maitland)—at least, I think that we are on the same side. I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Western Isles (Mr. Macdonald) not only on his initiative in obtaining this debate but on acting as an unofficial Whip to those of us who have a clear idea of what should be done in such a terrible state of affairs.

I congratulate the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) on a very fine speech—as fine a speech as I have heard in some time. I do not say this in any party political sense, but I am only sorry that more of his colleagues were not here to hear it. However, he can have the satisfaction of knowing that he and his colleagues outnumber the members of the Press Gallery, to which we are not supposed to refer. Whenever we discuss something of great importance, the Press Gallery is empty.

The House and the country have been badly misled. From the outset, we have been told that nothing can be done about anything in Bosnia. We have been told that the terrain is impossible, that the people are impossible and that the experts are against doing anything. No doubt those same arguments were rehearsed in the 1930s. However, I think that we have been misled and that the experts, of all persuasions, have been saying something different. As the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South said, for some unaccountable reason the message has not reached those in high places—or if it has, it has been suppressed.

I hope that the Minister will say something about that, because I am genuinely puzzled about what has happened. The more we learn about what the people on the ground have been saying, be they journalists or whomever, the more puzzled we become. A number of distinguished journalists who have spent months in Bosnia have visited us in the House. The opinion of all those whom I met was unanimous. Indeed, not only did they speak for themselves, they spoke for many of our diplomats and military men with whom they are personally acquainted. For a long time, they have held the view that military intervention has been and is feasible, but it is getting less feasible by the hour. I remain puzzled why word of that, if only to rebut it, has not reached the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary.

From time to time, colleagues meet British diplomats in Yugoslavia, NATO or the United Nations. We are surprised to learn that they, too, feel that the Government's policy has been what one described recently as

"a diplomatic and strategic disaster with major implications for western security."

One of the Government's own diplomats, with close knowledge of the position, felt so frustrated that he made that comment.

Another diplomat who spoke recently to some of my colleagues referred to the need for an ultimatum to the Serbs to be followed by military action. He was asked whether he had made that clear to his political masters. He said that he had. He was asked whether he had met them during his visit to London. He said that he had not because no one at the Foreign Office had asked to see him. They knew he was here, but no one asked to see him.

I am sorry to say that I am not really all that puzzled because I understand what is happening—we are being misled. The biggest surprise was to learn that there are senior people in the military who take a similar view about military action. Of course, we must always be cautious when talking to soldiers who say that a little strategic or surgical bombing, as they like to call it, will do the trick. Anyone who followed the various pronouncements of the military men during the Vietnam war will know that they got it badly wrong. Therefore, I do not suggest that politicians should always take what the military says as the absolute truth. However, it is surprising to hear very senior military people talking about policy to date as having been too little, too late. The word "appeasement" is openly used, and one now hears the former French commander on the ground, General Morillon, saying that the siege of Sarajevo should be lifted by military force if necessary.

However, the puzzle continues, and on 12 July the Prime Minister told my hon. Friend the Member for Western Isles that no advice had been received

"either from senior diplomats or from military figures that a solution could be imposed by military force."—[*Official Report*, 12 July 1993; Vol. 228, c. 682.]

I should be surprised and amazed if what those of us who are not that well connected in the relevant circles had been saying—or at least a flavour of it—had not reached the Prime Minister. About a dozen of us wrote to the Prime Minister—I think that the letter was dated 14 July—and we have not yet received a reply. We put to him, in words which I think that he will understand, our firm view that the country is being misled. I hope that we shall receive a detailed explanation, if not from the Minister present tonight, perhaps from the Prime Minister later—I should prefer to hear it tonight.

The position is more complicated than it is being made to seem. Our diplomats and military personnel have been misled by Ministers about the state of public opinion and, perhaps, the state of opinion in the House. I think that they have been told not even to contemplate anything that involves military action, because the British public will not wear it and Members of Parliament will not support it. It

[Mr. Chris Mullin]

is disappointing that some of the same people who whipped up hysteria over the Gulf war and the Falklands war—I do not want to be diverted by those quite separate issues—have been less straightforward about telling the public and the military the truth about Bosnia.

Mr. Malcolm Wicks (Croydon, North-West): I am puzzled. I believe that the feeling from the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in Brussels is that military intervention is feasible. If that is true, is my hon. Friend implying that that advice from the most senior military personnel was never given to the Prime Minister or his senior colleagues, or does my hon. Friend feel that, for some reason, despite the Government assuring the House that no such advice about the feasibility of military intervention was given, they felt that it would be unwise to pass that advice on to the House?

Mr. Mullin: I cannot pretend to know what the position is but there is a serious problem. However, what most hon. Members present this evening have been hearing from those in positions of authority who brief Ministers daily is different from what Ministers say that those experts are saying. Perhaps the advice that those experts have given Ministers has been hedged around with qualifications—perhaps the experts have said one thing to us and another to the Ministers. I do not know what the explanation is, but I should like to hear the Government's version of events from the Minister.

Military intervention by ground troops would be practical and honourable. Plans for it exist already, but we lack political leaders capable of rising to the occasion. Our soldiers in the field—there are many of them—have been badly let down by the Government.

Ms Short: The answer might be that military personnel are not entitled to say what Britain should do politically; they can give that answer only if asked the question. If asked whether limited military action to stop the aggression and the destruction of multi-ethnic Bosnia can be taken, the answer is yes. But it is said that military action consists of political objectives secured by military means, and if the politicians will not ask the question, the military are not allowed to say, "Yes, we know how to do it if you want to do it."

Mr. Mullin: That is one possible explanation. I do not know what the explanation is, but I should like to hear it. The evidence that my colleagues and I have seen and heard does not accord with pronouncements of the most senior Government members.

Our soldiers on the ground in Bosnia have been badly let down. They have been placed in the humiliating position of having to negotiate—if that is the right word—with drunken gunmen in some cases. They have witnessed unspeakable atrocities without being able to do what they want to do and are capable of doing—intervene and put a stop to them. Soldiers who say that they are entitled to expect a clear objective from politicians are right. We should be giving a clear objective and grasping the nettle.

A number of suggestions have been made in the past which have become an excuse for not doing much. One suggestion was that there should be an air exclusion zone. That bore absolutely no relation to the problem, because everyone knew that the main problem did not come from the air. Others suggested that we should do a bit of bombing as a substitute for doing something of lasting value. That is no good, either. People who talk in vague terms are not grasping the nettle. I grasp it unequivocally—as I and others have done previously—and say that I am in favour of using as many troops as necessary for as long as necessary to bring this tragic state of affairs to an end.

I recognise that that is a large thing to say, but it is not an impossible thing to say. Frankly, it is a smaller objective than defeating Saddam Hussein and driving him out of Kuwait, liberating the Falkland Islands, which are 10,000 miles away, or using thousands of troops to maintain that not very perfect regime in South Korea for 40 years. It is feasible and we should do it.

The casualties are much more than simply the unfortunate people of Bosnia. The United Nations has been let down by its most senior members who are unable or unwilling to enforce its resolutions. We should be told clearly now—I thought that we already understood this—that negotiations without credible threat of force behind them do not work. The Serbs are laughing at the United Nations. They are not only doing that—yesterday, they were shelling the United Nations. On the 9 o'clock news tonight, I was pleased to see that United Nations soldiers in Bosnia have been given permission to shoot back when they are shot at. I agree with that. However, it is not the solution. There is an urgent need to restore the credibility of the United Nations. That can be done only by a calculated ultimatum to the Serbs, backed up by the threat of military action.

We must start somewhere. The situation has deteriorated so much recently that intervention is getting more costly, more dangerous and more difficult by the hour. The obvious starting place is that suggested by the 80 or so congressmen—to lift the siege of Sarajevo by whatever means are necessary. From there, one goes on, hopefully, to lift the siege of the other so-called United Nations safe areas and remove the artillery that threatens not only Sarajevo but one or two other places. Heavy artillery is fixed. It cannot be moved easily, but it can be destroyed easily—and should be. I remember Martin Bell, who knows something about the situation, telling us that clearly when he came to see us the other day. Unless someone tells me otherwise, that is what I will continue to believe.

Finally, I ask the Minister whether there is any level of atrocity in the former Yugoslavia that could cause us to support military intervention. If so, what is it? If there is none, will he say so clearly?

11.43 pm

Mr. Max Madden (Bradford, West): I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Western Isles (Mr. Macdonald) on securing this debate and on his comprehensive speech.

For the sake of brevity—as a number of colleagues wish to speak—I begin by asking the Minister several questions relating to the refugee crisis. As he and the House will know, in October-November 1992 the United Kingdom Government agreed to take 1,000 former detainees and 3,000 dependants. The latest figures reveal that, so far, we have received 250 ex-detainees and 424 dependants. I am grateful that the quota for ex-detainees has been extended to cover those who are deemed by the United Nations

High Commissioner for Refugees to be vulnerable. I hope that the Minister will assure us that the Government will shortly consider increasing the quota of 1,000 to enable Britain to take more of the people who have suffered as a result of this horrific war in Bosnia.

Secondly, will the Minister assure us that the Government stand ready to receive more medical cases? So far, we have taken 68 and I am advised by the UNHCR that there is great urgency about persuading countries, especially those in the EC, to take medical cases. I hope that the Minister will say that the Government are sympathetic and will take more such cases. As we have heard in the debate, Sarajevo is in crisis. Hon. Members have mentioned Mr. Larry Hollingsworth, the UNHCR Bosnian representative.

Mr. Alex Salmond (Banff and Buchan): I listened to the last two speeches, and I am listening to the hon. Gentleman. I have noted the almost studied indifference of Ministers. Would it hurt Ministers to listen to the speeches on this important subject?

Mr. Madden: I consoled myself by noting that the Minister was taking notes of my questions, and I expect to receive detailed replies.

Mr. Hollingsworth recently met hon. Members from all parties and stressed the great urgency of funding to enable his organisation to purchase plastic sheeting, shelter and other necessary items to protect the people of Sarajevo in the coming winter. Those purchases need to be made now, but they are not being made. Will the money be made available?

At the meeting in the House, Mr. Hollingsworth repeated the words that were reported in *The Guardian* on 20 July. That report stated:

"The head of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' humanitarian operation in Sarajevo criticised the UN's programme as ineffective yesterday and called for military action to break Serbian blockades, . . .

Speaking in London at the launch of a Refugee Council appeal for Bosnia, Larry Hollingsworth, a former colonel in the British Army, called for military force to allow aid convoys to reach Sarajevo and the besieged enclaves of Gorazde, Zepa and Srebrenica."

My hon. Friend the Member for Western Isles said that a broad-based alliance of senior British diplomats, senior military commanders and senior aid workers holds the unanimous view that military intervention could and, indeed, should be taken, not only to protect the so-called safe areas, but to halt the aggression in Bosnia, which would, we hope, lead to an effective and sustained ceasefire. Hon. Members have confirmed what my hon. Friend has said.

A military commander recently said that rapid response military forces needed rapid response politicians. The central charge of the debate is that politicians, especially those in the European Community, but also those in the UN, have singularly failed to ensure that the aggression, genocide, rape, atrocities and horror of Bosnia should be halted. We believe that that can be done only through effective military intervention.

I hope that the Minister will not recite the usual catalogue of excuses for not engaging in such intervention. I hope that he will seriously consider the military-intervention options now available, which are mentioned regularly by the alliance of diplomats, military commanders and aid workers to whom hon. Members—including myself—have referred. I also hope that we can engage in a mature and sensible debate about the military options; many of us believe that now is the time to adopt them.

11.50 pm

Mr. Robert N. Wareing (Liverpool, West Derby): It is very unfortunate that the problems of Yugoslavia should have prompted so little interest years ago, long before the present crisis. In 1990, I went to Whitehall to tell the Minister of State—he will remember the occasion—that a crisis was looming. Precious few people wanted to know about the crisis then and for that reason many have not studied its root causes.

To a large extent, the crisis was caused by the over-decentralisation of the old Yugoslav state under President Tito. Not long after the end of the communist system in Yugoslavia, even Croat, Slovene and Montenegro communists thought of themselves as Croats, Slovenes and Montenegrans, rather than as Yugoslavs. When the nationalists in Croatia pressed for Croatian independence, the British Government at first adopted an even-handed approach. However, on 26 June 1991—when both Slovenia and Croatia declared independence—between 500,000 and 800,000 people in Croatia were members of the Serb ethnic group. Many lived in very compact areas, in particular the area around Knin and Krajina. In Serbo-Croat, "Krajina" means borders or frontiers. There was a substantial Serbian majority in many parts of the large frontier area between Knin and central Croatia.

When Croatia became independent—or was declared independent—in June 1991, non-Croatian citizens were immediately "ethnically cleansed". Serbs were immediately declared not to be citizens and were refused passports. They were driven out of their homes and jobs through intimidation. After only a few months, 60,000 Serbs were refugees in Serbia, having fled from Rijeka, Zadar and Zagreb itself: indeed, it is now said that about one third of the Serb population of Zagreb has been ethnically cleansed and driven away. Important people in particular were intimidated by the Croatian regime.

At the beginning of May, I visited the mass grave of Serbs and Muslims who had been massacred by the Croats between November 1991 and March 1992. Hon. Members should mark the dates, which include part of the period before Bosnia-Herzegovina was recognised as an independent state—the period when it was still within the state of Yugoslavia that was recognised by the international community. The Croatian army had invaded and taken over Bosanski-Brod and Deventa and massacred large numbers of people. I shall never forget seeing bodies exhumed from the grave at Bosanski-Brod. The first to be taken out of the grave was a woman. I know that it was a woman only because of the blue skirt and white spots. I saw 38 other corpses laid out. I remember the stench. The interesting thing is that that area was designated under the Vance-Owen plan to the Croats.

I might be accused of being pro-Serb. I remind the House that I was the first person to mention the names of Šeselj and Arkan. In the debate on the Queen's Speech on 1 November 1991, I warned of those dangerous neo-fascist nationalists who are now undoubtedly war criminals following events in Croatia.

We must bear it in mind that many of us are being hoodwinked. Not only the Government are being

[Mr. Robert N. Wareing]

hoodwinked. Indeed, to a large extent, I congratulate the Government. I thank God that there has been no military intervention by British or United Nations forces in the former Yugoslavia. It would have made the situation a million times worse. So many of the people who talk of military intervention have never been to the former Yugoslavia and seen the situation for themselves. They have certainly never been under fire. They do not know what it is to be bombed. Military action certainly does not make for a retraction of effort on behalf of those who are accused of aggression.

The public relations firms have come into their own in the Yugoslav crisis. The Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina, led by a Muslim fundamentalist in the shape of Izetbegovic, who wrote the Islamic Declaration in 1970, reprinted in 1990 in Sarajevo, have said that a majority or even a substantial minority Islamic population cannot live at peace within the political and social systems of non-Islamic communities.

It is false to imagine that the Muslims have been exclusively victims. We often hear people and sometimes Government spokesmen say that all groups have perpetrated atrocities. Yet the only ones which we hear about in the media are those committed by Serbs. Undoubtedly, atrocities have been committed. How many people in the Chamber tonight have referred to Muslim atrocities? They have certainly taken place, but the Muslims are running a good PR operation, especially from New York. *[Interruption.]* I have listened quietly and I have not interrupted anyone.

Hon. Members should look a little further than their noses. If they picked up the 16 December 1992 edition of *Epoca*, the Italian magazine, they would see an illustrated article about the torture of Serbian prisoners by Muslims in Sarajevo. If hon. Members read the edition of the weekly German newspaper *Die Zeit* published at the end of last week, they will find that a Muslim commander in Sarajevo has been sacked by the Bosnian Government because 28 Serbs were massacred in a mass grave just outside the centre of the city of Sarajevo. Those hon. Members who cannot read German should have that article translated—but they should not claim that the Muslims are totally innocent because they are not. I was told by an Italian and French journalist in Bosnia that the Europa and Zagreb hotels in Sarajevo are used as brothels by Muslim soldiers, who force Serbian women and girls into those hotels. It should not be suggested for one moment that all the atrocities are committed by one side.

It is suggested that British soldiers should be sent into Bosnia to fight on behalf of people who are committing atrocities, but that is not something that I should want to see. It is interesting that many of my hon. Friends are keen to see British troops withdrawn from Northern Ireland and rushed to Yugoslavia.

Sanctions have prevented the Serbs from putting across their case. Ian Greer and Associates acted for the Serbs at the beginning of the conflict but they are prevented from doing so now because of the sanctions. That is also true in the United States. *[Interruption.]* Hon. Members can heckle as much as they like, but Major General Mackenzie —the United Nations commander in Yugoslavia until last November—was quoted in a Los Angeles magazine as saying that every ceasefire that he negotiated was broken by the Muslims. General Waldren, who recently gave up his command in Yugoslavia, said the same about the recent ceasefire negotiated at Srebrenica. Hon. Members should study the details, and not believe the propaganda that appears in our newspapers.

I will not defend Milosevic, Tudjman or any of the other leaders. None of them is a true democrat. Tudjman's Croatia is no more democratic than Serbia—it is to a large extent less so. At the time of the election to which the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Lady Olga Maitland) referred, Mr. Micunovic, leader of the Democratic party, told me that Belgrade television was controlled by Milosevic. When I asked about the press, Mr. Micunovic said that the press was on the side of the opposition. I said, "I wish that had been the case in our last general election. We might just have pulled it off."

Mr. Barnes: I accept that paramilitary excess exists on all three sides—perhaps more heavily on some than on others. What is to be done about three groups that are at each other's throats when at least one of them has far more military power than the others?

Mr. Wareing: The important thing is that human rights should be respected in Croatia and Bosnia. International pressure must be brought on them both to ensure that human rights are respected on their territories. If a solution is to be found for Bosnia, it must be acknowledged that it is not a state but a province. It was a province under the Austrians and Turks and in the former Yugoslavia. The human rights of all Bosnia's ethnic groups must be respected in any solution—and that solution cannot be imposed on the significant Serb minority. If we forget their plight, no lasting solution will be found.

12.4 am

Mr. George Robertson (Hamilton): I am grateful for having been called to speak at this point. I am sorry that my hon. Friend the Member for York (Mr. Bayley) has been squeezed out. I shortened the time of my wind-up speech on behalf of the Opposition in the hope that he would be able to speak.

I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Western Isles (Mr. Macdonald), though the word "congratulate" is not perhaps the most appropriate word in the circumstances, on obtaining this debate, which is in relatively prime time by Consolidated Fund Bill standards. He spoke with conviction and authority. Although, as he knows, I do not agree with every word he says, I respect the strength of feeling that he expresses. My hon. Friend was joined in the passion of his speech, as on so many previous occasions, by the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack). What they say brings a dimension to the thinking on this most worrying subject that should be heard. Those who urge caution over the former Yugoslavia would find, were they here, that they were in the minority at this evening's gathering of right hon. and hon. Members. Perhaps that is why they have stayed away.

I, too, recognise that the tragedy that we see unfolding in the country that used to be called Yugoslavia, or in the conglomeration of new countries that used to be called Yugoslavia, must affect all of us. Those who watched the news this evening saw the choir of schoolchildren that used

to travel the world. The realisation that those children are hiding in buildings that are being bombed every moment brings home the awful reality of the situation.

It is difficult to escape feeling emotional when watching something that is happening in a country that for so many years was the holiday destination of many citizens of this country. The killing, the destruction of property, the outrage of mass rape and the effect that the war has had on so many innocents, including the millions of children in that country, is not something from which any of us can easily walk away.

I do not underestimate for a moment the depth of the tragedy, but it is important to recognise that there have been two successes. The first—I accept that it is a limited success—is that, contrary to all the predictions of the last two years, the conflict has not yet spread largely outside the areas where the fighting initially took place.

Ms Short: Not yet.

Mr. Robertson: My hon. Friend says "Not yet." I accept what she says. However, there has been some limited success in containing the conflict to that area. I shall turn later to why I believe that it may continue to be contained.

Secondly, the humanitarian effort has been successful. I refer not just to the troops under the United Nations flag who have protected the convoys. As the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Lady Olga Maitland) said, civilian truck drivers have gone to that area and stayed there, notwithstanding the dangers. Non-governmental organisation people have served there, as have civilians who work for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other organisations. This huge operation has saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of people who otherwise would have died of starvation or cold during one of the nastiest and bitterest winters in that part of the world. We should not forget that they did an enormously successful job. The number of casualties, high though it already is, would have been much higher had they not gone to the area. We must not underestimate, either, the difficulties involved in assisting in this bitter conflict.

It is easy, in the security of this Chamber, debating this issue in a civilised manner according to rules that have been formulated over the years, to talk about putting troops into the area. My hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland, South (Mr. Mullin), whose views on previous wars and conflicts I have listened to with interest in the past, said—as if this was easy—that he would send in as many troops as it would take for as long as necessary.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Indeed.

Mr. Robertson: The Minister confirms that; and I wrote down what my hon. Friend said. That is easily said, but not so easy to do.

Mr. Mullin: Will my hon. Friend give way?

Mr. Robertson: I will give way briefly, but I have only a limited time.

Mr. Mullin: I quarrel about the word "easy". I did not say "easy" and of course it is not easy and one accepts that. I was talking about the same degree of determination as that displayed in the Gulf and Falklands wars. That is what I was talking about.

Mr. Robertson: I know that my hon. Friend did not use the word "easy". I am ascribing "easy" to his comparison to what was done in the Gulf war and in the Falklands war. Those wars are not comparable, and my hon. Friend said that himself. Even if there was the political will, the physical logistics of the area might make it extremely difficult to attempt anything of that nature.

Mr. Macdonald: Does my hon. Friend accept that it is not only some Members of this place who are advocating that course? Larry Hollingsworth, who has been in charge of the humanitarian aid effort in Bosnia for many months now, has said that force should be used to try to deliver that aid. It is not just the armchair theorists who are saying that; it is also being said by the people on the ground.

Mr. Robertson: Some people on the ground say that, but others do not agree. Cedric Thornberry was in the House only a few weeks ago and he argued the opposite view. He said that if we start to impose military personnel in any kind of peace-making capacity, we would close down the humanitarian effort almost overnight. Even before we could start to deploy the limited troops available, we would stop the humanitarian effort which has created such life-saving capability.

I do not want to enter that argument too deeply. My party and I believe that there are serious problems in respect of the involvement of an open-ended commitment of a military peace-making exercise. I would like to leave the point on that parenthesis as I believe that there are other things that Governments could do and should be doing at the moment. The fact that they are not doing these things is assisting the degeneration of the conflict.

First, the international community in general should recognise that serious errors have been made in the conflict. Those errors include the way in which recognition was given prematurely to Croatia, and perhaps also to Slovenia, and the poverty of will that characterised the way in which mandatory economic sanctions were first imposed on Serbia. For 10 months, the Serbs were able to get around the potential of economic sanctions by setting up dummy companies and the like.

Had we implemented the sanctions with the vigour and force that we are now deploying, perhaps a greater impact would have been made on Mr. Milosevic at a time when that might have mattered very much in relation to the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

It all matters not just because we are outraged by what we see on our television screens, but because that wave of refugees coming way beyond the borders of Bosnia, Croatia and even Slovenia will be a problem for the nations surrounding that benighted part of the world and also for many other countries, including our own. Many of my hon. Friends have referred to the fact that, despite the Government's initial offers to take in refugees, especially those who were former inhabitants of the detention camps, we have not even reached the miserable level that the Government originally offered.

The problem matters also because the credibility of the UN and of international institutions is at stake as a result of what is happening in that part of the world. Of course, the fighting need not necessarily stop even with an agreement, if an agreement were to be reached in the next few weeks. That endless fighting will undoubtedly affect the rest of the world.

[Mr. Robertson]

We must recognise that the Washington agreement was a disgraceful watershed for which our Government, along with others, share responsibility. In one fell swoop it destroyed the Vance-Owen plan and left no real political objective in its place. It was an open invitation to the Serbs and Croats to move quickly to partition what was left of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The constant loud reference to the ending of the arms embargo that we heard from the Americans simply gave greater impetus to the Serbs and Croats who wanted to grab as much territory as possible before that eventuality occurred.

The agreement claimed that there would be safe areas, but they were in no way to be made safe. Has that not been vividly displayed since then? It claimed that the borders of Bosnia would be sealed to the supply of arms coming in from Serbia, but there was no way in which they would be sealed. It said that there would be threats against further action from Serbia and from Croatia, but there was to be no back-up to those threats at all—not even the possibility of limited air strikes on supply routes which might at the time have had and might even yet have an impact on the fighting that is taking place in Bosnia. There was to be no action, and there is still no action, taken against the land-grabbing of the Croats who are still engaged in aggression in that part of the world.

What should we do? I make a few limited suggestions, because the House wants to hear the Minister's reply to the many points that have been raised. First, we must make safe areas safe, as was promised. That means a British commitment to supplying the 7,500 troops that the United Nations Secretary-General said were necessary to carry out that promise. All those troops have been promised, but they are certainly not in place. I understand that they are short of the logistic and technical support that would allow them to be deployed to the former Yugoslavia, and to Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular. The British Government could make available that logistic support, and they should do so immediately.

It is right that there should be troops from Islamic countries, but I go along with the Government in their resistance to the use of troops from Iran. Islamic troops are an important signal to the Muslims in that part of the world.

Secondly, we must be much tougher on Croatia, and we must be tougher immediately. Although they have taken large numbers of refugees—of course, there is a worry that they would move them out of their territory—what is happening on the side of the Croatians in the south of Bosnia is as unacceptable as what the Serbs are doing in the north.

Thirdly, we must make it clear that any three-way partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina is not a long-term solution for that part of the world. Indeed, it is a recipe for long-term violence in that area. We need to escape from the mentality that keeps people in small ghettos without any passageway, especially to the sea. We must cut off supply routes to the Bosnian Serbs where they are still using force.

Mr. Gunnell: Will my hon. Friend give way?

Mr. Robertson: I am afraid I cannot give way. I apologise to my hon. Friend.

Mr. Gunnell: Will my hon. Friend answer a fourth question?

Mr. Robertson: I have a couple of points to make before I finish my speech.

We must cut off the supply routes and we must be prepared——

Mr. Gunnell: Will my hon. Friend answer a fourth question? What would he do about Sarajevo?

Mr. Robertson: I apologise to my hon. Friend because I am in the last few seconds of my speech. I cannot curtail the Minister's time for replying to the points that have been made. No doubt the Minister will take my hon. Friend's question on board.

We must also consider the long-term future of the refugees in the area. We must do something about the recognition of Macedonia, and we must do more about deploying more troops to the area. Kosovo's guarantees and observers must be maintained in position because it is extremely important that it is protected.

That list of items is the minimum that we can do and the minimum that we need to do at this time. We must do what is necessary and what is possible, and we must do it right away. To wait any longer is to court real disaster.

12.19 am

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Douglas Hogg): The hon. Members who have been present throughout the debate would agree that its tone has been measured and concerned. By the standards of the House, the debate has been remarkably free of party rancour. That is how it should be, because we all accept that what is happening in the former Yugoslavia is the greatest tragedy that Europe has seen since the end of the second world war. It is not just the greatest tragedy; it is a tragedy that was precipitated and carried forward by crime and wickedness on the part of many of those who are participating in the leadership on all sides.

I agree with much of the speech of the hon. Member for Liverpool, West Derby (Mr. Wareing), who said that all sides have a responsibility to bear in the matter. I think that the Serbs are the most guilty, but all the participants —Serbs, Croats and Muslims—have been guilty of crime and wickedness in the war.

It is also true that our concern is greatly deepened by the fact that we have 2,400 troops in Bosnia and many people from the Overseas Development Administration, the Royal Air Force and other service men on the ground, all of whom are engaged. All of their lives are at risk.

The debate has been treated with the gravity that it deserves. I find it somewhat odd, however, that among those who are most prominent in calling for military engagement are many who opposed British involvement in the Gulf war. As the hon. Member for West Derby also pointed out, many of those who are most keen to see British military engagement in the former Yugoslavia are those who want us to withdraw from Northern Ireland. It is difficult to reconcile those opinions.

When people talk about public support for military intervention, I believe that they are wrong. When I look round the Chamber, I accept that, probably, the majority of those present are in favour of military intervention, to some degree. I do not believe that that represents the majority view in my party and I suspect that the hon. Member for Hamilton (Mr. Robertson) does not believe

that it represents the majority view in the Labour party. I have made it my business to try to determine where political views lie and I do not believe that they lie in deepening military engagement.

My hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) said that the issue was about leadership. He said that one should go to people and say, "These are the issues: support us." That is an important point, but I should like to reply to him in something like the language used by my right hon. Friend the Member for Guildford (Mr. Howell). I do not believe that one commits oneself to military action unless one is prepared to suffer all that is required and to go on for as long as may be necessary. I do not believe that one can do that unless one's effort is truly underpinned by national will. I do not believe that that will exists in this case.

In common with me, the hon. Member for Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber (Sir R. Johnston) has heard the leader of his party speak on Yugoslavia on many occasions. We know that, for many months, the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown) has called for a forward policy of military engagement. It has taken many forms, but the right hon. Gentleman has always pressed for that policy.

I was in the Chamber on 11 June when the Minister of State for the Armed Forces reported to the House on the occasion when British troops had been engaged in action and had killed certainly one Croat and possibly two. At that point, the right hon. Member for Yeovil responded by saying that we should now consider withdrawal.

The hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner), sitting in front of him and referring to the right hon. Member for Yeovil, said;

"I have never heard such a two-faced statement in my life. The right hon. Gentleman wanted more troops before. Now he wants them out."—[*Official Report*, 11 June 1993; Vol. 226, c. 559.]

I believe that the Liberals' policy is unsustainable and that it varies: it is difficult to identify. Secondly, when the body bags start coming back, the public support will fall away——

Mr. Hugh Bayley (York) *rose*——

Mr. Hogg: No, I want to make progress.

It is important to stand back and identify the chief elements of the the war and of our policy. Bosnia's is essentially a civil war. It is perfectly true that Serbia and Croatia are involved to some degree, but the principal participants in the fighting in Bosnia are the people of Bosnia. And what are they fighting about? They are fighting about the character of the country in which they live. This is essentially a civil war, not a war between independent states.

It is primarily this fact which distinguishes Bosnia from the Gulf. In the Gulf there was a clear act of aggression by one sovereign state against another. The political objective could be clearly defined: the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait. But the political objective in Bosnia is an agreement between people who have been murdering one another for two years—an agreement to live in harmony. I do not believe that we can bring about such an agreement by the application of external force.

We are content to continue as long as we can with a policy of delivering humanitarian supplies. The hon. Member for Hamilton (Mr. Robertson) and my hon. Friend the Member for Sutton and Cheam (Lady Olga Maitland) were right about that. Not only soldiers and RAF men are involved; so are the ODA drivers and many others. Two thirds of the population of Bosnia now depend on external aid and there is no provision for the forthcoming winter. So, unless they are inevitable, we must not take measures that put at risk this aid. If we do, when the winter comes, there is a risk—perhaps even a probability—that people will die in their tens of thousands.

Mr. Bayley *rose*——

Mr. Hogg: No, I want to make progress.

We are also pursuing a policy of sanctions. The hon. Member for Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber asked why. He was good enough to admit that the impact of the sanctions on the Serbian economy had, in many respects, been effective. We are pursuing this policy because it is the only way of putting continuing pressure on Serbia and Serbia is the only power capable of bringing the Bosnian Serbs to heel. We will continue the policy until an agreement that is honestly implemented is in place——

Mr. Cormack: Does my right hon. and learned Friend realise what he has just said? He has said that this is the only way of putting pressure on Serbia. Does he really mean that? Is that now the policy of Her Majesty's Government?

Mr. Hogg: If I have time, I shall deal with other questions of military action.

A further point about the structure of our policy is that we are seeking to create the circumstances in which the three parties to the conflict can come to an agreement. Whatever agreement they are likely to reach will certainly be associated with misery, disappointment and word eating. We know that, but there is a chance—even a reasonable chance—that the three parties to the war will come to an agreement. That is why I welcome enormously what Lord Owen and Mr Stoltenberg have done and the presence of all the relevant parties at Geneva. We cannot make them come to an agreement, but we can create the circumstances in which they are capable of coming to an agreement. We can create the mechanisms and the international principles that will guide our approach to the outcome of such an agreement, but we cannot compel people to come to an agreement.

My hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) said that he is ashamed of the failure of Europe. We have to face the fact that there are many conflicts in Europe that will not be solved by international action because conflicts that are in essence civil wars can be solved only be agreement between those engaged in them. It is a great error to suppose that the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, NATO or any other such body can, by the application of external force, put an end to such conflicts.

Something else to which I take grave objection is the way in which people condemn what the British Government have done. We have been at the forefront of the international effort: we convoked the London conference; 2,400 British troops are now——

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): Order. Time is up.

London Transport

12.31 am

Mr. John Marshall (Hendon, South): I hope that, before I start the new debate, it will be in order to congratulate the hon. Member for Western Isles (Mr. Macdonald) on instituting a successful debate in which many hon. Members spoke with great conviction and from the heart. It was also one of the best attended late night debates that we have had for a long time, although I think that some hon. Members should perhaps have spoken not from the heart but with the head. It was a pleasure to listen to it, but I do not necessarily expect the hon. Gentleman to stay to listen to this debate.

Although the debate refers to the Northern line, London transport goes much wider than the underground and includes buses. My hon. Friend the Minister will expect me to say something about the proposed deregulation and privatisation of London Buses. I greatly welcome the proposed privatisation, which has of course been preceded by the usual scare campaign. We are used to such campaigns before privatisations. Before British Telecom was privatised, we were told that payphones would cease to exist and that rural telephone services would be ignored. In fact, since the privatisation of BT, there are many more payphones and they work, which they did not do when they were owned by the state. There are also better services in town and country. Wherever we look, privatisation has led to increased investment, dramatically improved productivity and improved morale in the industry involved. I believe that there will be similar benefits for London Buses. As soon as London Buses is removed from the public sector, investment will be increased, and the same will be true of the underground.

Mr. Tony Banks (Newham North-West): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Marshall: I give way to the hon. Gentleman, the refugee from the police.

Mr. Banks: On the contrary; I am not a refugee from the police, who acted in exemplary fashion. We had an interesting discussion, during which I learnt a great deal about how much the police dislike the Sheehy proposals. However, that is by the by.

It is all very well for the hon. Gentleman to talk about scare stories. I do not want to spoil his yarn, but it was the Select Committee on Transport which warned of a disaster on London's buses if deregulation is pressed. As he well knows, that Committee is Tory dominated.

Mr. Marshall: We have often heard of Select Committees being Tory dominated. My hon. Friend the Member for Macclesfield (Mr. Winterton) used to be Chairman of the Health Select Committee, which we were told was Tory dominated. That was a surprise to the Whips and to the House. As the hon. Member for Newham, North-West (Mr. Banks) knows, most of the scare stories originate from Labour Members and we have seen similar campaigns before.

Mr. Elliot Morley (Glanford and Scunthorpe): I have experience of bus deregulation in a rural and semi-rural area. Many early morning works journeys and uneconomic services were lost and passenger numbers declined, even though in some cases bus mileage increased because of competition. Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Transport Research Laboratory studied bus deregulation and found that, in many instances, services had severely deteriorated?

Mr. Marshall: The hon. Gentleman knows full well that there has been an increase in car ownership outside London, which is why the number of passengers has declined. He also knows full well that the number of passengers was declining before deregulation. The hon. Member for Newham, North-West said that the Select Committee had produced a wonderful report. The Select Committee pointed out that there has been an increase in bus miles, a fall in operating costs and a fall in public subsidy. Given the record of bus deregulation outside London, I am willing to say that it will be beneficial within London.

Until we had competitive tendering for bus routes in London, the service was very inefficient. Across the system, competitive tendering has led to a 20 per cent. reduction in costs, which surely emphasises the role of competition in achieving a more efficient service.

We must also consider the quality of the service in London. Before tendering, 92 per cent. of buses ran and 8 per cent. did not. Today, 98·1 per cent. run on the tendered routes. Instead of 8 per cent., only 1·9 per cent. now do not run—a much more efficient service.

I do not believe that deregulation will lead to hundreds of extra buses running down Oxford street, but there will be more mini and midi buses in the suburbs, we will have new routes and a more innovative service, which will be to the benefit of everyone in London.

I hope that my hon. Friend the Minister will be able to nail the wicked lie that is being put across London: that deregulation and privatisation will lead to the end of the concessionary scheme for senior citizens. All too often, those who want a few cheap votes in London go round frightening elderly people by saying that the concessionary fares scheme is at risk. I believe that the scheme, which is the linchpin of Government policy, will remain. I hope that my hon. Friend the Minister will be able to underline that commitment.

The Department of Transport has a limited budget to invest in London Transport and in road improvement in London. The budget should therefore be spent in a way that is most likely to relieve congestion. That is the best solution for individuals and commerce, but if we are to relieve congestion in London we must seek different solutions for inside and outside London. Outside London, improving the M25, London's bypass and industry's archway to Europe, must be a major priority. The M25 succeeded in taking traffic off many London roads. The need to widen it so soon after its completion is a tribute to the lack of foresight of traffic planners and the excessive preoccupation of the Treasury in the 1970s with the short-term and not the long-term needs of this country.

Within London, the emphasis must be on public transport and on improving buses, Thameslink and London Underground. We must recognise that 83 per cent. of people in central London move around by public transport rather than by private car.

We shall never secure the objective of eliminating or reducing congestion within London by tinkering with our road system. Such a strategy would be prohibitively expensive, divisive—because most people do not want big new bits of concrete and tarmac within London—and

counter-productive, because, as the experience of Los Angeles confirms, urban roads are wonderful examples of Say's law that supply creates its own demand. All that new urban motorways do is entice more people into motor cars.

Any preoccupation with the private motor car will fail to solve the basic problem of London—the need to enable millions of Londoners to travel to work in the City, to the west end and to the suburbs, and to preserve London as a centre of employment for millions, a major retail city and the centre of a major international airport. The key to the survival and prosperity of London is a decent public transport system.

The problem of the 1990s is a legacy of the locust years of the early 1980s. After the change of control in the GLC in 1981, the emphasis within London Transport was not on the quality of service or investment in the future, but on the level of fares. When my hon. Friend the Member for Harrow, West (Mr. Hughes) was a member of the GLC, the emphasis of the then leader of the GLC was on subsidising fares for American tourists, rather than on producing a better metro system for Londoners to enjoy in the 1990s.

We are today reaping the whirlwind because on many routes in London the level of investment in the early 1980s was far too low to give us a decent service in the 1990s.

Mr. Tony Banks: The Tory Government stopped it.

Mr. Marshall: The hon. Gentleman is wrong. In the 1980s, the Government allowed local authorities to reinvest the proceeds of any capital receipts. The GLC was awash with unnecessary capital investment, as was shown by the way in which the London residuary body was able to flog assets all over the place. If the hon. Member for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone) had not had a pathological desire to own large tracts of London, regardless of the use to which he could put those assets, the GLC could have invested much more.

Mr. Banks: We were not allowed to.

Mr. Marshall: The hon. Gentleman, now that he has been released by the police, has a desire to speak from a sedentary position. I was, at that time, chairman of a London borough finance committee and I can confirm —no doubt my hon. Friend the Minister can as well—that local authorities were allowed to spend their capital receipts and to reinvest them. If the GLC of the day had been willing to sell assets, it could have reinvested those receipts.

Mr. Banks: If the hon. Gentleman had been chained to the door for as long as I have been, he would realise that it is necessary, at my age, to make sedentary interventions. As he has forced me to my feet, let me just tell him that although the GLC had proposals for capital investments and for giving substantial revenue support to Network SouthEast, we were told by the Government that we would not be allowed to put them into effect and that anything that we gave to Network SouthEast would merely be deducted from the central Government grant. What would have been the point in those circumstances?

Mr. Marshall: It would have been perfectly in order for the GLC to top up its capital programme by selling assets. The real trouble was that the then leadership of the GLC knew that it had assets that it was not using, but had a pathological desire to cling on to them. There was a sort of machismo—one had to maintain one's assets. It did not want to sell them, to flog them off, to use sites to create homes or jobs; instead it wanted to keep them in the public sector. Without that approach from county hall, the level of investment in the underground system would have been substantially higher.

In recent times, there has been a substantial investment in modernising the Central line and I thank my hon. Friends in the Department of Transport for the money that they have spent on that. Elsewhere on London Underground, we all know of stations with defective escalators, platforms in need of a lick of paint and clocks that do not work, and of the fact that on many routes the rolling stock is old, uninviting, frequently graffiti-ridden, and often rather dirty. In fact, if the first impression of London for overseas visitors was based on the Northern or District lines, they would not return to, for example, the United States saying that London was the most modern city in the world.

The objective shared by all Conservative Members is the need for a decently modern metro. During recent years there has been great emphasis on the Central line, the Jubilee line and crossrail. However, by putting emphasis on those three main routes there has been inadequate investment in other parts of the core service.

In the autumn statement the Government gave a commitment to funding the Jubilee line provided that there was also some private sector funding. More recently, the House gave a Second Reading to the Crossrail Bill, but it has been made quite clear that there should also be significant private sector funding for that project. I welcome the Government's determination to get private sector funding for part of both those projects.

There is no doubt that the Jubilee line extension will lead to a dramatic increase in the value of Canary wharf. It will convert what looks like a white elephant into a very valuable asset. That was recognised by the Reichmanns with their original commitment to help fund the extension. It would be wrong for private gain to be financed solely by public funds. The autumn statement underlined the need for private funding and the tardy reaction of the bankers is to be condemned. They know that jobs and the viability of their own projects are at risk. I hope that they will be somewhat more aggressive in providing the necessary funding in future. Indeed, if they had been as slow in funding some property developments as they have been in funding the Jubilee line, they might be in a much happier position today.

Crossrail will also be a major bonus, not only to the private sector but to many people in London. Once the Paddington to Heathrow extension is funded, it will be possible to go from the City to Heathrow in 35 minutes. It is to be a joint private sector-public sector project, which is the way in which many of our routes will be funded in future.

In 1988 Sir Keith Bright, the then chairman of London Transport, described the Northern line as an abomination. Little has changed since, except that the rolling stock is five years older. The rolling stock is too old and the trains are graffiti-ridden, dirty and colourless. The stations are often dirty and they need modernisation. Those of us who use the Northern line, as I did this morning—or yesterday, to be more precise—and pass through Angel station have a reminder of what a modern station should be. We can rejoice for the people of Islington that they have a very

[Mr. Marshall]

expensive, modern station. Those using other stations on the Northern line wish that they could also have equally good stations.

At Hendon Central, my station, the clocks do not work and the dot matrix system, which was once at the forefront of technology, is now hopelessly out of date. Many stations still lack automatic ticket barriers, despite the fact that they are self-financing. It is not unknown for escalators and lifts not to work.

The Northern line requires a major overhaul—modernised stations, new rolling stock and improved track. It has been estimated that there will be an 18 per cent. growth in the number of passengers using the line over the next nine years. Once the modernisation of the Central line has been completed, the southern aspect of the Northern line will be the most congested route in the whole of London. The mere replacement of the signalling and control systems on the line would lead to a 28 per cent. reduction in the time of the average journey and a 25 per cent. increase in the line's capacity. Given the anticipated increase in the number of passengers who use that line, those statistics show the need for improvement.

In the 1992 autumn statement, the Government confirmed approval for the conditional expansion of the Jubilee line, but cut investment in the core services in London Transport. Before the House returns in the autumn the public expenditure round will be well under way. The message that we must give to the Government is that we need a substantial commitment to modernising London transport and the Northern line. In my constituency, the decision not to maintain the grant to the core services at the previous promised level meant that the modernisation and refurbishment of Hendon Central, Golders Green and Brent Cross stations did not take place. Trains need to be refurbished and emphasis should be placed on passenger security measures.

I have two suggestions for my hon. Friend the Minister. First, in last year's autumn statement, the Government allowed British Rail to lease £150 million worth of rolling stock. If it is all right for Thameslink to lease rolling stock, why is it not right for London Transport to do so? Secondly, in 1992 there was a substantial reduction in the planned investment in the core services of London Underground—will my hon. Friend the Minister restore part of that cut? Such a move would be warmly welcomed across London.

My hon. Friend has already become a popular hero due to his decision over the Oxleas wood. I should like him to become a doubly popular hero by deciding that more money should be spent on London Underground as that would benefit all Londoners and would be warmly welcomed, not least in my constituency.

12.52 am

Mr. Keith Hill (Streatham): I congratulate the hon. Member for Hendon, South (Mr. Marshall) on his choice of subject and its selection for debate. However, his resounding support of bus deregulation in the context of a debate on investment in London transport seems bizarre when viewed in the light of the well-reported hiatus in bus investment in London. That hiatus results directly from the joint threat of bus privatisation and deregulation. Investment in London transport, the sensible purpose of the hon. Gentleman's debate, is of fundamental importance to the future prosperity of our capital city, and the condition of the Northern line is of particular and vital daily concern to many thousands of Londoners.

I declare my interest in the debate. Hundreds, if not thousands, of residents in the Clapham and Balham districts of my Streatham constituency rely on the Northern line stations of Clapham Common, Clapham South and Balham for their day-to-day travel needs. In addition, I am privileged to be a member of the Select Committee on Transport, which was much maligned in the speech of the hon. Member for Hendon, South. Only last week it published its own highly critical report on London's public transport capital investment requirements. I shall refer to both my interests during my speech.

The background to the Select Committee report is that of a persistent long-term decline in the quality and efficiency of our transport system in London. Gross overcrowding on our British Rail and underground lines and at our railway stations has been the normal daily experience of all London passengers for as long as any of us can remember. Since 1989, the Government-induced economic recession has brought an unanticipated, and hopefully temporary, relief to the unfortunate London commuter. There are simply fewer Londoners with jobs to travel to now, but if and when—as we all pray—the recession lifts, without drastically increased levels of investment, a future of yet more overcrowding in a decaying public transport still beckons us.

Londoners have long been familiar with the observation that traffic on our roads now proceeds at a slower pace than in the days of the horse-drawn carriage. The health costs of environmental pollution resulting from slow-moving, stop-start traffic are almost certainly reflected in the appalling growth of bronchial illness, especially asthma, and particularly among young children, in London's population recently.

But congestion and an inadequate public transport system bring formidable economic costs as well. In the late 1980s, the Confederation of British Industry estimated that £10 billion was the yearly cost to the London economy of late deliveries, missed appointments, cancelled meetings and stress-related illnesses associated with the chronic congestion and overcrowding of London's transport system.

The implications of that neglect of our transport infrastructure for London's already precarious economy are both dire and well attested. In May 1990, the Corporation of London published a report entitled "London's Transport: A Plan to Protect our Future". It should still be the bedtime reading of every Transport Minister, especially the Minister for Transport in London, and not merely because it identifies the extension of the Northern line to Streatham as an important scheme worthy of consideration. On the basis of extensive consultations with more than 20 major City financial institutions, the report concluded:

> "There is an immediate crisis of high congestion and low quality of the transport system. What is at risk is not just the City as Europe's premier financial centre. It is London as an international capital, and as such one of the UK's greatest assets."

In other words, it is not only environmentalists and long-suffering London commuters who are saying that things cannot go on as they are; the Government's friends

in the City are warning that London's future is now at risk. Certainly nothing has changed in three years since that report was published, unless it is to get worse.

It will not be good enough for the Minister to argue —as I expect he will—that, at £2 billion out of the Department of Transport budget of £7 billion, London already gets a disproportionate slice of the cake. The truth is that London's role in the national economy is unique, and its transport problems are also unique. With less than one seventh of the population of England and Wales, London produces almost one fifth of the gross domestic product, yet it has been uniquely ravaged by the current economic recession. That comes on top of a prognosis for the London economy that was already highly dangerous.

A major source of the threat to London's economy is the inadequacy of its public transport system, yet Londoners are uniquely reliant on public transport for their travel to work. For 30 years, Governments of all political shades—I fully concede that—have systematically starved London's transport services of the necessary investment.

The Minister for Transport in London (Mr. Steve Norris): The hon. Gentleman was characteristically generous in attributing blame for past sins to Governments of all complexions. He seemed to be developing the argument that insufficient capital funds were expended on London. I ask him to expand that in one of two possible ways. Is he suggesting that, of the £7 billion currently spent by the Department, more than £2 billion should be spent in London? If so, can he indicate which parts of the Department's programme outside London he would cancel? Alternatively, is he saying that the whole budget should be bigger? If so, does he have policy clearance from the Labour Front Bench for that assertion? We are in dangerous territory, unless he is capable of substantiating both of those propositions.

Mr. Hill: With his usual prescience, the Minister anticipates precisely my proposition that, in the allocation of resources in the existing transport budget, more funds should be transferred to London. If he will have patience, that is precisely a point that I will address in my ensuing remarks. I have argued that, because of that history of neglect, there is a powerful case for sustaining higher investment. That was precisely the recommendation in last week's Select Committee report.

It is undoubtedly true, as the Minister will again undoubtedly argue, that there is record investment in the early 1990s, but two or three years of high investment following the lowest ever level of investment in the 1980s is a small swallow, and the summer has been remarkably short-lived. In its report, the Select Committee states:

> "We received evidence from both Network SouthEast and London Underground Ltd that the absolute level of investment is insufficient to maintain or improve the system. The danger is that the speed, frequency and reliability of passenger services will decline rapidly if the railways' infrastructure continues to deteriorate."

Such deterioration is inevitable on London's underground and, as London Underground's evidence to the Select Committee made dramatically clear, it is inevitable on the Northern line in particular. That is because London Underground was the special victim of the investment cuts that flowed from the autumn statement. Those cuts jeopardise the short-term upgrading and the longer-term modernisation of the Northern line.

When the Secretary of State for Transport appeared before the Select Committee, I asked, half in jest I confess, whether he had recently used Clapham Common tube station on the Northern line. He replied that he was sure that he had, but that it had not been recently. I suspect that that was something of an understatement. I also suspect that it would be helpful for Transport Ministers occasionally to discard the ministerial limousine and see London's public transport as it really is.

Mr. Norris: The first time that I asked to use the tube as part of my ministerial duties, London Transport was kind enough to provide me with a train of my own. Thereafter I have used the system incognito, which is a far better way to find out what the system is really like.

Mr. Hill: I am pleased to hear that. If the Minister has been to Clapham Common tube station——

Mr. Norris: I went last month.

Mr. Hill: In that case, the Minister should be ashamed of himself for allowing its present deplorable condition to continue.

I regularly travel on the Northern line to and from my constituency—I did so today—and it is not an agreeable experience. At the southern end of the Northern line, the passenger walks through dank, dark and dingy corridors to the gloomy caverns of platforms at the end of those corridors. Stained plaster bulges on walls that do not appear to have had a lick of paint for decades. The stations are bereft of staff, which is the result of another of the forced economies on the underground. No wonder women are so reluctant to use the underground outside peak times.

That is no way for commuters to have to travel at the end of the 20th century. Yes, trains do keep running—just about—but passengers travel in antiquated, overcrowded and rickety rolling stock, which at the age of 35 years is rapidly approaching the end of its useful life. It is a miracle that the system runs at all. It is a triumph of managerial and engineering ingenuity over lack of financial resources, and it cannot continue for much longer.

In the 1992 autumn statement, London Underground's capital budget was slashed by a massive 30 per cent. A direct and immediate consequence of that cut will be the delay until 1998 of the full upgrading of the stations at the southern end of the Northern line. More alarming still is the fact that the cuts in the London Underground investment programme for this and the next two years will mean a delay in the total modernisation of rolling stock, track and signalling on the Northern line until the year 2005—more than 10 years away. Northern line commuters face another 10 years of train, track and signalling breakdowns, failures and delay—that is, if the modernisation ever takes place.

As Mr. Denis Tunnicliffe, managing director of London Underground, made graphically clear to the Select Committee, for London Underground to embark on a project involving £1 billion worth of investment—a massive proportion of the underground's budget—would require a level of confidence in the Government's commitment of resources that would be difficult to justify against the backdrop of the recent wild fluctuations in funding for the underground system. What a way to run a railway!

[Mr. Hill]

It goes without saying that the Minister will plead the necessity of cuts, in the light of the Government's £50 billion budget deficit. Let us leave aside the obvious comment that the London commuter is being forced to pay the price of the Government's economic mismanagement. Even within the constraints of the overall budgetary deficit—here I come to the point made by the Minister in an earlier intervention—the Government have made a clear decision to disadvantage the underground passenger.

The truth is that, wherever else the autumn statement cuts may have fallen, they did not reduce the overall transport budget: that remained stable. In the autumn statement, the Government made a conscious decision to shift transport spending away from public transport in London—and London Underground in particular—into road-building projects outside the capital. They could have chosen to sustain investment in London Regional Transport; they chose not to do so. The London commuter will not forget that act of discrimination in a hurry. Nor will Londoners lend any credence to the Government's pleas of poverty for London Regional Transport, in the light of the decision—announced last week, and much lauded by the hon. Member for Hendon, South—to devote £144 million to the lunatic creation of a 14-lane M25. That was an act of massive despoliation of the green belt, which will suck yet further resources away from London.

The Government still have an opportunity to make amends in their next autumn statement by committing a stable, sustained and higher level of funding to both British Rail and London Underground to permit the maintenance of services through infrastrcuture renewal over the medium term. I hope that they will heed the advice offered unanimously by both Conservative and Labour Members of the Select Committee:

> "If no such funding is granted, passengers in London will inevitably experience a rapid decline in the speed, reliability and frequency of their services, which would seriously affect the quality of their lives and the competitiveness of business in the nation's capital."

Those are sombre words which the Government ignore at their peril—and at the peril of London as well.

1.7 am

Mr. Tony Banks (Newham, North-West): I congratulate the hon. Member for Hendon, South (Mr. Marshall) on choosing this subject for debate. After his customary out-to-lunch bit, he made a number of useful points. Having noted the expertise of my hon. Friend the Member for Streatham (Mr. Hill), I felt sufficiently humble not to speak; after all, he can make a much better speech than I can. Then I looked at the Minister and thought, why not?

Few would deny that London's transport system is in a poor state. That is not to talk the system down; it is merely to acknowledge that, as my hon. Friend the Member for Streatham said, it has been underfunded for years. Let me point out yet again to the hon. Member for Hendon, South that, when the last Labour GLC declared its intention to invest heavily in capital projects in London Transport generally, the Conservative Government of the day used various devices to block our aim. That is the truth of the matter.

One needs to look at the position today in terms of capital investment decisions and take it on a little to show that the Government have let down Londoners badly. There was a time when we thought that perhaps the Government had changed their mind and saw how important it was to invest in an efficient transportation system for the capital city; it would be to the benefit of not merely London but the whole national economy. Just before the 1992 general election, in the 1991 autumn statement the Government made a commitment to provide investment to meet the target of a "decently modern metro"—the term which comes up time and time again—in 10 years.

In autumn 1991 the Government promised £633 million towards London Underground's capital investment in the core system mentioned by the hon. Member for Hendon, South—that is, in trains, structures and services of the existing network. The hon. Gentleman referred to new projects such as crossrail and the Jubilee line extension as if they were already up and running. They have not even been started. Those new projects are subject to separate ring-fenced funding. Such projects are often prayed in aid by the Government when they talk of record sums of investment for future years. As we know, construction has not yet commenced on any of the projects.

The Government safely won the election in April 1992, having promised such capital sums as I have mentioned and, I might add, not to increase value added tax or to cut public expenditure. They managed to renege on all those promises. The 1992 autumn statement is crucial to what is happening now to London underground in particular but to London transport in general. In the 1992 autumn statement the Government allocated only £416 million to the core system in expenditure year 1993-94. That was a shortfall of £217 million, or 34 per cent., on what was promised.

The Minister has always been very open and he admitted that the amount allocated in 1992 was less than was promised. But the investment is crucial. The Government said in the previous autumn statement how much was needed. To reduce the amount in the subsequent one seems like reneging on a firm promise. How can one expect London Regional Transport to plan adequately given that uncertainty?

In November 1991 the then Secretary of State for Transport pledged the necessary investment and said that by 1993-94 London Underground investment in the existing railway should be more than £700 million a year taking into account the Monopolies and Mergers Commission statement that that amount was needed to provide an adequately modern framework. *[Interruption.]* The Minister says that that was a London Regional Transport figure, but it was accepted by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. One must assume that both knew what they were talking about. The same statement was then emphasised by the Minister for Public Transport on 17 February 1992.

So one could have expected Londoners to believe that Ministers were speaking the truth and that London Underground and London Regional Transport could proceed in the full expectation of getting what they were promised. Of course, it has not worked out that way. In 1991 the Government promised London Underground £571 million for 1994-95. In 1992 that was revised to £343 million. That was a shortfall of £229 million, or 40 per cent. In the 1991 statement the Government promised

London Underground £585 million for 1995-96. In 1992 that was revised to £425 million, a shortfall of £160 million, or 27 per cent.

As my hon. Friend the Member for Streatham said, that is no way to run a railway. I have heard the Minister say that, when one compared the position in the 1992 autumn statement with that in 1991, the Government could not proceed on the original basis because the circumstances looked bad. Yet the allocation from the Treasury to the Department of Transport remained virtually unaltered between those two years.

Then Ministers decided to change the allocation between the different transportation modes for which they are responsible, giving greater emphasis to roads than to London's transport system. By comparison with 1992-93, the total roads budget for 1993-94 increased by £125 million, or 4 per cent., but London Regional Transport's share fell by £132 million, or 30 per cent. The situation will worsen in 1994-95. The total roads budget is set to increase by £194 million, or 31 per cent.

It is not a question of pleading a shortage of money. The sum allocated by the Treasury seems to remain the same between those years, but the Government's priorities changed in 12 months, and that is something that the Minister must address.

I presumed that the hon. Member for Hendon, South would concentrate most on the Northern line—and rightly, given that his constituents suffer a poor service on that misery line, as do many other commuters. I believe that it has one the longest tunnels in the world, extending 17 miles. As my hon. Friend the Member for Streatham said, keeping that line running is a triumph of managerial and engineering expertise.

I remember travelling on exactly the same trains that run today when I made the journey from my school—Archbishop Tennyson at Kennington Oval—to Tooting. The stations also seem remarkably the same.

Mr. John Marshall: It could not have been all that long ago.

Mr. Banks: The hon. Gentleman is very kind. I wish that it were so, but it seems a long time ago to me.

Trams were running in those days. I do not know whether the Minister is old enough to remember trams and trolley buses. I was only a babe in arms at the time, but I still remember them, and much deplore their passing. Trams had their guaranteed road space, and no one got in the way of one of those great clanking vehicles. Introduced in their place were unenforceable bus lanes—but now Croydon is considering a tramlink, and there are trams in Manchester and Sheffield. Trams are making a comeback. They never left some continental cities. I agree with the hon. Member for Hendon, South that the Government got transport planning badly wrong, and London and other cities have suffered as a consequence.

The Northern line also has been affected by the change made between the 1991 and 1992 autumn statements. Some of its stations have been refurbished—London Bridge, Borough, and High Barnet to East Finchley inclusive. Refurbishment was to be undertaken at eight stations this year, but that work has been cancelled because of the 1992 cut in Government grant. The planned £56 million package of refurbishment of 10 stations at the southern end of the Northern line has been postponed until 1998.

The hon. Member for Hendon, South mentioned Angel station, but Mornington Crescent will remain closed until further notice. It cannot be reopened until its lifts are replaced. Because of the cut in the 1992 budget, London Underground does not have sufficient funding for that work.

As to passenger security measures at the southern end of the Northern line, it was planned, as part of the 10-station modernisation project, to replace the life-expired equipment at Clapham North, Clapham Common, Clapham South, Tooting Bec, Tooting Broadway and Balham stations and to install equipment at Oval, Colliers Wood, South Wimbledon and Morden. Those proposals also have stalled, and that work will not be undertaken in the current financial year. The money that London Underground was clearly promised by the Government before the general election is being cut.

Call me an old cynic if you wish, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I cannot believe that there was not some connection between the general election and London in the promises that were made by the Government in the 1991 autumn statement. If indeed, as the Minister for Transport in London said, it was because the situation looked a lot worse in 1992, perhaps the Government did not know enough about the way the economy was functioning. The Government do not show up in a particularly good light either way. Either they misled the electorate, or they did not know what was going on in the economy. Neither possibility reflects credit on the Government.

I hope that the Minister has studied the report produced by the Centre for Economic and Business Research. Its title is "The Economic Impact of the London Underground Core Investment Programme"—not what one would consider to be a particularly catchy title, but certainly it is a vital piece of research. We all want a "decently modern metro." As the report finds, that programme would deliver passenger benefits worth hundreds of millions of pounds a year. It would deliver an improved quality of life in the capital, enhance the availability of skills for employers, boost the economy and employment in both London and the rest of the United Kingdom, and offer value to the United Kingdom well in excess of its cost to Government and pay for itself in 10 years.

The Minister knows a good deal when he sees one, and he has concluded one or two in his time: he has the gold watch to prove it, I understand. That seems like a good deal to me. I cannot understand why the Minister does not reach out with both hands and grab it. There is a difference between borrowing money in order to fund current expenditure and borrowing money in order to invest for the future. One has to draw a distinction between those two aspects of expenditure. We are debating investment for the future. Unless we have a properly funded London underground and London transport system—not just properly funded but at a sustained and predictable level, for it is the unpredictability that tends to throw costings and plans up into the air—we shall not get London's economy right.

It is not just a question of pleading for more money for London—London Members obviously do that—but investment in rolling stock and new buses for London means jobs for people in cities outside London, because Greater London has lost most of its manufacturing capacity. Investment, therefore, means jobs for people outside London. That, again, must surely be what the

[Mr. Banks]

Government want to achieve. I cannot understand why the Government will not accept that to borrow money for investment in public transport is completely different from borrowing money merely to sustain a budget deficit, due to revenue spending problems.

My hon. Friend the Member for Streatham mentioned the two Transport Select Committee reports, in both of which he played a most conspicuous part. The first, on the question of capital investment, stated that London's public transport system is being crippled and, with it, the future of the city. It said that London Transport needs both a higher and a sustained level of investment, the very point that I made earlier.

These are not the ramblings of some wild-eyed Trot —the kind of person whom the hon. Member for Hendon, South seems to see all around him. This was the considered view of a Committee of our colleagues, with Conservative party Members of Parliament in the majority. The Committee was not in the hands of the hon. Member for Macclesfield (Mr. Winterton), who is seen as a bit of a loose cannon on the Tory Benches; it was in the very safe hands of the former Secretary of State for Transport, the right hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Channon). I am sure that the Minister would not put him in the category of being a wild and unpredictable maverick within the ranks of the Conservative party.

The second report—the hon. Member for Hendon, South touched upon it—deals with bus deregulation. It was even more damning. I went to get a copy, for greater accuracy. It says that deregulation, which already presents something of a gamble, could prove to be a disaster for London.

The Select Committee went on to make several recommendations to the Government. It said that they should not proceed with deregulation and should try something else. I have seen no response yet from the Government. Perhaps the Minister can give us a clue to encourage us in the belief that that Select Committee report will not be shelved and ignored like so many other Select Committee reports.

If he does not mind my saying so, the hon. Member for Hendon, South was very selective in his quotes from the Select Committee report when he referred to deregulation elsewhere. With regard to deregulation outside London, the report states:

"While bus mileage has increased, so have fares in real terms, and while operating costs are down, so is the level of patronage. Similarly, whereas in places like Oxford and Inverness, passengers have experienced genuine improvements in the quality of services, in larger cities such as Sheffield and Manchester deregulation has led to considerable problems of congestion and unreliability. This inconsistency is mirrored in the sharply contrasting views of passengers surveyed in different parts of the country."

The report then refers to the lessons for London, and makes the very good and obvious point that

"There is no other city in the United Kingdom comparable in terms of size or population with London. That alone does not mean that the experience of deregulation in the rest of the country is entirely without relevance to what might happen in the capital. The fact that London is at least six times larger than the next biggest city in Britain implies that the problems to be tackled in introducing deregulation are of a different order of magnitude, but not necesarily unique in nature."

Those are strongly-worded warnings from a Committee that considered deregulation very carefully.

The Minister will receive slavish and adulatory support from the hon. Member for Hendon, South in his role as a Parliamentary Private Secretary and member of the payroll vote. However, most people who look at the matter objectively are unhappy about deregulation. The experience outside London is not consistently happy. That being so, one would have expected the more cautionary Conservative Members to say, "Let's halt for a while. Let's look at it carefully once more. After all, she's gone now and there's no need to prove ourselves as ideological loonies. We don't have to run around deregulating and privatising. Let's have a look at this one because if we get it wrong it could be hung around our necks at the next general election."

Far be it from me to pass on good advice to the Minister, but were I in his place, as I hope to be one day soon, that is the kind of thought that would have passed through my mind. However, the Minister can give us his initial thoughts about the report on bus deregulation in London.

I will conclude by asking the Minister some specific questions. He can probably guess some of them, but I might as well use this occasion to raise them. The hon. Member for Hendon, South referred to the Jubilee extension and to what it is going to do. It can do a lot of things, but it cannot do anything unless it starts. Will the Minister tell us the latest situation in respect of the Jubilee line? It is becoming rather tedious waiting for the final announcement that everything is okay and that it will go ahead. I would like the Minister to make that announcement in the House and not during the recess so that he can receive all the praise that I know that he feels that he thoroughly deserves.

What about the Crossrail Bill? The Government say that they support that, but we still have not seen the key reports on the scheme's viability or the potential for private sector support. We have heard that the private sector is interested, but we heard that about the Jubilee line extension. We need to see some of the old ackers up front, to put it in the crude parlance that the Minister and I fully understand.

Through London First, the private sector has asked the Government to give a clear commitment to the amount that they will invest in the scheme. One needs to know exactly how much the Government will pay towards the funding of crossrail. The Chelsea-Hackney line is safeguarded, but there is no clear commitment to proceed with the line. Perhaps the Minister will say something about that.

Of course there still remains considerable uncertainty about the channel tunnel rail link. Again, we would like a commitment from the Minister in respect of the finance to be provided for the central London station and the importance of intermediary stations. He knows—I have thrashed this matter around for a long time—that my borough of Newham is working hard, hoping that we will get the international station at Stratford as part of the Government's strategy for the east Thames corridor. Given the amount of money that the Government are putting into Stratford, for which we are extremely grateful, it seems that that investment could be greatly enhanced by a decision on Stratford as an international channel tunnel station. Of course, there is also the east London line extension, again approved by London Transport but without the funds available to enable construction to go ahead.

London Transport recently published its report entitled "Making Vision into Reality"—and there is also the report entitled "The Economic Impact of the London Underground Core Investment Programme". The company is seeking a commitment to £900 million per annum investment and a total investment of £6·4 billion to generate employment and additional revenue to the Treasury and London Underground's operating costs. It can be shown, not by me in this debate but by those who have carefully studied the matter, that investment in the public transport system in London can pay for itself in all the ways that one could imagine.

I hope that the Government will join the Opposition in declaring themselves to be fully in favour of giving London the public transport system that it needs. We could then hold up our heads and point to our transport system in the capital city as being the envy of the world, as it certainly used to be. Of course, that does not happen by wishful thinking. It happens as a result of sustained work, sustained investment and commitment. We will gladly join the Government in that spirit of common purpose if only they drop some of their ridiculous ideological fixations about transport and start to realise that Londoners deserve a far better system than the one they have at the moment. When they have such a system, they may be prepared to look carefully at the Government's credentials when they put themselves forward at the next general election, but I would not count on it.

1.32 am

The Minister for Transport in London (Mr. Steve Norris): At the conclusion of this enjoyable debate, I join hon. Members in congratulating my hon. Friend the Member for Hendon, South (Mr. Marshall) on raising this subject which is important to those who represent London, London's commuters and, dare I say, all right hon. and hon. Members who, along with millions of our fellow citizens, experience public transport in London as part of their daily lives.

I shall start with one of the ramblings of that well-known wild-eyed Trot, the hon. Member for Crewe and Nantwich (Mrs. Dunwoody), and what the hon. Member for Newham, North-West (Mr. Banks) referred to as a hugely critical report on London's public transport capital investment requirements. The quote is the first sentence of the conclusions of the report. It states:

> "There is no doubt that in the past few years investment in London' public transport has been at a significantly higher level than in previous decades."

I merely wish to record that point to underline one assertion which I might be entitled to make. That is, contrary to a lot of very misleading nonsense that I have heard—although not from the hon. Members for Newham, North-West and for Streatham (Mr. Hill)—there is not a low level of investment going into public transport in London. On the contrary, in comparison with the investment made in the days of the Greater London council, we are now spending twice as much on London transport—in comparison with certain years, we are spending three times as much as the GLC.

Not all the difference can be accounted for by the assertion of the hon. Member for Newham, North-West that that is all due to the dastardly Tory Government trying to deny the right of the hon. Member for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone) to spend Londoner's money on his grandiose ideas for improving London transport.

One such gem of an idea was the Westbourne Park bus garage, which won an award from the national brick council, or whatever it was. That extraordinary creation is a wondrous celebration of the joys of the brick—if one can think in those terms at this hour of the morning. Its slight problem is that it cossets buses on the assumption that they must be kept in cathedral-like splendour overnight when not in use—presumably to keep their engines warm or to stop the rain falling on them.

Mr. Tony Banks: What is wrong with that?

Mr. Norris: No private operator in his right mind would spend that amount of money on the simple job of garaging a bus fleet. It sums up the difference between the Opposition and the Government that, when I point out the ludicrous waste of money on that particular edifice, the hon. Member for Newham, North-West says, "What is wrong with that?". There is not a bus operator worth his salt in the country who does not know precisely what is wrong with that. What is wrong with that is that it is a gratuitous waste of taxpayers' money. What is wrong with that is that it represents a ludicrous misappropriation of scarce resources in a manner that is little short of crass. I see that the hon. Member for Newham, North-West, whose thirst for the battle has not been the slightest assuaged by his recent experience at the hands of the Metropolitan police, is dying to leap to his feet.

Mr. Banks: Before the Minister goes into orbit on the question of the bus garage, may I tell him that many contractors now store buses in the open. That is not a good practice. Correct me if I am wrong, but I think that the standard of bus cleanliness is deteriorating rapidly. That is in part due to the fact that many buses are stored in the open because when some people get hold of bus operations they sell off the real estate, which makes them a nice bit of profit.

Mr. Norris: The hon. Gentleman is normally a reasonable chap, but he is wrong on two counts.

First, the hon. Gentleman is wrong to suggest that there is anything wrong with the idea of leaving a few buses out in the open. These days they are built to withstand the odd night of rain or even snow. Secondly, he is wrong about whether buses are cleaner than they were. He will be aware that the cleanliness of the service is one of the indicators of performance that London Transport is keen to see customers determine, not some statistician with a clipboard. On that basis, London Transport's stock is reckoned to be consistently cleaner now than in the past.

I do not want to labour the point about Westbourne Park bus garage, although it is a gem of its kind. I merely stress that, in the past few years, substantial investment has been made in transport provision.

The hon. Member for Streatham said that things got a lot better in the early part of the 1990s. He should appreciate that things are likely to get better in the middle years of the 1990s, after the return of the Conservative Government. I have no doubt that things will then go on to get even better in the late 1990s.

There is much evidence to back the Select Committee's statement that current investment in London Transport is significantly greater than that made in previous decades.

We are in the process of completing the £800 million renewal of the Central line, as the hon. Member for Newham, North-West will know from his constituency

[Mr. Norris]

interest. A £300 million programme is under way to refurbish a great many of the trains. I shall also run through some of the other projects that have been mentioned, so as to provide the answers for which I have been asked.

The Jubilee line extension will begin when the agreement with the private sector is in place. I make no apology for using that tried and tested form of words. The hon. Gentleman will know that putting the agreement in place with the Olympia and York administrators was a difficult and complex business, but it is worth fighting hard to secure a private sector contribution. As my hon. Friend the Member for Hendon, South said, that contribution of about £400 million towards the cost of the scheme will compensate the taxpayer for the immense benefit that the private sector developer of Canary wharf will derive from it. I hope that we will be able shortly to make an announcement that will please the House.

The hon. Gentleman knows that crossrail is funded for the next three years, which is as far as the public expenditure survey extends. By contrast, there is no expectation of any significant expenditure on Chelsea-Hackney during the next three years. Such expenditure as is necessary will be subsumed in LRT's general vote. The hon. Gentleman was right to point out, however, that the line is safeguarded. There is no question but that the scheme should follow on after we have completed the Jubilee line extension and crossrail.

I take this opportunity to tell the House that London Regional Transport is securing agreement to the proposals for the northern extension of the east London line, and is negotiating with local authorities and others. The extension has been universally welcomed. Subject to the availability of finance, LRT would then hope to turn its attention to the equally important southern extension of the line.

The channel tunnel rail link will continue as a joint public-private sector proposition, the precise details of which are yet to be established, but the underlying principle of which is clear. To build the line, it will be necessary to seek large amounts of both public and private sector money, because the private sector can then enjoy the benefits that the line will bring.

I cannot help the hon. Member for Newham, North-West on the prospects for Stratford, because the work undertaken by Union Railways and others to refine the route and the positioning of the stations is still in hand and it would be wrong to anticipate the findings of the studies. I am not yet in a position to say what they may be, although I often have discussions with Newham council, whose interest in the matter I shall bear in mind.

I accept the Select Committee's later conclusion that larger investment in the system would be desirable and that it should be consistent. I do not come here with trite words that turn night into day; I do not suggest that reductions in LRT's capital spending were desirable, or that variations over two or three years were helpful. I must tell the hon. Gentleman, however, that when the Government became aware of the urgent need to deal with the public sector borrowing requirement, it would have been wrong to exempt this area of expenditure.

There is a straightforward explanation for the apparent imbalance in the distribution of the "pain" between the various aspects of the programme. As the hon. Gentleman knows, a great deal of the road programme is committed some time in advance, which means that there is a need to devote a proportion of the Department's total resources to the continuance of that programme in order not to frustrate work which has already begun. In the case of London Transport, it is true to say that the decision to reduce the level of grant affected its ability to invest, but, in historic terms, it still left it substantially above its baseline of only two years ago.

I have also read to the McWilliam study to which the hon. Gentleman referred. I shall not make a detailed critique of it, but it is the only point at which I can refer to my gold watch. The House will know that the hon. Gentleman has yet to make a speech as my shadow—long may that continue to be the case—without making an overt, or covert, offer for my watch. It is an unremarkable item and I am perfectly happy to negotiate with him. What has prevented him from turning his expressions of interest —as we used to call them in the trade—into anything more positive is that he cannot put up the money. I appreciate that his extensive television career is now accruing large royalties and that Mrs. Banks is probably constrained as to how they are dispersed, but the point that he has frequently made is, to put it crudely, that he cannot afford it. In Professor McWilliam's report, affordability is an even more important criterion than desirability.

I draw a veil over my bungled and feeble attempts at humour to underline the serious point, which is that it is not enough for investment to be desirable to enable schemes to stand on their own when, in the public sector, they have to queue behind so many other calls on the public sector. Affordability becomes the key criterion. That is and always has been the fundamental advantage conveyed by privatisation, as proved by British Telecom, British Airways, the British Airports Authority or even the current proposals in the Railways Bill.

There are innumerable propositions for investment in Network SouthEast, which would lead to a positive cash flow in five years but which are not entertained because the resources are not there. As long as British Rail is in the public sector, it calls on the Exchequer's liberality, along with London Transport, roads, hospitals and schools. In the private sector, the situation is entirely different. If a scheme is good and will bring a positive cash flow within three to five years, no bank will refuse to finance the investment. Once investment is made, the quality of service is improved, the public purse is relieved and we all gain. Even at this stage, I urge members of the Opposition to recognise that privatisation is not a matter of dogma; it is a matter of recognising one of the great truths, which is that, however much money is available to a Transport Minister, of whatever party, there will always be more demands than funds to meet them. In those circumstances, we should be tapping the private sector market, which after all is the only other real source of capital available to any Government beyond that which they can raise by taxing, borrowing or printing. Regardless of which party is in power and how much the Chancellor gives the Secretary of State for Transport, there will be more demands on the public purse.

Mr. Keith Hill: The hon. Member dilates on the advantages of the private sector, but the blunt truth is that, in the Government's spending programme for 1993-94, London Underground lost precisely £300 million. That

went to Government spending on the roads programme. Which roads programmes benefited from London Underground's loss in the 1993-94 capital programme?

Mr. Norris: The hon. Gentleman knows that, even if I wished to, I could not answer that. If he has any pretensions to assuming office in this Department, he would do well to recognise that well over 90 per cent. of goods and people are transported by road. It beggars belief that Opposition Members can treat the road programme as if it were entirely dispensable—as if there were no value in relieving city centres of the appalling problems of pollution and of asthma among young children, which they are keen to allege but not so keen to see relieved by a bypass. The hon. Gentleman should be careful about assuming that all the shortfall in public transport expenditure could necessarily be made up merely by massive transfers from the road programme.

My hon. Friend the Member for Hendon, South did the House a service by raising the subject. I emphasise the positive aspects of the work of Denis Tunnicliffe of London Underground Ltd. and of Clive Hodson of London Buses. LUL's company plan led to the rationalisation of more than 1,000 pay and grading agreements, which previously created a climate of jobsworth that made any management improvements on the underground almost impossible to achieve. The company plan, which was not an easy task, rationalised those pay and grading agreements into an intelligent managerial structure. That has allowed London Underground to make huge leaps in quality, although I recognise that much investment is needed in the Northern line—a case that my hon. Friend the Member for Hendon, South prosecutes assiduously on behalf of his constituents.

I share an interest in the southern half of the line, which is where I live, and I know the stations to which the hon. Member for Streatham referred, running from the Oval down to Morden. There is, none the less, clear evidence, to which the Monopolies and Mergers Commission referred in its 1991 report, of the way in which management action has transformed the quality of the line. My hon. Friend will know that we now receive few complaints about the line compared with only two or three years ago. That has been achieved not by large investment but by tremendous management effort. I take the opportunity to congratulate all those who are involved in the management of the Northern line because they have done a superb job. On present form, it looks as if the refurbishment of the line will now be completed before 2003, not 2005. I accept that that is too long away for any of us to take great pleasure from, but the programme is there and we plan to take it forward. I know that if there is any opportunity to do so, my hon. Friend will urge me to urge, in turn, LT to give that scheme high priority.

The management improvement means that, in the second year of the LT customer charter, we see standards improving across the board, and those standards being monitored not—I am sorry to use the analogy again, but it is important—by a man with a clipboard, but by customer reactions, obtained live by independent survey. They are a serious sign of whether we are getting the system right.

Both the hon. Members for Streatham and for Newham, North-West spoke of bus deregulation. On the evidence, my hon. Friend the Member for Hendon, South is entirely right. I accept that the trade unions, many Labour local authorities and, I am sorry to say, normally quite intelligent Labour Members of Parliament all hate it, for obvious reasons, but bus deregulation has achieved exactly what my hon. Friend has said—a great deal more bus miles run.

If one wants to get people on buses, the first thing that one has to do is run a bus. That is a simple proposition, but it is one that even Labour Members should be able to get their minds around. Once one has done that, it also makes sense to try to get the operating costs of the buses down, and they are down by about a third. Far more importantly, the subsidy required from the taxpayer has been reduced by half. That is the experience of deregulation outside London.

I congratulate on behalf of other hon. Members the hon. Member for Streatham for his part in the work of the Select Committee, which produced a rather helpful report on bus deregulation. I know that it is a matter of great political importance, so it imported a note of potential danger, which is perhaps understandable, in suggesting that unless certain steps were taken, there could be dangers in bus deregulation in London. I accept that proposition. It would be irresponsible to introduce any significant change into a market as sophisticated as London unless one were entirely clear what the changes were designed to achieve. One should take account of experience elsewhere —whether in Sheffield, Glasgow, Oxford or Bristol—the good and the bad, the advantages and the disadvantages.

I welcome the opportunity to tell the hon. Member for Newham, North-West that the Department has not yet formally responded to the Select Committee's report. I want to take some time to give it the attention that it deserves. I can say now that I think that it was right to point out that we need to know clearly what we shall do about the extra buses that are the happy consequence of bus deregulation. I am convinced of the need to ensure, by legislation if necessary, the continuation of, for example, the travel card. The concessionary fares scheme will continue, and continue to be funded by the boroughs as now, and it will apply across the board, not simply among selected operators in selected areas.

I give those commitments for a straightforward reason. If I were not to do so, it would imply that I did not understand what the market for public transport in London was. I hope that the House will give me credit for at least understanding that. Anyone who bothered to examine what makes London's public transport tick would understand why the travel card is important. It is the key to the willingness of people to use the system and to their ability to use it. I want to see it developed with such things as stored value ticketing. That is not available at the moment, but technology is bringing it forward, and it will open up a whole new market.

I believe that about 85 per cent. of routes will be run commercially in London. That has been the experience outside and the London bus executive will be funded to secure those socially necessary routes that are not profitable. That would again be a necessary part of the deregulation process. If, with those caveats, we can move forward, it is with one signal proposition as our banner —that deregulation does not mean no regulation.

I hope that the hon. Member for Newham, North-West will take some comfort from the fact that I do not foresee deregulation as meaning a free-for-all. It is important to learn lessons from elsewhere in the country and from our experience of the workings of the 1985 Act. I believe that,

[Mr. Norris]

in general, the experience has been good, but it would be crass not to open our eyes and look at experience elsewhere.

Once again, I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Hendon, South on giving us the opportunity to have this useful debate. If I may say so without incurring the wrath of the Whips, we enjoy each other's company in these debates. At least, I do; I cannot speak for the hon. Member for Newham, North-West. God knows, his taste is so eclectic that I have no idea what he enjoys, but I am prepared to make my statement on a unilateral basis——

Mr. Tony Banks: See me afterwards.

Mr. Norris: I will indeed see the hon. Gentleman afterwards. I hesitate to think what, at 2 o'clock in the morning, he has in mind. Still, with his rather eclectic tastes I have no doubt that we can think of something amusing.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to set out the Government"s response to some of the points that have been raised. I believe that the future of public transport in London is exciting. It will involve more commercialisation, more private initiative and investment and an awareness of the need to achieve yet better and better standards. I hope to take that work forward through the interesting days that lie ahead over the next 12 months.

Energy Conservation

2.1 am

Mr. Cynog Dafis (Ceredigion and Pembroke, North): I am glad to have this opportunity to say something further about my Energy Conservation Bill, which was first presented to the House as a ten-minute Bill on 24 February. I shall begin by briefly reiterating its main provisions. Its core provision is to require district and borough councils, after extensive public consultation, to draw up energy conservation plans for all domestic properties in their areas with the aim of achieving energy savings of 10, 20 or 30 per cent. The plans would assess the estimated reduction in fuel bills, the resulting reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide, and the cost of implementing the plans.

The relevant Secretary of State would set a date for the completion of the plans, which would be sent to him. He would then, at his discretion—I emphasise that—publish a timetable for the implementation of the plans and make arrangements for the funding. Local authorities would ensure that the works to bring about increased energy efficiency were carried out. Almost inevitably nowadays, they would do that in their role as enablers rather than as providers.

From that focused programme of activity, a whole range of benefits would flow. First, there would be environmental benefits. Under the Rio accord, the Government are committed to stablising carbon dioxide emissions at the 1990 level by the year 2000. It is worth bearing in mind the fact that that target will not bring about a stabilisation of carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere. To achieve that, the United Nations estimates that we need a 60 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in the near future. I repeat that the Government's commitment is to stabilise by the year 2000.

With 27 per cent. of the United Kingdom's CO_2 emissions deriving from the domestic sector, a programme activated through my Bill could make a useful contribution. Of course, there would also be reductions in sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide. Other instruments will have to be brought into play, as well as the one proposed in the Bill. The Combined Heat and Power Association advocates a target of 6,000 MW from combined heat and power—treble the present level—by the year 2000. Will the Minister say tonight whether the Government would be prepared to adopt that target? However, I say that merely in passing, and I shall now return to my Bill.

In addition to the reduction in atmospheric pollution, health gains would result from the elimination of cold and damp in homes, and there would be subsequent savings in social security expenditure for health authorities. Landlords, both public and private, would gain through reduced maintenance costs, which would slacken the upward pressure on rents. Newark and Sherwood district council has made an efficient attempt at quantifying many of the savings.

The quality of life, especially for poorer families, would be significantly enhanced. Their energy cost savings would release additional spending power. Another important consequence of the measure would be job creation—in manufacturing, distribution and installation. That would, in turn, result in an improved tax take for the state and a reduction in unemployment and social security benefits —a virtuous cycle.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. At this hour, I hesitate to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but I must remind him that, as a general rule applicable to all substantive motions for the Adjournment, the subject to be discussed must not involve legislation, except by incidental reference. Therefore, I hope that the hon. Gentleman will not persist in reminding the House, at this early hour, of the exciting prospect of his future legislation.

Mr. Dafis: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am grateful for your guidance. I was not aware of that rule, but I shall studiously avoid reference to legislation from now on.

There has been massive support for the proposals in principle—there is room for modification. A total of 110 district and county councils have expressed support for them, and the range of other organisations to have done so is truly impressive. It includes environmental organisations, ranging from Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, through to the Royal Society for Nature Conservation, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, to the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales and the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

Other supporters include the Institute of Housing, the Trades Union Congress, the National and Local Government Officers Association, the Gas Consumers Council and the National Housing and Town Planning Council. Significantly, the list also includes groups such as the Child Poverty Action Group, Age Concern, Help the Aged, the Disabled Living Foundation and the Right to Fuel Campaign. In addition, more than 350 Members of Parliament have registered their support for such proposals, either by signing early-day motion 1483 or by letter to me from organisations that support the measures. There is wide-ranging and impressive support for such proposals.

Both because of the programme's intrinsic merits and the overwhelming support, the Government must take seriously the proposals and the topic. That is particularly true in view of the imposition of value added tax on domestic fuel—a measure announced after I presented my ten-minute Bill. The proposals have suggested that funds for energy efficiency programmes and works should be through a levy on electricity and gas bills. I am sure that such a provision would rightly be regarded as inappropriate, as domestic fuel is to be taxed.

The Government presented their proposal for VAT on domestic fuel partly as an environmental tax. Now, it is a sine qua non of environmental taxation that it should be recycled in some form to correct the environmental phenomenon that the tax is supposed to address. If a proportion of the VAT proceeds are recycled to meet the cost of a domestic energy efficiency programme, the Government's claim that VAT is an environmental tax would gain some credence and some of the hardship that VAT on domestic fuel will impose on the less well-off, the elderly and the disabled would be mitigated. It is worth bearing in mind the fact that the Government have no plans for any major environmental legislation in the next Session.

I turn to some of the comments made by the Lord President of the Council in his reply to me and some of the supporters of my proposals. He referred to some of the Government's energy efficiency schemes and suggested that more could be achieved by encouragement than by introducing a mandatory requirement for the drawing up of schemes. I say two things in reply. First, some of the Government's schemes, especially the home energy efficiency scheme—HEES—are laudable enough but too limited in scope. That is recognised by the managers of the HEES Neighbourhood Energy Action whom I have met and who support my proposals.

Secondly, the plans that would be introduced under my recommendations would provide a source of information and data that would maximise the effectiveness of, for example, HEES, whether at the existing expenditure level or an expanded version of it. In 1992, HEES incurred Government expenditure of £45 million. In the same way, schemes introduced by the Energy Saving Trust, which is one of the Government's instruments for bringing about energy savings and environmental improvements, would find the framework provided by the comprehensive plans envisaged in my proposals invaluable. Clearly, there is a need for a comprehensive account of the need for energy, the scope and opportunities for it and the means to bring it about.

The support of many local authorities does not indicate an unwillingness to accept mandatory responsibility. Local authorities accept that it is something that they can undertake as long as financial provision is made by the Exchequer to meet costs. The core of my energy efficiency suggestions is the information-gathering process. Plans involving information would enable the work to be prioritised according to social need and environmental impact to achieve maximum efficiency. It is acknowledged that that is lacking in the haphazard collection of schemes operated by the Government at present.

Once the plans have been drawn up and are in place, the Secretary of State could timetable their implementation according to what is realistic in budgetary terms and in keeping with the Government's policy and priorities. My proposals would not commit the Government to a massive investment programme from the beginning of the process, although a substantial investment would be more than justified and bring about great benefits.

Suggestions for modifying the proposals would be welcome, and some organisations have already committed themselves on them. For example, regional energy boards have been suggested. Perhaps that would be a superfluous tier, and other details of that suggestion have been criticised. The Government may have reservations about strengthening local authorities and giving them a more prominent function in the development of energy efficiency. However, housing and environmental health departments are uniquely qualified to carry out the kind of survey work involved in preparing plans. They would have a crucial role, but not necessarily as providers.

Contractors who currently deliver the home energy efficiency scheme for Neighbourhood Energy Action, would be well placed to carry out installations. Organisations such as TECs could stimulate interest and carry out the training programmes that would be necessary to implement such ambitious proposals.

There is no problem about making changes, but comprehensive provision for a radical improvement in domestic energy efficiency is crucial for environmental, social and economic reasons. My proposals attempt to describe how such provision might be made.

2.16 am

Ms Clare Short (Birmingham, Ladywood): I welcome the debate, but not the hour at which it is taking place. One of my colleagues who is no longer in the Chamber said that the best contribution that we could make to energy conservation would be to turn off the lights and go home. There is something in that, but our strange procedures require us to be here at this hour.

I congratulate the hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North (Mr. Dafis) on the immense amount of work and commitment that he has put into the issue of energy conservation. Labour strongly favours such a policy, and many months ago we published our policy document on energy efficiency for the environment and the economy. It contains detailed proposals for a scheme for household energy conservation which would have an enormous number of benefits, and, unusually in social policy terms, they could be obtained at limited cost.

Such a policy would contribute to a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. We gave a commitment on that in Rio that must be met by the Government. I see in today's issue of *The Times*—today is still yesterday under the funny rules of the House—that the Secretary of State for the Environment is apparently about to announce proposals to increase energy conservation measures in business. I do not know whether the Minister will tell us anything about that. That is the first objective that would be met by Labour's scheme.

The second benefit of our scheme is enormously important at this time, because it would create thousands of desperately needed jobs that would enable people to cease relying on benefits and start making a contribution to their communities. That would also enable them to regain their independence and not have the humiliation of having to live on benefits.

Thirdly, it would help to solve the enormously serious problem of fuel poverty. Far too many of our citizens struggle from week to week to keep themselves and their children warm and to pay their bills. A serious programme of energy efficiency and conservation in households would help to relieve that poverty.

Fourthly, under Labour's proposals, the details of which I shall shortly present to the House, there would be no cost to the Exchequer because the scheme would be funded by requiring gas and electricity providers to invest in energy conservation measures and put on all the households that had been so improved a cost that would be less than the amount that was saved. In the long term, that would pay for the measures and create an incentive for energy providers to invest in energy efficiency. That would be better than their current incentive, which is to try to sell as much energy as possible, despite the damage to the environment and to people who suffer from fuel poverty.

Labour's proposals differ somewhat from those of the hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North. He said that he was interested in any proposals that might improve on his. I hope that he has read our document: I feel that it has some advantages, although we have exactly the same objective.

Let me tell a story about my constituency that encapsulates the enormous benefit that can result from this kind of social policy. The Ladywood ward of my constituency contains many maisonettes and tower blocks that were built in the 1960s. They are very badly insulated, with underfloor electric heating which was installed at a time when electricity was very cheap and was provided very inefficiently. Those blocks are now riddled with cold, damp and black mould; people often come to my advice bureaux bringing items of clothing covered in mould, and telling me about the number of times children suffering from asthma have been in and out of hospital. Evidence I saw a few years ago suggests not only that damp and cold heighten suffering from asthma and bronchitis, but that the spores in the mould damage children's lungs in the long term. The same story is told up and down the country.

In one block, Beale house, the tenants banded together rather than taking legal action individually against the local authority over the provision of unfit housing. They found a local solicitor, and acted collectively against the local authority—as citizens are entitled to do under existing housing legislation—on the ground that it had provided inadequate housing. They cited the damp and mould. They won their case in the first court: the local authority was ordered to improve the block and provide insulation and better heating.

Birmingham city council then had to decide what to do. It knew that if the case was upheld it would be bankrupt, given all the blocks and maisonettes in the city that were in a similar condition: much as it might have wanted to improve the heating and insulation in all those blocks, it had not the resources to do so. It told the Beale house tenants that it would appeal against the ruling, that the tenants could act collectively against the local authority, and that it would honour the victory of the tenants of that particular block.

The council got together with the Midlands electricity board to launch a programme of insulation in the block, and to install off-peak electrical heating. The results were truly wonderful. At that time—some years ago—a "hard to heat" allowance was still provided under DSS regulations; all the tenants receiving benefits received the allowance—which, of course, cost the Exchequer money.

The net result was the provision of jobs in an area of high unemployment. The block was insulated and equipment was installed—equipment that had been built in the west midlands. People's bills were reduced significantly. People were warmer, and had more hot water. Moreover, the Exchequer saved money because the "hard to heat" allowances were no longer required. That superb social-policy move brought benefits to the environment and individuals: it ended fuel poverty, and improved the health of my constituents' children.

The Labour party—and the hon. Gentleman's Bill, which we are not allowed to mention, but we can mention the suggestions that he has made tonight—proposes the adoption of such a policy on a national level. We should change the regulations controlling the providers of gas and electricity. The appointment of a regulator for the gas industry since deregulation has introduced some sensible provisions—for instance, the E-factor, which seeks to encourage energy efficiency in gas providers. However, there is no similar control on electricity providers.

As I said earlier, funding such investment through a premium on bills that was smaller than the saving that would come to individual citizens if we went for big packages of energy insulation would mean that the poor would be better off, no bills would go up, people would be warmer, there would be less fuel poverty and our carbon dioxide emissions would go down.

There would be no cost to the public sector borrowing requirement because the investment would be funded by private borrowing by the domestic fuel users. It is a wonderful scheme that would benefit everyone and would overcome many of the problems that the country faces.

It is shocking and surprising that the Government have not seriously considered the scheme and gone for it. In contrast, as the hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North said, the Government propose to impose VAT on fuel. That is an enormously unpopular proposal which will probably cost the Government the Christchurch by-election, and rightly so. Yet again the measure will bite most heavily on the poorest people in our country. That is the record of the Government since they took power in 1979.

The Government claim that the reason for the measure is protection of the environment. That is a bogus claim. Anyone who has scrutinised the proposal objectively knows that the imposition of VAT on fuel is a tax-gathering measure at the cost of some of the least well-off people in our country. Other measure are available to protect the environment if the Government were really interested. The remedy is energy conservation.

In case the Minister intends to repeat the disreputable allegations made by the Prime Minister about current Labour party policy on energy, let me say that we are, have always been and continue to be opposed to the proposal to impose VAT on domestic fuel. We are currently engaged in a consultation about our environmental policy. We have asked members of our party to consult with local communities about the current European Community proposals for a carbon energy tax. As the EC is putting the proposal to all the countries of the Community, and the proposal appears to be favoured by most countries except Britain, we have asked for the views of members of our party on it.

The Prime Minister misuses that consultation to suggest that the Labour party is in favour of VAT on fuel. That is simply untrue. I hope that the Minister will not attempt to pursue such disreputable and not entirely honest allegations at this late hour of the night.

We in the Labour party welcome the debate introduced by the hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North and his proposals for an improvement in energy conservation. We recommend to him, to the Government and to everyone else the Labour party's scheme as being slightly preferable, more efficient and less bureaucratic than some of the details of the hon. Gentleman's proposal. I do not say that in a negative spirit. We have the same objective. It is a question of how best to achieve it.

We deeply regret that the Government have gone for VAT on fuel. That will hurt those who are fuel poor in our country who are not in a position to and will be even less in a position to invest in energy-saving measures. We further regret that the Government, in their great programme of deregulation, propose to reduce the standards for insulation contained in the building regulations rather than improving them. We suspect that that is partly because the committee which is examining deregulation for the Government includes representatives of the building industry who, of course, give funds to the Tory party. We regret that.

Even at this late hour, I suggest to the Minister that the Government should take up proposals for energy conservation and energy efficiency which would benefit all of us at little cost to the Government.

2.28 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. Tony Baldry): The hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North (Mr. Dafis) has given us a useful opportunity to discuss energy efficiency.

I wondered how long the hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood (Ms Short) would speak before she came clean on the Labour party's proposals for VAT on fuel. I thought that she sought to get her retaliation in rather early to explain away the most recent Labour party briefing which recommended an energy tax. The hon. Lady's protestation that Labour had never contemplated value added tax on energy would carry more conviction if it were not the case that a Labour party document published in 1990, "Looking to the Future", stated:

"Proposals by the European Commission to remove the zero rating from Value Added Tax would impose new burdens on the poorest in our community."

The House ought to take careful note of the next sentence:

"Zero rating on items such as food, fares, books and children's clothing should remain as an essential part of the VAT system."

No mention there of VAT on energy or domestic fuel. I have no doubt that Labour's draftsmen chose their words very carefully—just as the hon. lady did this evening, in seeking to claim that suggestions for some form of energy tax, as proposed in *Labour News* recently, were part of a wider consultation exercise among constituency parties.

At least the hon. Lady had the decency to turn up for this debate—unlike hon. Members of other parties.

Ms Short: I am grateful to the Minister for giving way. I am sorry that, at 2.30 in the morning, the hon. Gentleman repeats dishonest allegations made in the House by the Prime Minister. The Minister knows very well that an old Labour party document stating, "We don't support"——

Mr. Baldry: I am not giving way to the hon. Lady——

Ms Short: I am sorry, but the Minister did give way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The Minister has given way.

Ms Short: For the Minister to suggest that an old Labour party document saying that we did not propose the extension of VAT to items "such as" means that we were in favour of imposing it on domestic fuel is unreasonable and unworthy of him. The document to which the Minister referred is part of a consultation with party members as to their views on current EEC policy. May we please have an honest debate, not dishonest and misleading allegations?

Mr. Baldry: That was not worth giving way for, so I do not intend to give way to the hon. Lady again. I have no doubt that in the run-up to the last general election Labour party draftsmen chose very carefully the words to appear in "Looking to the Future". However much the hon. Lady protests, she cannot disguise the fact that that document specifically excluded any reference to VAT on energy. She cannot deny that Labour's most recent consultation document recommends that party members should use

"Chris Smith's article to help you discuss the following questions: Economic Policy—In what ways can economic policy be developed to encourage environmental protection? You might consider Taxation Policy (e.g., energy tax . . .)".

[Mr. Baldry]

Most people would rely on a reasonable interpretation of those words, and most people can understand plain English.

As I said, at least the hon. Lady had the decency to turn up to explain her party's policies—unlike Liberal Democrat Members. I am sad about that, because I wanted to ask them a few questions. I note that my hon. Friends the Members for Dorset, West (Sir J. Spicer) and for Dorset, North (Mr. Baker) are in their places. Liberal Democrats have been scurrying around parts of the country saying how monstrous it is that we propose to introduce VAT on domestic fuel. That is surprising given that only recently the Liberal Democrats produced a paper entitled "Costing the Earth—Liberal Democrat Policies for an Environmentally Sustainable Economy". All good stuff, one might think. It states:

"Liberal Democrats advocate as a first priority the imposition of a tax on energy."

I wonder whether the Liberal Democrat candidate in Christchurch is explaining that to the local electors. The document goes on to say that

"The United Kingdom is unusual amongst EC members in not applying even standard rates of VAT to domestic fuels . . . If it proved completely impossible",

say the Liberals,

"to persuade our international partners to adopt energy taxes, we would nevertheless press forward, but phase them in at lower levels than otherwise—for example, by ending the anomalous zero rate of VAT on fuel."

If a Liberal Democrat Member had bothered to turn up in the House this evening, I imagine that he or she would have sought to argue, as did the hon. Member for Ladywood, that that means something other than what it means in plain English. But in plain English, to end the zero rate of VAT on fuel means no more than that.

Mr. Dafis: Will the Minister address the suggestion that I made—that part of the proceeds from VAT, granted that that imposition is to be made, should be dedicated specifically to financing energy efficiency programmes?

Mr. Baldry: I noted the hon. Gentleman's proposal, and I shall turn to it in a moment. First, however, I want to deal with the question of VAT generally and the policies of the Opposition parties towards it. The hon. Gentleman made his policy very clear.

The Liberal Democrats go on to say:

"we also recognise that the poorest income groups usually lack the capital required to invest in these items."——

meaning energy efficiency appliances.

"Although we are clear that this problem must be addressed, we are equally clear that this must not"——

the word "not" is in italics, so that we all clearly understand that the Liberal Democrats mean "not"——

"be achieved through granting exemptions to particular target groups; everyone must face the same incentives to use less and cleaner energy."

The Liberal Democrats do not even intend, therefore, to mitigate the impact of their VAT proposals for fuel——

Mr. Eric Martlew (Carlisle): Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Baldry: No, I am not going to give way.

They do not intend to mitigate the impact of those proposals on the most vulnerable members of society.

Mr. Martlew: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Baldry: No. The last time that I gave way to a Labour Member it was not worth doing so. I want to make some progress.

What is clear, therefore, is that the Liberal Democrats propose to introduce VAT on fuel and that they do not intend to grant exemptions even to the more vulnerable members of society. I hope that that is being explained throughout the country.

It should not, of course, come as a surprise to people in Dorset. As long ago as 1990, Liberal parliamentary candidates in Dorset made that clear. I have here the *Dorset Evening Echo* of 3 December 1990 in which the Liberal Democrat candidate for Dorset, South proposed that there should be VAT on domestic fuel.

I hope, therefore, that it is clearly appreciated that the Opposition parties would, if given the opportunity, impose VAT on fuel and that some of their protestations——

Mr. Martlew: Will the Minister give way?

Mr. Baldry: ——are unwarranted. If the hon. Gentleman wants to say that the Labour party had no intention ever of so doing, he will simply repeat what his hon. Friend the Member for Ladywood said. If he wants to make another point, I shall gladly give way to him.

Mr. Martlew: I am surprised that the Minister did not give way before, but we have to be grateful for small mercies at this time of night. Can the Minister tell me where it is said in the Conservative party manifesto that the Conservatives were going to put VAT on fuel?

Mr. Baldry: It did not say in the Conservative manifesto, in terms, that we were going to do that. However, the point that I am making is that the Opposition parties made it clear that they intended to introduce VAT on domestic fuel. It does not lie in their mouths to deny that, to oppose VAT on domestic fuel or to suggest that, if they had the opportunity, they would not have introduced VAT on fuel as an energy efficiency measure.

The Opposition parties make a suggestion and they simply attack it when the Government introduce the proposal. It would be more honest and straightforward if Opposition parties and Opposition candidates on the hustings made clear where they truly stand on such proposals.

I do not intend to take up much more time because I sense that the House would like to make progress. I should like to respond to some of the points made by the hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North because he asked about energy policy.

The debate is timely because, in the past few days, the Government have published a consultation paper that sets out proposals for a national sustainable development strategy and proposals for completing the programme to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment made those proposals clear in an announcement today.

Our sustainable development strategy will consider the state of the environment now and how it might change over the next 20 years on present trends. It will consider the way in which development in different areas of the economy can both harm and benefit the environment and ways in which we as individuals can promote the principles of sustainable development.

As I said, last week we published a consultation paper setting out our proposals on sustainable development. Indeed, we have led the field on sustainable development for several years by monitoring and reporting on our environmental policies. Since 1990, when we published our White Paper "This Common Inheritance", we have had an annual progress report on our environmental policies.

The key to our success has been in setting ourselves specific targets. Last year's report listed nearly 500 separate environmental commitments from Government Departments and other public bodies. We have already acted on the great majority of them and have committed ourselves to further action.

We have been at the forefront of international action to tackle the threat of climate change. We played a major part in brokering the framework convention on climate change in Rio last year, and we are committed to producing a national plan, setting out in full how we will meet our obligations under the convention by the end of this year. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment announced today our proposals for completing Britain's carbon dioxide programme. As no one referred to this earlier—perhaps because hon. Members had not realised that the Government had moved forward in that regard—let me briefly set out, for the benefit of the House, the elements of our proposals for completing our carbon dioxide programme.

We intend to strengthen the Energy Efficiency Office programmes of information and advice, to stimulate additional savings from industry, and to reinforce the work of the Energy Saving Trust to encourage households to use energy efficiently. The hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North called for that to happen, and it will happen through the Energy Saving Trust and we expect public sector bodies to provide a lead.

In addition, we intend further savings to be achieved in transport emissions and a further increase in the target for combined heat and power to 5,000 MW. That is a substantial increase. It may not be quite as much as the Combined Heat and Power Association would have liked, but it is a substantial move in that direction.

Earlier this year, we discussed widely our carbon dioxide programme. The issues that were discussed included the types of measures that the Government should take as part of the programme, and the role of other organisations and groups outside Government. Our view has been that an effective and efficient national carbon dioxide programme requires a partnership approach. We believe that our role is to provide the right fiscal, regulatory and financial framework for our programme to tackle carbon dioxide and to help to disseminate advice and information on the many actions that can be taken to achieve savings.

Decision makers in business and each and every one of us in our own homes throughout the country can take the action that will lead to lower emissions. We are looking to business groups, trade associations and voluntary and consumer groups to act as channels of information and encouragement.

Several measures have already been announced. They include those announced in the March Budget to increase the price of energy in domestic transport sectors, which I have already discussed, the establishment of the Energy Saving Trust to provide financial incentives to energy efficiency, and an increase in the objective for renewable energy. Taken together, those measures are expected to stimulate savings amounting to two thirds of our national target.

Last week my hon. Friend the Minister for Energy announced his proposals for further renewable energy orders under the non-fossil fuel obligation in pursuit of the new objective for renewable energy. Today my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment announced a trial of local energy advice centres being conducted by the Energy Saving Trust, with finance from the Energy Efficiency Office—again, a measure that I hope will be welcomed by the hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North and other hon. Members who are keen for energy efficiency to be promoted.

We have considered what additional measures should be taken to complete the programme. We have concluded that we should take further action to help business to make energy savings, so we shall strengthen the Energy Efficiency Office's programme of advice and information aimed at business, and we will discuss with business groups how to obtain the maximum response. Significant additional savings can be achieved in that sector. We recognise that public bodies should provide a lead, so we will be setting further targets for the Governments estate —that is, buildings in our control—which should take energy used by central Government down to well below 80 per cent. of 1990 levels by the year 2000, and looking to other public sector bodies to adopt similarly stringent targets.

We will also continue to provide information and encouragement to households to use energy efficiently, and we will increase the resources devoted to that, working with the Energy Saving Trust to reinforce the impact of the trust.

Concern has been expressed about the prospect of increasing transport emissions. We believe that it is reasonable to work towards further savings by the year 2000 over and above that which is expected to be saved as a result of the fuel duty increases that were announced in the March Budget. We also take the view that energy should be produced and delivered in a way that keeps carbon dioxide emissions at the lowest cost-effective level, consistent with our other environmental goals. That is primarily the responsibility of the energy industries. We will be working towards the achievement of 5,000 MW of combined heat and power capacity by the year 2000—an increase of 1,000 MW on our previous target.

The framework of our carbon dioxide programme is now in place. Many organisations have indicated their willingness to participate in the programme. We are substantially ahead of our international partners in meeting our programme for carbon dioxide emissions, and we look forward to their joining us so that, together, the international community can meet its obligations.

I hope that the hon. Member for Ceredigion and Pembroke, North will consider the measures that we have already had in place for some time. For instance, I refer to the £60 million that we have been investing in the greenhouse demonstration programme; the best practice programme of the Energy Efficiency Office, which has been going on for many years; the home energy efficiency scheme, to which the hon. Gentleman rightly paid tribute, and which provides grants to help to provide basic insulation measures and advice to low-income households; the promotion of the take-up of home energy labelling; our consultations on proposals to strengthen provisions in

[Mr. Baldry]

the building regulations which set standards for the insulation of dwellings; and the setting up of the Energy Saving Trust, in partnership with British Gas and other energy providers to develop programmes designed to promote the efficient use of energy.

I hope that the House will accept that those measures, taken together, represent a comprehensive programme to promote energy efficiency in a manner that ensures that we can meet our international obligations and, at the same time, ensures our competitiveness.

Support Helicopters

2.50 am

Mr. Peter Griffiths (Portsmouth, North): I welcome the opportunity to initiate an Adjournment debate on the further development of the programme for providing efficient, up-to-date helicopters for our armed forces. Many hon. Members believe that they are crucial to the effective defence of our country. The debate refers specifically to support helicopters for the Royal Air Force.

I do not believe that I need to spend too much time arguing that it is necessary for us to provide such helicopters. Every indication suggests that modern warfare is increasingly becoming a matter of quick, positive response. Helicopters are an essential part of that reaction.

Whatever reductions it may be possible to make in our defence budget and that of other nations, there is no evidence that any power, major or minor, has decided that it is possible to reduce the requirement for and dependence on helicopters.

We have had experience of warfare in the south Atlantic and more recent experience in the deserts of Arabia. We pray not, but we could have experience of warfare in the mountains of Bosnia. Those theatres of conflict are immensely different, but it would not be possible for us to maintain our national interests in each one if the helicopter did not act as a main element in our operations.

We can move on from deciding whether we need to increase and develop our helicopter capacity for our armed forces to considering what kind of helicopter is needed for the support role undertaken by the RAF. We need a utility helicopter that is capable of a multiplicity of roles. If possible, we need a helicopter whose design relates closely to those used by other sections of the armed forces. That immediately brings to mind the decision of the Royal Navy to choose the Merlin version of the EH101 helicopter, which is built by Agusta of Italy and Westland of the United Kingdom.

I should declare an interest—and speak with pride—about the fact that my constituency is home to the Westland subsidiary of FPT Ltd. It is at the cutting edge of technology in the use of laminated substances for self-sealing petrol tanks and other containers that need to survive the kind of treatment to which they are subject in war.

The United Kingdom headquarters of IBM is also in my constituency. It is good to see the commercial expertise of that great international company involved in collaboration and co-operation with a British defence manufacturer. I take pride in that, too.

The EH101 is the only truly modern helicopter being developed in Europe which will be available within the period of need to our armed forces. That is why I suggest that the Minister puts it at the top of his procurement list for the RAF. This is not just another helicopter that one could purchase off the shelf anywhere else. It is designed for the needs of today and of tomorrow. It has the potential to meet the needs of our armed forces for many years to come.

I shall not go into the details of the aircraft's technical advantages over its most obvious rivals, but it would be sensible at least to list them for the benefit of those who

examine these matters closely. Apart from its Anglo-Italian design, the EH101 has certain technical advantages over all its competitors.

First, the design of the rotor blades is remarkable. That is the key to the technical efficiency of the helicopter. Nothing else flying either in Europe or America offers the same efficiency.

Secondly, allied to the efficiency of the rotors is the increased capability of the EH101 due to its built-in active control of vibration. Vibration is a major cause of wear in helicopters, leading to problems of maintenance and repair, which are in turn key factors in the immediate availability of an aircraft in wartime. The EH101 can measure and counteract the development of vibration, thanks to its careful original design.

With any aircraft being used intensively in war, there is a need to check on its efficiency and safety, both for the success of an operation and for the safety of the crew. Such monitoring of safety and usage has been applied later to some helicopters, but the EH101 is the first to have had the monitoring system built in from the start. The idea was that this is an essential: it should not be a bolt-on afterthought.

I referred earlier to the different theatres of war in which our forces might be called upon to protect our interests. The EH101 has an enormous advantage over its potential competitors in that it has an all-weather capacity that is unsurpassed—indeed, unequalled—by any similar rotor aircraft. It means that it is an aircraft which can be used in weather in which helicopters would usually be grounded. Such arguments must be taken into account when we make a final decision.

We have a British product which is well ahead of its nearest competitor and which is already likely to be a world beater. When the Royal Navy announced that it would opt for the Merlin version of the EH101, Canada followed and placed an order for the naval version but also ordered some of the utility versions, which we are recommending for the Royal Air Force. It is clear that other countries are watching closely the decision to be taken by the Ministry of Defence. They are looking to see what decision the British take on British products. If we show confidence, the product will be a world beater in not only the military but the commercial sense. It will be something that we can promote with great enthusiasm.

I stress that the EH101 is not an expensive aircraft that we are trying to persuade the Minister to buy; it can be sold on the basis of value for money. If the Royal Air Force follows the Royal Navy and if, at some later stage, the Army also decided on a compatible helicopter to allow for flexible operations and the exchange of aircraft and spares in an emergency, not only would this helicopter remain excellent value, but its unit costs would be reduced. If the EH101 were the helicopter chosen across the armed forces, we would be getting an extremely good bargain. That should surely be kept in mind in the present economic circumstances.

I have sought to establish that we need a decision that the EH101 is the prime choice. The final question is, when should an order be placed? The answer is tonight. A decision should be taken here and now. We need a commitment that the EH101 is the Government's choice. We need the decision to be taken quickly so that it is possible to continue the development of this fine aircraft and move on rapidly to its production. We need immediate confirmation, which will itself convince potential customers that they can place their confidence where we have placed ours.

We must express our confidence in the EH101 project. A great deal of money has already been spent on it. It is not an untried proposal but an aircraft available as the basic helicopter for our armed forces well into the next century. It is the ideal choice as a support helicopter for the Royal Air Force.

3.3 am

Mr. Michael Colvin (Romsey and Waterside): Even at this very late hour, I am pleased to take part in this important debate on support helicopters for the Royal Air Force.

I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, North (Mr. Griffiths) on initiating the debate and on the way in which he set out the arguments for the EH101 utility helicopter to fulfil our defence forces' requirements for support helicopters.

I thank other hon. Members, especially Conservative Members, who signed the motion and therefore enabled this debate to be extended to three hours.

I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Stroud (Mr. Knapman) on his long-standing interest in the project. He has many potential subcontractors for the EH101 project in his constituency and he would have welcomed the opportunity to be here to participate in the debate, but unfortunately he has to visit the glorious Gloucester Regiment, which faces amalgamation. I believe that he must be there in time for reveille, so he is unable to be with us.

I should like to congratulate the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown), whose constituency is the home of Westland, on supporting the EH101 project throughout. The saying that a politician's mind is conditioned by the state of his seat certainly applies to the right hon. Gentleman, but I have some difficulty in reconciling his support for the project with his views on the social chapter and his party's views on defence expenditure.

I put that point to him during our debate last Friday afternoon, but I was not satisfied with his response. He could not say which would cause the most damage to Westland's workers: the social chapter, with the additional burdens that it would impose on Westland as employers —Westland is very much against the social chapter—or the 50 per cent. cut in defence expenditure that his party advocates. He did not say, and probably could not say, what the answer to those questions was.

Sir Jim Spicer (Dorset, West): He is not here now.

Mr. Colvin: As my hon. Friend says, he is not here to answer, so we will continue to put such questions to him.

I have forgotten how many speeches I have made on defence matters, but in each I have made a plea for more helicopters. In April 1987, I thought that at last the Government had got the message, when the then Secretary of State announced that the Government would order 25 utility EH101 helicopters. We all cheered, but we are still awaiting confirmation of the order.

I note that the full title of today's debate is "Support helicopters for the Royal Air Force". I cannot boast a great constituency interest in the manufacture of the EH101, although I dare say that few constituencies do not have some aerospace content, but the Army Air Corps is

[Mr. Colvin]

just up the road from my constituency and down the road from my home. I am well aware that it would dearly like to be flying support helicopters for the Army. That, in a sense, is another debate, and I do not think that we want today's debate to be side tracked into a discussion about who should fly support helicopters. Let us just accept that our armed forces need them and, for the sake of the debate, that the RAF will be providing the pilots and the air crews.

Each time I have made my plea for more support helicopters the circumstances have changed and the need has become more urgent. We saw the collapse of the Warsaw pact in 1989, and the so-called new world order, which has developed into new world disorder. We saw the peace dividend lead to the previous Secretary of State's introduction of "Options for Change". We saw the creation of new military structures—smaller but better is the new basis for our armed forces.

We are seeing a far greater role for United Nations operations, following the Secretary-General's paper "The Agenda for Peace" with more peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building operations. There are 17 United Nations operations around the world, and 25 potential flashpoints where hostilities could break out at any moment where our troops may need to be deployed.

As a permanent member of the Security Council, the United Kingdom should be ready to participate where Britain's national interest is identified—anywhere in the world. In the new NATO structure, in which we are privileged to lead the rapid reaction corps, we have an important role to play. Under the new-look NATO structure, a British-dominated rapid reaction corps totalling between 70,000 and 100,000 men will train for quick deployment. That means having an air mobile division made up of British, German, Belgian and Dutch units, and a southern region division, probably under Italian leadership.

We must have the equipment to meet our new role, and our new obligations worldwide, and that means greater flexibility for our armed forces, and far greater mobility —two important principles of war. My right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State, in his introduction to the recently published White Paper on the defence estimates for 1993, said:

"improvements to our amphibious capability and the Army's anti-armour capability, and further investment in transport aircraft and support helicopters"

were proposed. He at least has at last got the message.

There is no doubt that, in trying to meet our obligations in providing peacekeeping and intervention forces, the United Kingdom is not adequately equipped. The fourth report of the Select Committee on Defence for this Session homes in on the problem of mobility and helicopters. It draws attention to the fact that a number of capabilities have been prioritised in the focus on intervention forces, the principal ones being helicopters, which are playing an increasingly important role in support and combat.

Our report goes on:

"A number of important choices remain to be made, notably on the choice of a support helicopter to replace the present fleet of ageing Wessex helicopters, and to complement the heavily stretched Pumas and Chinooks."

It draws attention to the fact that the RAF operates a fleet of 140 aircraft in all—Chinooks, Pumas and Wessex support helicopters. It concludes:

"It is, however, doubtful whether MoD has sufficient helicopters to be able to perform the increased role that they envisage, and we are concerned at the apparent prevarication and lack of urgency with which the Minister is addressing this point."

That is the Select Committee's conclusion this year.

We can go back to 1989-90, when it said in its third report:

"MOD's consideration of the requirement for support helicopters, and the way in which such a requirement should be met, stretches back to the mid 1970s and the matter needs urgent resolution."

And so we say again this evening.

Our report concludes:

"We consider that the Ministry must face up to the fact that delay and inaction is becoming costly both in financial and effectiveness terms and that a decision on the way forward must be made immediately."

I do not think that I need to say more, but I shall none the less.

In United Nations operations, especially in Bosnia, there is a great need for support helicopters. The United Kingdom has had to send Sea King helicopters to Bosnia, presumably because we have run out of support helicopters. We have none to spare; they are all far too busy in Northern Ireland, where almost half of all our helicopter hours were flown in 1991-92 in support of our security operations.

No one disputes the case for more helicopters. We could probably manage with fewer tanks, but that is another debate. The question is which helicopter should the Ministry of Defence order. Apparently, we have to consider three options. I wonder whether that is genuine or whether there is really only one that we must consider seriously. Currently, the force consists of 32 Chinooks, 42 Pumas and 64 Wessex, making a total of 138 support helicopters. That includes those undergoing repair, modification or refurbishment.

There is certainly a case for commonality, as my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, North said. However, I should have thought that we could eliminate the Pumas —not because they are French, but because they are a very old design. They do not have the lift capability and they are too small. They carry only 12 men fully equipped; perhaps 16 not fully equipped. They do not have an adequate performance—the range is inadequate and they do not fly fast enough. They are a fair-weather aircraft, and my hon. Friend made the important point that we need a helicopter with all-weather capability.

The performance of the Chinook is not that bad. It certainly has good lift capability, and can carry 42 men in all. It has old technology and is not especially reliable. Indeed, it is notable that Chinooks are no longer used in support operations for North sea oil and gas exploration. It is certainly a costly aircraft—not so much in its unit cost, as Boeing Vertol have cut that to the bone to try to get orders, as in its life cycle costs, on which the MOD now rightly concentrates.

Even having got rid of all the amortisation, it still costs between £2,000 and £3,000 an hour to operate. That compares with £750 an hour for an EH101. It is obvious that the EH101 has a cost advantage. In fact, it only costs —I say "only", but it is still an expensive aircraft—about £12 million. One should also bear in mind the fact that the Chinook is an old design—30 years old—and needs midlife updates, which can be extremely costly. Those costs are presently estimated at between £4 million and £5 million.

We must not forget that all that expenditure occurs in the United States, so we pay for it in dollars and the work goes to American factories and workers. It has been the British Government's policy for many years to try to make the so-called two-way street of reciprocal sales and purchases with our American allies across the Atlantic more evenly balanced. The exchange is still 2:1 in favour of the United States of America, and to order Chinooks for the RAF would only make that two-way street more out of balance than it is already.

We might be able to justify the purchase of some Chinooks as so-called attrition buys to replace those that we have lost for one reason or another. We cannot justify buying a 30-year-old design when a new, modern technology aircraft is available. The RAF would not take that action were it considering the purchase of fixed-wing aircraft, so why does it even consider doing so when considering the purchase of helicopters?

Tonight we are considering the utility version of the EH101—EH stands for European Helicopters, which is a combination of Westland and Agusta. The commonality issue, which has been raised, is valid. The Ministry of Defence has already ordered 44 of the helicopters—the Merlin version—for the Royal Navy. It is important to have commonality with other countries within the rapid reaction corps, which I have mentioned.

The Italians, who belong to that force, are joint manufacturers, with Westland, of the aircraft. The Dutch, who are also in the unit, are keen on the project and have already, as a matter of defence policy, quoted a preference for buying more helicopters and fewer tanks. The all-weather capability is important in relation to the EH101, which does not ice up. That means that the big capability gap in helicopters has at last been closed.

We should not forget that Her Majesty's Government have already spent £1·3 billion on development of the aircraft—the air frames, the avionics and the engines. In all defence procurement it is important to consider the impact on Britain's industrial capability. There is no doubt that the helicopter would bring many jobs for British industry. It is estimated that 3,000 jobs would be created by the order for only 25 of the helicopters over three to four years.

The RTM322 Rolls-Royce engine is made jointly with Turbomeca of France—half the development goes to each country—which may improve the chances of the French looking to the aircraft as a better support helicopter than the Puma, as it has greater capability. That engine is already flying in the fourth preproduction aircraft.

The technological lead has been mentioned, and there is no doubt that the anti-vibration development—the active control structural response—means that the aircraft has great potential for civilian use. Those of us who have travelled in helicopters appreciate that vibration is one of the hazards. Undoubtedly, with a military version, the lack of vibration will have a significant bearing on the length of time that equipment on board lasts.

The sales potential of the EH101 is good. The Canadians have already ordered it for their navy, as well as the utility version. The middle east is certainly a big potential market. Japan is also a potential market. It is estimated that the market for the EH101 is probably about 750 aircraft, so eventually there will be many jobs for British workers if worldwide sales achieve that target. We await the stamp of approval from the British Government for the utility version of the EH101. Surely that will be a great encouragement to other countries to order it.

Paragraph 122 of the defence White Paper, which is the section on the RAF's air transport and support helicopter fleet, says how vital the EH101 is to strategic and tactical mobility. It says that the RAF Chinook helicopters

"are already the subject of a modernisation programme which will extend their lives well into the next century. We have been reassessing our requirement for support helicopters in the light of the changed strategic circumstances. We have concluded that, in view of the need for increased flexibility and mobility in the new operation environment, there is a need to procure additional support helicopters to supplement our existing assets. We are urgently considering how best this significant enhancement to our operational capability can be achieved."

Once more, we say "hear, hear" to that.

Timing is absolutely crucial. The Government cannot prevaricate any longer. We need to confirm the order for 25 EH101s and order a further 25 without delay.

Mr. Bruce George (Walsall, South): The hon. Gentleman knows that I would join him in support if it did not disqualify me from my debate, which is next on the Order Paper. He explained why the Government had been prevaricating. Why has there been such a delay? Is it that the defence procurement budget cannot sustain such an imaginative and long-awaited approach, or is somebody on the military side in the MOD sticking the knife in?

Mr. Colvin: I thank the hon. Gentleman for making that interesting intervention. As far as those who take a special interest in defence matters are concerned, somebody in the Ministry of Defence seems to have it in for the EH101. I will not name names this evening—perhaps another hon. Member will be brave enough to do so. There is no doubt in the minds of those who have investigated the matter that the preference of the Royal Air Force is for the EH101 helicopter, so probably only one person is standing out against it at present. Perhaps if it were someone else in that position, it would be a much easier decision for the Secretary of State to make. I hope that my hon. Friend the Minister will clarify the position.

I hope that this is my last speech on the subject of the EH101 helicopter. I hope that the Minister has received the message loud and clear, and will appreciate that the order for these aircraft is one way to ensure that, in the words of the White Paper, we defend our future.

3.29 am

Sir Jim Spicer (Dorset, West): It must be well over 10 years since my hon. Friend the Member for Romsey and Waterside (Mr. Colvin) and I started to raise the subject of the EH101 in the House. Most Conservative Members have been ardent supporters of the home-grown product, and in that we have had Opposition support.

This is a unique occasion because there are no fewer than six Conservative Members in the Chamber who all have a direct interest in the EH101 and the Westland factory. It is sad that the person with the greatest interest in Westland—for obvious good reasons—is not here to support his constituents. I speak of the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown), the leader of the Liberal Democrat party. Perhaps he has other fish to fry elsewhere. As my hon. Friend the Member for Romsey

[Sir Jim Spicer]

and Waterside said, the right hon. Gentleman has always supported the cause, and perhaps it falls to me to speak on his behalf and on behalf of his constituents.

Westland has about 7,000 workers, and probably well over 1,000 of them live in my constituency. The Lords Commissioner to the Treasury, my hon. Friend the Member for Dorset, North (Mr. Baker), who is in his place on the Front Bench, could probably lay claim to 700 or 800 of those workers. Other hon. Members who are present for the debate represent a substantial number of people who are directly employed by Westland.

However, that is only part of the total number, because all over the country and in—dare I mention it?—Christchurch, hundreds of subcontractors look to Westland for orders and, in particular, to the order for the EH101.

Over the years we have all shared a sense of frustration. I was with the management of Westland in Yeovil on the night that the agreement with the Italian Government was signed. We waited anxiously in case there was any slippage, and we wondered whether our Secretary of State for Defence had signed up and whether anyone would renege. There was a great sense of relief when, as a result of pressure, the agreement was finally signed. The co-operative agreement between us and the Italian Government and Agusta is unique.

As my hon. Friend the Member for Romsey and Waterside has said, there was an agreement in 1987 to purchase the utility version of the EH101. We are not dealing with a public inquiry on the channel tunnel or Twyford down or with a bypass for Dorchester. We expect such inquiries to be long-winded because of the unbelievable democratic process. Public inquiries can go on for ever, but we are not discussing a public inquiry but an internal Ministry of Defence matter. It is almost unbelievable that we and the Westland work force are still waiting some six years later.

I accept that delicate balances sometimes have to be struck. I am reminded of the recent battle between Rosyth and Devonport. My hon. Friend the Minister of State for Defence Procurement, who is to reply to the debate, my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence, and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister had to strike a balance and make a political decision. Day after day, they were bashed and bullied by those on both sides of the argument: the Scottish parliamentary lobby spoke for Rosyth, while the vociferous west country group spoke for Devonport.

There is no such conflict with the EH101. It is a straight choice. The EH101 is first and foremost a British product, built in conjunction with the Italians; it is a modern, well-designed, superlative helicopter that will see us well into the next century. There is nothing wrong with the Chinook, but it is a bit clapped out in terms of design.

I made my last parachute jump from a Dakota. I loved the Dakota—it was a marvellous aircraft—but it was designed in 1937-38, and we were still parachuting from it in 1957-58. That does not detract from it, but when we have the opportunity to buy a really modern helicopter, for God's sake let's get on with it. There is 100 per cent. support for it in the House and the country. If my hon. Friend the Minister told the House, "We have made this political decision", he would have the wholehearted support of hon. Members and the country.

Westland holds a unique place in the affection of our people. I have known and worked with the company for just over 20 years; it must be said that some 20 years ago it was not quite the company that it is today. What has happened to the work force and the factory over the past seven or eight years is almost unique: it is now a lean, fit company, producing a magnificent helicopter. I can only say to my hon. Friend the Minister that, as my hon. Friend the Member for Romsey and Waterside suggested, it is high time we recognised that. By placing this initial order, we could trigger a potential order for 750 aircraft.

There has been some mention of where the opposition to the order lies. I do not know, and I do not much care; what I know is that we cannot pretend for much longer that we have a genuine air-mobile capability if our air-mobile force does not contain enough helicopters to warrant naming a brigade or division as air mobile.

This is not the time to discuss relative helicopter strengths. However, whether we look at the United States, the Germans or the French, we find that every country that has adopted an air-mobile role has provided sufficient helicopters. Only two weeks ago, in the debate on the estimates, I said that it was time for us to face up to the conflict—not that there is a conflict any longer—between the tank and the helicopter. We all know that the number of heavy battle tanks will be reduced dramatically: we must move to an air-mobile role, and we cannot do that without the EH101.

I beg my hon. Friend the Minister to stand up and, diplomatically—as I know he will—make it clear to the isolated pockets in the Ministry of Defence that may oppose the placing of the order that we will not put up with that any longer. It has to be a political decision. It would be welcomed by everyone in the country. The sooner that that decision is made, the better it will be for the work force at Westland and for everyone on this side of the House.

3.39 am

Mr. Mark Robinson (Somerton and Frome): I join in the congratulations given to my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, North (Mr. Griffiths) on his success in securing the debate. I also confess a touch of nostalgia to my hon. Friend the Member for Dorset, West (Sir J. Spicer). I am perhaps a little older than I look, but my first flight was in a Dakota and I have a great affection for that aircraft.

I have sought to catch your eye, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because many of my constituents, like those of my hon. Friend the Member for Dorset, West, work at Westland. They are represented at all levels, from the chief executive, who is my constituent, to the shop floor. My hon. Friend mentioned the social chapter. There is deep anxiety about the effect that the social chapter would have on Westland's costs. It is worth passing that message through to the right hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Ashdown). I concede that he has been a great supporter of the EH101 project, but I hope that he will bear in mind some of the comments that have been made in the House about the social chapter.

The continuing success of Westland group is important to the south-west, which has seen a great contraction in the defence industries. That has served to heighten the impact

of the recession throughout the region. As our armed forces seek to take their support helicopters into the next generation, Westland has produced in conjunction with Agusta the next generation helicopter, which is the only one of its type.

Already the Government have ordered the Merlin variant of the EH101 for the Royal Navy, but there has been overlong delay in implementing the original decision of Lord Younger when he was Secretary of State for Defence in relation to the Royal Air Force.

I should like to dwell on the jobs aspect and the technological advantages of the EH101, which I believe are clear. It has a unique all-weather capability and long-range operational potential, together with innovations to remove vibrations from the cabin. That demonstrates its advance over the present generation and places the aircraft at least seven years ahead of any possible rival. It fits precisely with the requirement of "Options for Change", namely, rapid reaction capability, which is so vital in this era of flexible response.

The EH101 would be an asset in not only military operations but humanitarian exercises, as my hon. Friend the Member for Romsey and Waterside (Mr. Colvin) said. The requirement to take part in humanitarian exercises is increasingly prevalent, as we were reminded by the United Nations Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace". It is perhaps no coincidence that an earlier three-hour debate in the Chamber this evening was about the former Yugoslavia. The Sea King helicopter is playing a significant role in that very operation. If we look to the future, we can see the EH101, with its adaptability, playing an important humanitarian role.

I have no doubt that recent international events have served to highlight the fact that the Government's decision in 1987 to support the EH101 project was correct. The only competition in sight seems to come from overseas, either in a possible lower capacity helicopter, which is only on the drawing board at present, or in old technology aircraft such as Chinook or Puma. Replacements for old technology aircraft will inevitably be sought sooner or later by their producers, but with some considerable delay compared with the availability of the EH101.

In this efficiency-conscious era, it is important to seek commonality across our helicopter fleet, and the EH101 provides an opportunity to do that. With the Royal Navy using anti-submarine warfare, airborne early-warning and commando helicopters; the RAF using support, combat, research and rescue helicopters; and the potential for the Army and the Royal Marines to perform a variety of functions with a support helicopter, standardisation of the United Kingdom defence force fleet would bring obvious and varied advantages.

Cost is an important ingredient. The price for the utility EH101 is more competitive now, bearing in mind the technological advances that it embodies and the reduction in through-life costs that it offers compared with previous generations of helicopters. Also, I understand that Westland has offered to reduce the initial procurement price of both the Merlin and utility variants if the RAF order is placed. I hope that my hon. Friend the Minister will bear that in mind. I thank him for his forbearance in recent weeks. Although I am new to this subject, I cannot help feeling that when my hon. Friend sees me coming down the Corridor, he thinks, "My goodness—here comes another support helicopter."

The EH101 adds up to a convincing case for a British product which will be at the forefront of technology, and which can succeed in the intensely competitive overseas defence market. Success depends on winning overseas orders. The RAF order confirmation would not only add to the Government's seal of approval but would be a welcome fillip to the overseas saleability of both the military and civilian version.

Continuing indecision has made the battle to win orders more difficult than it might otherwise have been. The time must be right to put an end to that uncertainty. The estimated worldwide sales potential for 750 aircraft has a consequential spin-off worth at least £8 billion to this country—apart from orders that could develop in the United States.

Westland has a unique product that can exploit a considerable gap in the world market at a time when other manufacturers are not ready to fill it. The RAF needs support helicopters. When it comes to exports, success at home breeds success abroad. So there is common purpose, and one that will provide much-needed jobs throughout the south-west.

The necessary decision should not be further delayed. It would be welcome in not just Somerton and Frome but Christchurch, where there is a Westland facility that would benefit from the order. I hope that my hon. Friend the Minister will do his best to ensure that a decision is made at the earliest possible opportunity.

3.48 am

Sir Jerry Wiggin (Weston-super-Mare): I thank the large number of my hon. Friends who signed an application to the Speaker for this debate, and I thank in particular my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, North (Mr. Griffiths) who interrupted his holiday plans to introduce this debate on precisely the right note, which was maintained by my other hon. Friends.

We are here to endear ourselves to my hon. Friend the Minister at 10 minutes to four in the morning, and I hope that our diligence will be rewarded. I know that the Minister will not want us to speak for too long, as he has other things to do. It was good of him to come here to answer the debate, which I hope he will find persuasive.

I, as a matter of principle, support the theory that it is not for politicians to support one product or another when it comes to its adoption by the armed forces. However, for various reasons, that has become the practice in recent times, when the items concerned are competing domestically within the United Kingdom for the attention of the procurement division of the Ministry of Defence.

As has already been pointed out, this is not one of those occasions. It is not a question of either Rosyth or Plymouth; it is a question of our helicopter being, without any doubt, the item. There is no technical rival to it in the world. It is clearly a question of money and of subversive pressure being exercised within the Ministry of Defence, which we must ask our Ministers to overcome by the sheer logic of the argument.

For many years there has been a fundamental flaw in the acquisition of support helicopters for the British Army. They have been provided by the Royal Air Force. During the short time that I was in the Ministry of Defence, I sought to make that point. Subsequent to my departure, an inquiry was conducted. I am afraid that the lobbying

[Sir Jerry Wiggin]

and politicking that went on resulted in no change to that basic policy but, as has already been said, this is neither the time of night nor the place to go into that matter.

If we give one service responsibility for another service, inevitably that service will put its own service requirements and its own service priorities before those of the other service. Once again, this has been shown to be the root cause of the difficulty.

Nobody has suggested that the next fighter aircraft for the Royal Air Force should be a 30-year-old design, or that the RAF should consider buying second-hand aeroplanes from the French, so why should the RAF do that when it comes to helicopters? The truth of the matter is that the RAF does not care. The helicopters are not for the RAF; they are for the Army. This is clearly seen to be a matter of prejudice within the RAF. I hope that the Minister will either deny that allegation or deal with it in due time.

I heard a rumour that, despite the obvious decision, the RAF had said, "Let us re-write the specification." After all this time, that is so obviously and clearly a deliberate delaying tactic that I hope it will be seen for what it is.

The cost of the original item is an important issue. No one has suggested that the EH101 is a particularly cheap aircraft but, as has rightly been pointed out, it is a reliable one. Those of us who have used machinery, in whatever way and in whatever form it may have come, know that it is no good having something cheap if it does not work and that it is worth paying for quality, design and a modern device.

The fact that the Royal Navy has already ordered this aircraft, though a slightly different version, leads me to believe that there must be huge cost benefits in getting together with the Royal Navy, in terms of both spare parts and training, but I am far from convinced by what I have heard that these cost benefits are being taken into account, because there is no machinery for so doing. Each service does the costing for its aircraft. That, too, will, I hope, be taken into account. The aircraft's all-weather capacity, for example in respect of the former Yugoslavia, is also important. We have sent troops into the former Yugoslavia and we have apparently had to borrow Royal Navy helicopters because there are simply not enough RAF helicopters. That is an appalling situation.

My hon. Friend the Member for Romsey and Waterside (Mr. Colvin), in an excellent speech in which he covered all the technical points that apply to the argument, said that he had been making speeches about helicopters for many years. I have been doing the same. For year after year, we have pointed out the absolute requirement for more helicopters, and particularly for those of a general purpose and utility nature.

I am sorry that the Liberal Democrats have been unable to field someone to participate in the debate. However, it is acknowledged that there is all-party agreement on the issue in the House. When my hon. Friend returns to the MOD, I hope that he will take a very clear message from this debate. Although I have a Westland plant in my constituency and most of us have some interest in Westland and its sub-contractors, there is a basic defence argument that promotes this helicopter beyond all others. As I said at the beginning of my speech, that must be the parameter on which defence equipment is chosen.

I hope that my hon. Friend the Minister will be able to put down very swiftly the counter-arguments that have been raised for entirely the wrong reasons. I hope that he will acknowledge that this is the best helicopter for the armed forces, that it should be purchased, that that purchase should start forthwith, and that that message should go out to our friends and allies who will also consider purchasing the helicopter when they see the confidence that should so rightly be placed in it by the RAF.

3.56 am

Mr. Eric Martlew (Carlisle): I congratulate the hon. Member for Portsmouth, North (Mr. Griffiths) on securing this debate. He said that it was the Adjournment debate. Unfortunately, it is not. I have the Adjournment debate, which will take place at 8 am. The hon. Gentleman will understand if I am brief.

I have just come from the Tea Room, where we saw one of the famous Westminster mice. However, before that, I smelt a rat. It is a pity that the Liberal Democrats were not here to see it. The hon. Member for Somerton and Frome (Mr. Robinson) pointed out the Christchurch factor. I will be the first person to congratulate the Minister tonight on announcing the order for the 25 EH101s.

Many of us have been involved in politics for a long time. I recall the Labour party once being accused of building the Humber bridge in order to win a by-election. I think that that accusation was made by Conservative Members. I am sure that the Minister is going to announce the project tonight. It is not often that we have such a noble array of knights of the shires on the Conservative Benches at 4 am. They know, and I know, that the Minister has decided that two days before the Christchurch by-election would be a good time to announce the project.

The EH101 is an excellent aircraft which has always been supported by the Labour Benches. It is a pity that it has taken the Government more than six years to confirm that it is to be built. According to my notes, Lord Younger was only Mr. Younger—he had not even received his knighthood—when, in April 1987, he announced his intention to replace the Pumas with 25 utility versions of the EH101 in preference to the Chinooks. He said:

> "The choice will build on the investment that we have already made in the naval version, and reflects our policy on European helicopter collaboration."—[*Official Report*, 9 April 1987; Vol. 114, c. 470.]

That was the position in 1987. It has taken a by-election in Christchurch to announce the project. We are pleased that a sinner repents, and I am sure that that will be welcomed in the west country.

In the spring, I went to the Westland factory at Yeovil. It is an excellent facility. The craftsmanship was fine, the management were fine, and there was great co-operation between the trade unions and the management. I was very disappointed to hear tonight that they were against the social charter. It would not seem to have an effect on such a good employer as Westland. Perhaps that is more to do with politics than with industrial relations.

As hon. Members have said, the situation with regard to support helicopters is desperate. It is not just one person in the Ministry of Defence, even if that person is suspected of being high up in the chain of command. I have talked

to several senior RAF officers over the past 18 months. There is no doubt that they are lukewarm about the helicopter.

The hon. Member for Weston-super-Mare (Sir J. Wiggin) mentioned that the pilots also fly helicopters for the Army. That situation is not satisfactory, and it has to be tackled. That is why we are in such a plight with our helicopters. In the past, the Army wanted more tanks, the RAF wanted more Tornados, and the number of helicopters suffered. Now, in the new ball game, we do not need as many Tornados or tanks, and we do not have any helicopters. That is nonsense. The Conservative Government have been in office for the past 14 years, so they must take the blame for the present situation.

The Minister's announcement will save jobs. I record my disappointment that no Liberal Democrats are present. They are probably in Christchurch gathering votes. The Minister is in the Chamber gathering votes. We will welcome the Minister's announcement. It is a pity it has taken so long.

4.1 am

The Minister of State for Defence Procurement (Mr. Jonathan Aitken): I warmly congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, North (Mr. Griffiths) on his good fortune in securing this debate, which the House and the Government regard as a subject of prime importance. My hon. Friend said that support helicopters are essential to the future of our armed forces. I certainly concur in that judgment.

I recognise that this nocturnal debate, polite and even-tempered though it has been, symbolises the rising political temperature of the subject. I am aware that a large number of hon. Members have signed the motion which led to the debate. I am aware also that, in recent months, many more hon. Members have tabled parliamentary questions, written letters on the subject, and even, as my hon. Friend the Member for Somerton and Frome (Mr. Robinson) said, forcefully buttonholed Ministers in the corridors. My hon. Friend the Member for Dorset, West (Sir J. Spicer) summed up the matter when he eloquently spoke of his feelings of "frustration" at the seemingly endless twists and turns over the long delays that have characterised this matter. I understand his and other hon. Members' strong feelings.

The saga of support helicopters for our armed forces has been Wagnerian in its length and Shakespearean in its complexity. Many of my hon. Friends would like the saga to be brought to a glorious conclusion tonight, with the equivalent of the crashing chords of the entry of the gods into Valhalla or the speech of Henry V at the siege of Harfleur. In commercial terms, that would mean the announcement of an order. Indeed, my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, North said that he was expecting an order tonight.

That phrase seems to have sent the hon. Member for Carlisle (Mr. Martlew) into orbit. In his political excitement, he has smelt a by-election rat. He thinks that it is the Tory card to win the Christchurch by-election. The hon. Gentleman's sense of smell is characteristically misplaced. What we have heard tonight is the familiar sound of the Labour party barking up the wrong tree.

This is a serious and important subject. I understand the impatience that has been expressed by my hon. Friends, and I recognise the formidable political pressure that has been exerted by all parties on this issue. I noted in particular the telling quotations from the Defence Select Committee of which my hon. Friend the Member for Romsey and Waterside (Mr. Colvin) reminded the House.

As my hon. Friend the Member for Weston-super-Mare (Sir J. Wiggin), a former Defence Minister, reminded us, this is, above all, a defence issue. Such issues are always subject to careful consideration and deliberation. I am sorry to say that tonight I will not announce an order for helicopters, but I will signpost the way ahead and give my hon. Friends some encouraging and hopeful signs in response to the good points that they have raised.

As my hon. Friends reminded the House, the starting point for the debate was the announcement in 1987 by the then Secretary of State for Defence, my noble Friend Lord Younger. He declared that the Government had an intention to place an order for 25 utility EH101 support helicopters. He made it clear, however, that that was subject to the resolution of contractual and other issues.

Since 1987, we have witnessed dramatic changes in the strategic environment. The Warsaw pact has collapsed and the former Soviet Union now belongs to the history books. We have made great progress in establishing mutual trust between ourselves and our former adversaries.

At the same time, the release of tensions previously restrained under the old cold war structures has made the world, in some respects, a less stable and less certain place. We must now look beyond the possibility of a static conflict in the central region.

We now require a much more flexible approach. That word was used in many speeches tonight and I accept its importance in relation to support helicopters. The linear battlefield has become a thing of the past, and we must look towards equipping our armed forces so that they are adaptable and mobile.

Against that background of change, it was only right that we should reassess our requirement for support helicopters—just as we have had to reassess our requirements for all aspects of our defence capability. "Options for Change" remains the foundation for such assessments, but, as my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence made clear in the 1993 defence White Paper "Defending our Future", it is important that we retain the ability to respond and adapt to a fluid strategic situation. Accordingly, my right hon. and learned Friend announced in "Defending our Future" that we plan to introduce a number of additional support helicopters to our existing fleet.

A great deal of work has been necessary to establish the new requirement for support helicopters. We have in particular been looking at the nature of the tasks that our future support helicopter fleet is likely to perform. I am conscious that this process has taken some time. Some of my hon. Friends would say that it has taken too much time. I am pleased to say, however, that we have now completed our reconsideration of the requirement. We are now addressing the next step—the procurement strategy.

The main conclusion is to confirm that our current support helicopter fleet is not large enough to carry out the tasks that will be assigned to it under the concepts of operations which are being developed to meet the defence roles of our forces. The Army's new role in the Allied Command Europe rapid reaction corps is just one of the developments which has led to an increased demand for support helicopter capability. My hon. Friend the Member for Romsey and Waterside was right to draw attention to

[Mr. Jonathan Aitken]

that dimension of the argument. We have therefore assigned support helicopters a high priority within the overall defence programme, and we have made substantial financial provision within the forward programme for the procurement of additional helicopters.

My hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, North referred to the fact that this is the age of peacekeeping. The field Army's requirement in this new age insists on greater mobility and flexibility. The requirement for support helicopters can be broadly broken down into two areas. First, we must look towards meeting the requirement for more helicopters to support field Army, providing it with the increased flexibilty and mobility that it now requires. Secondly, we need to address the problems posed by the limited performance and capabilities of our existing Wessex fleet.

I will not go into detail here about the options for the Wessex. It would be helpful for the House, however, if I set out the considerations facing the military strategist and planner in the new strategic environment of the last decade of the 20th century and beyond.

First, there is likely to be a requirement to project force over greater ranges. Ranges between points of disembarkation and the forward operational area may be considerable, and sometimes much more demanding than previous central region logistic requirements. For example, during the Gulf conflict, the distance from Al Jubayl to the field force maintenance area in Saudi Arabia was 300 km, with the tactical assembly areas a further 150 km beyond. Or, as another up-to-date peacekeeping example, it is a day's journey by road or track from Split harbour and airport to the base of the British UNPROFOR battalion in Bosnia, but only one hour by helicopter.

Secondly, Army operations may be conducted in areas with a much less developed communications infrastructure than was the case in the central region. Thirdly, operations on a more fluid and less dense battlefield will require greater support helicopter mobility and reach.

A more capable and versatile support helicopter force is therefore needed for military activities across the spectrum of conflict, which may range from peacetime support operations to major ACE rapid reaction corps deployments and high-intensity operations.

A support helicopter may seem a fairly straightforward piece of equipment at first sight, but the view of support helicopters as the airborne dumper truck of the battlefield is an over-simplistic one. There are, in fact, a great many operational, technical and contractual matters that have to be resolved in order to get the right kit into the hands of our forces. Needless to say, this has to be done in a way that achieves best value for money—not only for the taxpayer, but also for the forces themselves, so that they derive the maximum capability from what is inevitably a finite defence budget.

Because these calculations are so important, we must be sure that we get them right. With the best will in the world, this takes time. It may therefore help the House if I give an insight into some of the factors that we have to take into account.

Mr. Martlew *indicated dissent.*

Mr. Aitken: The hon. Member for Carlisle shakes his head, as though these things did not matter, but they are serious, and I am sorry that he is not interested in them.

Mr. Martlew: The Government have had since 1987 to make these calculations, yet the Minister comes here to tell us of more delay.

Mr. Aitken: The hon. Gentleman is still excited about the Christchurch by-election. Like Harold Wilson, he is a man whose vision is limited to tomorrow's headlines. I am trying, at this thoughtful nocturnal hour, to take the House into the Government's confidence and to outline the factors involved in reaching the decision to which all thoughtful people want to move quickly—but it must be the right one.

First, there is the straightforward question of lift. There are some loads that, either for physical or operational reasons, cannot be broken down beyond a certain size. Indeed, some, such as artillery pieces or Land Rovers, are so large that they have to be carried as underslung loads. We thus have an unavoidable requirement for a certain minimum number of very large helicopters—I shall return later to the way in which our present fleet meets this requirement. But most of our loads are divisible and are thus liftable by a number of different helicopter types.

At first sight, one might be led intuitively to suppose that the most economical way of carrying this balance would be with a smaller number of larger aircraft, much as it is cheaper and quicker to move house with a single large removal lorry rather than with innumerable car loads. If lift were the only concern, this analogy might have some validity. But for support helicopters, there are other considerations: flexibility, survivability, maintainability and through-life costs. Flexibility, for example, is of particular concern. This is achieved largely through having a greater number of helicopters. It may in some circumstances be operationally advantageous to have a larger number of smaller helicopters, even where that results in lower overhaul lift for a given investment. Needless to say, this greater number of smaller helicopters would be an economic proposition only if the smaller helicopter were significantly cheaper than the larger helicopter.

We also have to consider the configuration of the helicopter itself. The ability to carry underslung loads is significant, although it is preferable from the point of view of agility and vulnerability to carry loads inside wherever possible. The capacity to carry fully-laden troops and bulky internal loads is important, as is the ability to load them on and off quickly. For this, a rear ramp is essential. That is one advantage of the EH101. Another factor is the aim of not having too many eggs in one basket. A balance has to be struck between the attraction of retaining operational coherence with large loads and the operational consequences of losing such a load.

The survivability of the helicopter depends on three factors: first, the ability to fly with sufficient agility close to the ground to avoid being seen; secondly, the size of target that is presented, both in conventional and radar and infra-red terms; and, thirdly, the ability to withstand a hit through, for example, the duplication of certain essential flight systems. Clearly, most of those factors are influenced by size, although others could be expected to feature more strongly in a modern design.

Reliability is another important factor in operational and financial terms. The consequence of breakdowns during operations is self-evident, especially in the later phases of a prolonged battle. Reliability also influences the number of aircraft needed to maintain a given establishment in peacetime. The more reliable a particular type, the fewer helicopters we have to buy to maintain a particular establishment size.

The final factor is ease of maintenance and low through-life costs. We see great attractions in the latest form of health and usage monitoring system, known as HUMS. HUMS monitors wear and tear on a continuous basis, thus enabling just the right amount of work to be done at precisely the right time. When taken with the ease of access and the maintainability of modern designs, it clearly contains the cost and deployment of spares and support staff.

I hope that I have given the House a flavour of the complex analysis which has to be undertaken to find the best way forward. Some of the debate has centred around the two main contenders, the Chinook and the utility EH101. I heard what my hon. Friend the Member for Romsey and Waterside said. It is a difficult comparison as, to some extent, the Chinook and the utility EH101 are like apples and pears. They are two very different aircraft, with very different virtues.

The Chinook clearly has the larger lift capability and there are therefore some tasks that only the Chinook is capable of performing. Our Chinooks have given excellent service, and the fleet is now undergoing a mid-life update which will increase its viability and extend its life. We expect to gain many more years of service from this helicopter. However, the Chinook will never match every feature of a newer generation helicopter such as the EH101.

So far, my Department has invested about £1·4 billion in the development of the EH101. It is primarily in support of our procurement of the Merlin anti-submarine warfare variant, but it included the airframe which is, of course, the essence of the utility version.

We are well pleased with the progress of the Merlin and we have no doubt that the utility version will be a thoroughly reliable modern helicopter, possessing all the features that one would expect of its generation.

Several of my hon. Friends, especially my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth, North, mentioned the fine technical qualities of the EH101, such as its vibration control, the advanced design of its rotor blades and its unsurpassed all-weather capacity. They and a number of advantages that have been so well championed by its manufacturers, Westland, will of course be taken into account, as will the industrial factors of which some of my hon. Friends spoke so eloquently. We shall also bear in mind the comment made by my hon. Friend the Member for Dorset, North to the effect that Westland held a unique place in the affections of his constitutents and many others across the country.

One or two of my hon. Friends mentioned the export potential of the EH101. My hon. Friend the Member for Somerton and Frome spoke of an £8 billion export potential. I assure my hon. Friends that I am very conscious of the EH101's considerable potential in that respect, and I congratulate Westland on its success last year in winning an order for 50 EH101s from the Canadian Government. My Department, and specifically the Defence Export Services Organisation, will continue to give the company every support in pursuing other export prospects.

There is currently an export prospect in Holland. I have had constructive and comprehensive discussions with my Dutch counterpart, and the two Ministries of Defence have exchanged detailed information about their requirements. At a recent meeting, I took my Dutch counterpart through our thinking in some detail. Hon. Members will appreciate that those discussions on a Government-to-Government basis must remain confidential, but I can assure my hon. Friends that we have done our best to be helpful in this and all other export cases.

I have tried to summarise the wide panorama of points and interests that this helicopter decision encompasses. I hope that I have fairly summarised the nature of the decisions that we face. There is no doubt that we have a requirement for additional medium support helicopters. The characteristics that we seek are varied, reflecting the range of operational scenarios that we now face. The world is certainly a different place from the days of 1987. We need the flexibility, familiarity and dependability of a proven aircraft and the benefits of reliability and survivability that are promised by a modern design. We need lift capability and agility.

Mr. Colvin: Will my hon. Friend deal with the point that was made by my hon. Friend the Member for Weston-super-Mare (Sir J. Wiggin) on the specification of the EH101? My right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State confirmed before the Select Committee that the EH101 meets the Ministry of Defence's required specification. Will the Minister confirm that that is so?

Mr. Aitken: I can confirm that. As my right hon. and learned Friend said, we have looked at this very carefully, and the EH101 meets the specifications that we have laid down.

Although the specifications of the Chinook and of the EH101 are fine, there is no perfect solution to the catalogue of requirements that I have outlined. There would seem to be clear operational support attractions in a mixed fleet solution as well as the industrial advantages to which many hon. Members have drawn attention, but the prices quoted by the manufacturers will be crucial to our choice. I cannot stress this latter point too strongly. I was very pleased that my hon. Friend the Member for Somerton and Frome mentioned it in a passage of some eloquence. Overall value for money is the key. I shall certainly be delighted to see him coming down the corridor if he brings me further news of price reductions from any manufacturer.

Sir Jim Spicer: My hon. Friend is quite right to say that there must be value for money, but one manufacturer has been producing helicopters for the past 30 years and is determined to dominate the world market. It might be prepared to enter into unfair competition with the aim of destroying the opponent's capability of breaking into its potential market. Surely there comes a point when price ceases to be a factor, and we have to bear in mind the national interest.

Mr. Aitken: Of course we bear in mind the national interest, and, although my hon. Friend is right to signal some anxiety on this point, we in the Ministry of Defence were not born yesterday. Any manufacturing company

[Mr. Aitken]

whose product has had a long run could, towards the end of the run, offer a much cheaper price—my hon. Friend calls it an unfair price, but it would be a much cheaper price—compared with a company that is bringing on the newest technology just after development. As I tried to say earlier, not just in product but in price one would to some extent be comparing apples and pears. I did not use the phrase "financial price" so much as "value for money", which is the key calculation. I was simply stressing that, in the final judgment, overall value for money is the key to procurement decisions.

We are now in the last stages of our studies and deliberations. My hon. Friend the Member for Weston-super-Mare spoke with all his experience as a former Defence Minister of delaying tactics by service interests. I assure him that Ministers have gripped the issue firmly and are determined to move forward speedily. We are well aware of the urgency of the matter and of the urgency of our forces' requirements. We are also aware of the industrial case, which has been made so well tonight.

I am sorry to disappoint my hon. Friends and the hon. Member for Carlisle by not being able to make an announcement on the way forward before the recess. I assure the House that we hope to make a further announcement soon.

Private Security Industry

4.24 am

Mr. Bruce George (Walsall, South): I had thought of apologising to the Minister for detaining him at this late hour, but, on mature reflection, I concluded that his colleagues and predecessors at the Home Office had been detaining me since 1977 over the introduction of a regulatory or licensing system for the private security industry. Therefore, I feel slighly less guilty about keeping him up late, or dragging him in early.

I presume that my speech will be as unsuccessful as the speeches made by hon. Members on both sides of the House in the last debate. They have been campaigning for five or six years so they have some time to catch up with my abortive campaign. My speech will not be one, as might have been anticipated, bashing Group 4 Total Security; nor shall I be nasty to the Home Secretary. Others have done that far more successfully than I have over the past couple of days, so I shall not add to his misery.

My interest in controlling the private security industry goes back to the 1970s. The first Member of Parliament who, to my knowledge, raised the issue of control and licensing of the private security industry was the right hon. Member for Sutton Coldfield (Sir N. Fowler). I see from "*The Times* Guide to the House of Commons" that the Minister who is to reply was his Parliamentary Private Secretary some time ago. The right hon. Gentleman, now the chairman of the Conservative party, has continued his interest in the private security industry as a non-executive director of Group 4, an interest which is well known and clearly declared. His interest was sustained, but not in seeking legislative change.

I recall, when I started my campaign in 1977, a senior figure in the industry, having seen parliamentarians displaying but not always sustaining an interest in licensing, asked me whether I was a "flash in the pan". A decade and a half later, I am still plugging away, still facing this impenetrable wall of bureaucratic and political inertia in the Home Office. One day, maybe that will change.

I have a non-pecuniary interest to declare. I am a patron of the Institute of Security Management. Other people in another place have campaigned for many years alongside me. Regrettably, two of those stalwarts have died—Baroness Phillips and Lord Ted Willis. I pay tribute to what they did.

Who is opposed to the eminently sensible and logical plan to regulate the private security industry, an increasingly important industry? Many other countries have concluded that one cannot allow a free market to develop without some regulation. The Home Office is opposed to such plans. Some big captains of the private security industry are opposed, and some of the criminal classes are opposed because it would make it more difficult for them to find lucrative employment in an industry that is open to entry by them.

The Home Office is opposed because, basically, it is anti-regulatory and there is a profound philosophical indifference to my argument for a licensing authority. However, many countries deeply committed to the free enterprise ethic do not see regulation of the private security industry as inimical to the free market. One would not call the United States a bastion of socialism, but most of its states have some form of regulatory system.

A recent report prepared by the Dutch Ministry of Justice on the European private security industry has been used by European employers and Euro-Fiet, a federation of European trade unionists, as a basis for discussion on the licensing and regulation of the private security industry across Europe. The report concludes:

"Britain is the only country (of the 18 countries surveyed) without any legislation. . . . In most European countries there is some form of legislation. . . . A notable exception is Great Britain. In all European countries except Britain authorization requirements and operating conditions are imposed."

But not, I emphasise, in this country.

The Government's philosophy of antipathy to licensing is well known beyond the private security inidustry. Their antipathy to regulation of the industry is clearly expressed in a recently published, but not widely distributed, report entitled "The private security inidustry: background paper." Paragraph 25 says:

"Market forces . . . operate. Inevitably, users of the industry get what they pay for . . . The Government would not wish to intervene in a way which relieved users of security companies of their responsibilities for setting and monitoring effective contracts with these companies. It is ultimately for users to ensure that the company they choose is competent and reliable, and to include strict requirements for employee vetting, training, supervision and performance in their contracts."

It is wrong to argue that the people hiring the private security firm would be familiar with the organisations set up by the industry, that they would know the performance of the companies that were members of those associations, or that they would be familiar with the Manned Services Inspectorate. If they wished to purchase a security system —I am having one installed in four hours' time, which is not the reason for the debate but is an indication of its topicality for the George household—they would be unlikely to be familiar with the term NACOSS—the National Approval Council for Security Systems—which is the supervisory association for security systems.

To impose on potential hirers of security companies the obligations to be knowledgeable about the technical intricacies as well as performance and competence is asking a great deal. Taxi drivers have to prove competence and honesty; surely the same should apply to personnel who will guard property and lives. It is wrong to rely on market forces and knowledge of the free market.

The industry has grown in leaps and bounds. We can trace its private detective origins to the mid-19th century. Locksmiths go back many centuries before that. Guarding —which is what I am largely, although not exclusively, talking about tonight—goes back to the early 16th century when men were first paid by private individuals to guard private property. There was the Watch, which was made up of men working on a rota basis. Later, people who were part of the rota appointed substitutes to work on their behalf—generally speaking they were the unemployable. The author Henry Fielding said of the watches, which were disparagingly called "Charlies":

"They are chosen out of those poor, decrepit people who are from their want of bodily strength rendered incapable of getting a living by work."

The bad odour that surrounds the private security industry is not a phenomenon of the late 20th century. The impetus for reform came from the City of London. I accuse the Government of turning back the clock on policing by almost a century and a half.

In the pre-policing era, if one wished for security and the protection of life and property, one had to rely on one's own endeavours. The municipality employed guards, but they were generally pretty ineffective; banks hired their own guards for the transportation of money; people who lived in private homes or groups of homes hired private watchmen. All these measures were rendered superfluous and marginal by the establishment of the modern police force.

When society and the state assumed responsibility for policing, the private sector atrophied. Now, regrettably, the public cannot find the remotest guarantee of protection of life and property from the police force, because its numbers have not grown commensurate with the growth in crime. The inevitable consequence is the increased use of the private security industry, which now operates in areas that were hitherto the responsibility of the police.

Private individuals hire companies to install burglar alarms. Hospitals, and even schools, employ their own security guards. There is an enormous growth in security for the home, for factories and for shopping malls. Only last weekend I heard of a private security firm in Solihull called Rentacop. It patrols a private estate and proudly boasts that its security operation will relieve the police of the great responsibility of patrolling that housing estate.

The area from which my parents come in south Wales provides a further example of how the public are frightened, not by the perception of crime, but by the reality of crime. Residents in the district have set up more than a neighbourhood watch; there is a rota system in which two people patrol throughout the night, with a third person manning a telephone. There has been a levy on householders to raise money to buy a mobile telephone. That measure has had the support of the police.

In south Wales, there has also been a growth in aggressive vigilantism, which has led, in one case, to loss of life. We have seen the emergence of hell's angels and the terrifying evolution of self-help security in the era of do-it-yourself policing. I do not regard that as a model of security to which we should aspire. I would be terrified at the thought of the privatised security industry de facto, and eventually perhaps de jure, operating alongside the police—with the police responding to major crimes and the private security industry increasingly taking on tasks that were previously carried out by the police.

The Government have deliberately encouraged the growth of the private security industry. The Government have also encouraged the private sector to take on responsibility in prisons and for the guarding of immigrants. Before the Minister says it, I know that that policy started in, I think, 1978. The Criminal Justice Act 1991 contained further inanities such as the privatisation of prison escorts and court security. The private industry is lapping up those developments.

The private security industry has been enormously advantaged by the Government's inability to control crime —it is the principal beneficiary of that failure. I shall not dwell too long on criminal statistics, which are published annually, but the latest report for 1991 said that there had been an annual increase of 6 per cent. in the number of notifiable offences recorded by the police between 1981-91. For crimes of violence against the person, there was an annual increase of 7 per cent.; robbery, 8 per cent.; burglary, 5 per cent.; criminal damage, 8 per cent.; and other offences, 10 per cent.

We are all aware of the percentages of crimes that take place as opposed to those that are recorded. The latest

[Mr. Bruce George]

report "Criminal Statistics England and Wales 1991" Command 2134 published by the Home Office shows that recorded burglaries rose by more than 20 per cent. It says:

"Robberies rose at a faster rate than all other main offence groups in 1991 with a 25 per cent. increase."

The staggering increase in crime has led people who are unable to rely on the police, as they did in the past, to fall into the willing hands of the private security industry. The industry is adaptable. It sees a commercial imperative and seizes further opportunities. A further reason for growth in the private security industry is not simply the increase in the crimes but the new crimes that are coming into existence. That has led to the industry prospering.

I am not opposed to the private security industry. There are those who see me as an enemy of the industry. It is quite the reverse. I recall giving written evidence to the Home Secretary, Lord Whitelaw, in 1979. In the foreword to my report, I said:

"The industry is important and will develop further in the public interest as well as the interest of the companies, their employees and the consumers of security services only if the parameters of their activities are set by Government, minimum standards are laid down and entry is controlled. I pay tribute to those thousands of competent, trained, honest and dedicated people who man many security operations. They face a danger often more serious than that faced by the police. Armed criminals increasingly have, as their targets, armoured vehicles. Lives have been lost and individuals injured, even maimed, and all this for a miserable wage."

I deny that my solution is other than in the interests of the private security industry. If the industry is prepared to press for regulation, eventually the Home Office may relent.

We are talking about an enormous industry. It is much larger than the police, if one takes it in its broadest sense. It has a turnover of £2 billion per year—one report suggests six billion ecu. We are talking about manned security; security guards in armoured vehicles; retail security; designers, installers and maintainers of alarms, locks, safes and security equipment; security consultants; those engaged in security storage; access control; security printing; office security; private investigating; VIP protection and security in places of entertainment. This is an enormous industry and one which will prosper fully only when it is operating within parameters laid down by legislation.

What is wrong with the industry at present? The first problem, but not necessarily the principal problem, is the penetration of the industry by those with serious criminal records. The Home Office dismisses that as alarmism. I recall a programme called "Punters" on BBC radio after the last general election. I thought of writing in and asking, "Could you find out why the Home Office is so hostile to the concept of licensing?" However, I was beaten to it by a guy from the north-east who was angry at how easy it was for him to come out of gaol and find a job in the private security industry. He was advised by a cellmate to join a specific company. It is easy to get into the industry.

Paragraph 55 of the sixth report 1989-90 of the Select Committee on Defence, of which I am a member, says:

"We cannot however overlook the weight of evidence presented to us on the private security industry, which demonstrates its inability to ensure that it does not employ proven criminals or those with criminal intentions."

The chief constable of North Wales, who was at that time chairman of the Association of Chief Police Officers crime committee, briefed the Select Committee on Defence, and in its report the Committee said:

"From this briefing and from information on particular cases which have been supplied to us, it is evident that there is a very serious problem with the calibre of people employed by private security firms, arising in part from the employment of guards with criminal records."

The Minister will be aware of the leaked report from the Association of Chief Police Officers in 1987. It identified from a limited survey 609 firms that had given the police cause for concern. Another report by the association in 1990, prepared at the request of the Home Office, found 168 instances of staff, owners, managers and directors of private security firms being arrested or charged with serious offences. I understand that the police are still looking for a former Securicor employee, Eddie Maher, who hopped it with £1 million. Securicor has put up a reward of £100,000.

Despite all that, the Government deny that there is a problem. I have bulging files on crimes committed by private security guards. Of course, they are in a minority, and it would be wrong for me to castigate a large number of honest people and taint them with criminal intentions. However, that minority is worrying, because it demonstrates that it is painfully easy to enter the private security industry. A recent report published in "Police Review" was prepared by a guy called Graham Birch, who went into the industry to seek to prove the point that he wished to make. He asked:

"How easy is it to be employed as a security guard without any vetting, so gaining access to property to steal, or plant a bomb if so inclined? My research has shown that often it is frighteningly straightforward."

I shall deal for a few moments with the case study of the growth of crime and how it affects the private security industry. Shopping centres are guarded by private security companies, and that phenomenon illustrates the range of crime that such firms have to deal with. They include car park crime, risk of fire—accidental or arson—ram raiding, a crime that is euphemistically called shrinkage, bilking, credit card theft, armed robbery, racial harassment and attacks, terrorism, extortion and kidnapping.

Those crimes are examples of pressures on the private security industry, and I am afraid that in many cases and for a variety of reasons the industry does not measure up to the task. One of the reasons for that is the lack of any obligation on the industry to have a decent training regime. The bigger companies rarely invest more than three days in initial training on the job. How can one expect people to function as effective security officers after such a short period of training? The overwhelming majority of the personnel in the private security industry do not have three days—or even three hours—training.

A recent report shows that we have probably the lowest percentage of trained guards in the European Community. Training schemes in the contract cleaning industry are infinitely better thought out and more comprehensive. The British Institute of Cleaning Science manual shows that the cleaning operator's proficiency certificate is infinitely preferable to anything in the private security industry for the training of personnel. If the security services involved in cleaning can embark on such a path, I only hope that the private security industry will do so.

There have been improvements in, for instance, the City and Guilds and the security industry training organisation.

Last year, I presented a national vocational certificate at Olympia; I believe that the British Standards Institution is doing a great deal of work, as are our universities and colleges. Progress has been made over the past decade, but only for companies that wish to subject themselves and their employees to a training regime.

How often do such schemes involve middle or top management? In a number of American states, unless the principals of a company can prove that they have qualifications in the private security industry, they are not allowed to function. If that happened in this country, most private security companies would be driven out of business.

Criminality and gross inefficiency are two of the problems involved. It is not surprising that inefficiency is rampant: pay is usually very bad. GMB/APEX is one of the unions that have made a great deal of progress. We are talking about good employers who pay a decent wage; but let us envisage a situation in which a good company—company A—puts in a bid for a contract. It pays a decent wage; the personnel are properly supervised; there are proper communications and proper holiday pay. The company takes out a good insurance policy, so that if one of its personnel sets fire to a factory, compensation will be possible. Company B is a cowboy outifit with low wages; the guys must work 70, 80 or 90 hours a week, and receive poor holiday pay, poor supervision, poor uniforms and no insurance.

In many cases, the hirer will opt for the cheapest bid. Almost inevitably, price competition means that quality will suffer: in most cases, good companies cannot compete with the rubbish, and are compelled to lower their standards to stay in business.

Turnover can be 100 per cent. in many companies; hours can be long, because the wages are so abysmal. Performance is often rubbish. The Defence Select Committee inquired into a company which will remain nameless: it was referred to simply as "serial 46". Our report concluded that that company represented one of the most appalling stories that we had heard in the last 10 years. The Committee has mounted four or five inquiries into the private security industry, as it pertains to the Ministry of Defence.

The company had a contract with the MoD's procurement executive in north London. According to the report,

"For a period of over a year, from early 1989, the company received a series of formal warnings, following complaints of 'too high a turnover of staff, not enough staff always provided, staff not always wearing uniform and staff coming on duty without having been through the due processes'.

"To cap this litany, there were on more than one occasion cases of vandalism committed by the guards, including the smashing of windows. The Director of MoD Security unfolded a horrifying tale of inefficiency, idleness and absenteeism. The company was given, in effect three months' notice in November 1989, and this contract was prematurely terminated on 20 February 1990. The firm was not replaced immediately, as there were no available alternatives."

We concluded that the fact that the company's

"security guards should be unable to prevent occasional criminal damage on dispersed civilian sites was understandable, if regrettable. But that they should themselves indulge in an apparent spree of vandalism on a Ministry of Defence site; that it should not even be an isolated occurrence, but one matched by employees of other companies at other MoD sites; and that the MoD should not be able instantly to remove the security guards for lack of a viable alternative beggars belief."

The performance of the industry is often grossly sub-standard. The Government cannot wash their hands of performance and say that it is purely a matter for the market to determine.

I have talked about criminality, poor performance, absence of accountability, low public esteem, which stretches from indifference to amusement, and poor relations with the police. I have not given the argument of private armies because I feel that it is invalid. I do not see Group 4, Securicor or Security Express marching down Whitehall to remove a Government, however attractive that might appear at present. There is not the will and there is not remotely the competence. Besides, a large percentage of such firms are unionised, which would probably have an effect the opposite of that which I have said.

The Government's approach to all the problems has been minimalist. They have been hostile to statutory control, favouring self-regulation, which is so discredited in other sectors of industry and commerce. Self-regulation is an oxymoron. It is merely self-defensive companies banding together to do the least possible to stave off external criticism and Government action.

Up to 1980, the Home Office was indifferent to the private security industry. I managed to squeeze out of the then Home Secretary, Merlyn Rees, a Green Paper on security that turned out to be a hatchet job on my concept of regulation. Since then, there has been collusion between the Home Office and the private sector, particularly the British Security Industry Association Ltd., which has encouraged a seemingly endless system of acronyms. Private security rivals only the Ministry of Defence in the production of acronyms. BSIA established MSI in 1982, then the Inspectorate of the Security Industry a few years later. We had SSI, the Security Systems Inspectorate, in 1987 and NSCIA, the National Supervisory Council for Intruder Alarms, became NACOSS, the National Approval Council for Security Systems. We also saw IPSA establishing the BRSB and the establishment of SITO. To my mind, that amounts to another acronym—SFA.

The Government established a working group to consider ways of improving self-regulation. The committee that they established came up with the predictable and intended result, namely, ways of improving self-regulation. From whatever angle we look at self-regulation, it has been unsuccessful. It is fundamentally flawed. It is an improvement on what happened before, but it is grossly inadequate. The present system excludes many companies and tens of thousands of employees who are not part of any system of self-regulation. The motive force is the interest of the bigger companies and their professional leadership. The Government have admitted that inevitably users of the industry get what they pay for. The Government consider that issues such as training and wages are fundamentally matters for the industry and its customers. That is a fundamentally flawed argument.

The Government's route is not the way forward. It is for the Government to accept their responsibility for establishing the parameters within which the industry operates. I have tried on several occasions to introduce a Private Security (Registration) Bill. I had all-party support. The Bill would establish a regulatory authority and a registration council. The Bill provides for——

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Michael Morris): Order. I have to remind the hon. Gentleman that in an Adjournment debate, the subject to be discussed must not involve legislation except incidentally.

Mr. George: Incidentally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope that the Government will read my Bill and even act upon it.

Sooner rather than later, a concept of statutory regulation and licensing will be accepted. It will come about because more and more companies in the industry will see licensing and statutory control as the way forward to establish their legitimacy and wipe out unfair competition.

Jim Harrower, chairman of Group 4 Securitas, said recently that his company has been arguing for statutory control for 20 years. IPSA, the International Professional Security Association, which is closely linked with the BSIA —the British Security Industry Association Ltd.—in a new regulatory authority, is basically in favour of statutory control. Perhaps the House will take more interest in the private security industry than in the past. Eventually, public opinion will require the industry to be regulated. The creation of the internal market will provide a logic and impetus that will persuade even this Government to accept that they have taken the wrong route. If this Government do not pay heed to the warnings, I hope that the next one will.

5 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Wardle): I congratulate the hon. Member for Walsall, South (Mr. George) on securing this debate. The future of the private security industry is of interest to us all, and I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for raising it. The House will be aware of his long-standing interest in statutory regulation. He is definitely not a flash in the pan, as someone apparently described him.

I do not share the hon. Gentleman's view of self-regulation, nor his analysis of recent developments. Crime has been increasing throughout the western world over the past 40 years. Since 1979, the Government have increased spending on the police by more than 80 per cent. to a figure approaching £6,000 million. There are 16,700 more uniformed police officers, and more uniformed officers being released by the process of civilianisation.

Police priorities remain to protect the public, prevent crime and tackle crime when it occurs. It has never been suggested that the police can handle crime prevention alone. As the hon. Member for Walsall, South knows, the Home Office has a wide range of initiatives. They include crime prevention units, the safer cities programme, 115,000 neighbourhood watch schemes, car crime prevention year, and so on. They all involve co-operative effort between the police, local community groups of all sorts, local authorities and business interests. Crime prevention cannot, as the hon. Gentleman suggested, be left purely to the police—and that has never been the case.

I define a private security company as one that employs staff to protect property or individuals, or that installs systems that do so. The superficial differences between the private security industry and what one might call the public security industry—such as the police and prison service—lie in the method of funding, accountability, the authority given to individuals, and the uniform.

The private sector receives its funds direct from those who want to pay for specific services. The hon. Gentleman would no doubt agree that it is accountable only to those who have paid directly for its services. Its employees do not have powers of arrest and detention such as those held by a police constable. It is an offence to impersonate a police officer. The private security guard, therefore, must wear a uniform that could not be confused with that of a police officer. That important distinction should be made in our deliberations.

I call those differences superficial because they are the surface indication of the substantial differences between the private and public security functions. The police are paid from public funds because they are expected to provide a service to everyone who needs to be protected from crime or public disorder. Police constables are accountable to the law, not to any individual who happens to pay them. Because of that wider accountability, they can be given the authority to interfere with the liberty of other members of the public—and because their uniform is a symbol of that authority, no one else can wear it. The private security industry, therefore, can be clearly distinguished from a public service and it is divided into two main sectors.

First, and most visible, is the manned guarding sector, about which the hon. Gentleman spoke. It consists of security officers who are responsible for guarding individuals, private property and cash in transit. Also included here are the door supervisors employed by night clubs to control admission and maintain order. I shall say more about them later. Then there are the security systems specialists. They install and maintain intruder alarms, security locks and safes and, to a lesser extent, access control and closed circuit television systems. There is a clear need for all these services, and the future of the private security industry is to continue to provide them.

That, of course, is a broad generalisation. It is in the nature of commercial firms to expand and find new markets. The question at issue in considering the future of the private security industry and regulation is how far such an expansion should be allowed to go. Privately guarded vehicles use public streets. Individuals living on public estates may decide that they want protection greater than that which can be provided by the police. Police capacity is stretched and could perhaps be augmented by privately hired security guards. Security systems installed by private firms could be monitored by these firms instead of by the police.

This blurring of boundaries is made even greater by the very welcome emphasis in recent years on the need for closer co-operation between the police and the public in crime prevention, to which I alluded at the beginning of my speech. There has been a tremendous growth in crime prevention activity, through the schemes to which I referred, up and down the country, involving active, public-spirited citizens. The public is becoming increasingly aware that the police cannot fight crime alone, or keep order without substantial co-operation from the general public. That must inevitably raise the question, which the hon. Gentleman touched on several times, whether there is room for any other commercial way of providing still more support for both the police and the public in their efforts to create the kind of society in which we all want to live.

The scope for this kind of expansion has already been recognised in the employment of private security firms under contract to the public sector. Where the full range of

police, or prison, powers and skills is not needed, it is difficult to argue that the private sector should not be involved. That has been recognised in the employment of Group 4 to replace police and prison officers who previously had been used to escort prisoners. It is, however, at an early stage of development. The Government wish to make a full evaluation of its effectiveness and its implications before deciding on other areas in which private sector security may provide a welcome relief to the heavily pressed public sector.

If I may be allowed to dwell for a second on Group 4, about which the hon. Gentleman made some helpful remarks, despite the well-publicised problems—not publicised by the hon. Gentleman—during the early days of the contract, the court escort contract operated by Group 4 in Humberside and the east midlands is providing significant benefits to the criminal justice system in the area. Much has been made of the escapes from custody in the first days of the contract but, given the scale of the task that Group 4 took on, it would have been surprising if there had not been some teething difficulties. They should not be allowed to overshadow the fact that about 2,000 moves of prisoners are carried out successfully each week. Group 4 has been operating for 17 weeks, so we are talking about 34,000 prisoner moves, during which time there were 12 escapes.

The Government were able to offer a contract to Group 4 because it and other firms that tendered for the work were able to show that they maintained adequate standards, both in the employment of their staff and in defining the limits of their activities. That is not true of all security firms, as the hon. Gentleman pointed out. This lack of recognised or common standards is one reason why it may be premature to generalise about the future of the private security industry. This overall description covers organisations as well known and respected as Group 4 and Securicor; smaller, less well-known but equally reliable specialist firms; and individuals who have great personal integrity and years of experience. However, it also takes in groups of people who rather more closely resemble the criminals they purport to oppose and some who are out to make quick money rather than to offer a worthwhile service, as the hon. Gentleman acknowledged.

The wide diversity of the industry is one of the factors that make it difficult to generalise at present about the future role of the industry. Another factor is the extent to which the police service, to which it is most closely compared, is itself in a process of great change. The proposals in the White Paper on police reform are intended to encourage a much closer relationship between what local people want from their police and what they receive.

The White Paper gives chief constables much greater freedom to choose how best to meet the policing needs of the communities that they serve. It envisages stronger police authorities which may themselves have a view of the role of the private sector in their police areas. It would be premature to leap to conclusions now on the future role of the security industry before those critical changes come into effect.

Similarly, the White Paper suggests that both national and local objectives should be set for the police. Those objectives should help the police to prioritise and may encourage them, probably with some reluctance, to drop some tasks that have previously been seen as theirs alone. There may be other opportunities for the private security industry in that regard.

I hope that what I have said so far shows that the Government are not blind to the opportunities for expansion of the private security industry or indifferent to the way in which boundaries between its functions and those of the police and prison service may change in response to changing circumstances. We recognise that the private security industry has a valuable part to play in the overall approach to public safety, but we think that it needs to demonstrate its own strengths and establish its own standards before it can become a strong contender for growth. We are anxious to see it become a more coherent industry of its own volition before we begin to consider seriously the diversion of large sums of public money to procure its services.

That is why we have encouraged and supported the industry's efforts to regulate itself instead of conceding to requests from the hon. Gentleman and others for Government regulation. If all that was in question was the checking of criminal records, that could be achieved, if not immediately at least when the new computerised criminal record system becomes operable next year, but the lack of a criminal record system in itself tells nothing of the industry's own maturity and ability to set standards and to see that they are maintained. We believe that the consistent refusal to accept this as a Government responsibility has been a significant factor in the progress that the industry is now making.

In 1990 the National Approval Council for Security Systems—NACOSS—to which the hon. Gentleman referred, was created. It has since been accredited by the National Accreditation Council for Certification Bodies —the NACCB—as a fit and proper body to certificate firms complying with relevant British standards in the field of intruder alarm installation. In the same year, the Security Industry Training Organisation, SITO, was formed. SITO has since been recognised by the Department of Employment as the central point of reference for training needs throughout the security industry.

In 1992, the Inspectorate of the Security Industry—ISI —was launched. That body was set up jointly by the main trade associations in the security industry. It provides an inspection service for firms in the manned guarding sector and is currently awaiting the outcome of its application for accreditation.

Companies within the industry may therefore apply to these bodies for certification to British standards, and customers should look for companies that comply with recognised standards. National vocational qualifications have been developed by the industry, and their increasing importance to companies as a means of assessing the quality of staff or applicants will also help to raise standards.

I said that I would come back to the subject of door supervisors who are sometimes known euphemistically by other terms. This is an area in which individuals could all too easily abuse the aura of authority which being part of the private security industry can give.

The Government have received representations from 1989 onwards about problems of intimidation and violence caused by door supervisors in certain areas. The suggestion was that these would be mitigated by the introduction of a statutory licensing system involving

[Mr. Charles Wardle]

criminal records checks on those employed as door supervisors. Police reports revealed that some 60 per cent. of force areas had such problems and had set up, or intended to set up, local regulatory schemes in conjunction with local authorities to deal with them.

The police were invited to monitor a representative sample of the local schemes over a year. The schemes mainly operated through conditions attached to the licensing legislation requiring door supervisors to be registered. The registration procedure involved local checking of criminal records. The schemes generally worked well, and I shall discuss them further with representatives of the entertainment industry and the hon. Memberss whom I have arranged to meet later this year, including the hon. Members for Wigan (Mr. Stott) and for Makerfield (Mr. McCartney). That local process matches much more closely than a national one the vision in the White Paper on police reform of local policing being matched to local needs.

In taking the actions that I have outlined, the Government believe that the private security industry has shown itself to be flexible enough to provide answers to demands for improved regulation within a fairly short time scale, and to offer an increasing range of services in both the private and public domains. It is our view that it will increasingly compete for contracts in all aspects of protection of private property and of individuals. Those letting contracts, whether they are chief constables, chief executives or anyone else, will ensure that the companies and their work forces are able to demonstrate the right qualifications, and will set proper standards for job performance. Those who fail to offer quality assurance, or fail to meet the standards in operation, will not be able to compete; hence the advantages of self-regulation.

In that way, we believe that those who are accountable to the public for public safety will increasingly have confidence in the services offered by the private sector. They will be able to make pragmatic decisions about the most effective way of ensuring public safety in situations in which the division between public and private property and interest becomes blurred. They will ensure that the public and the private sector work together at local level to meet local needs to local standards. It is only then that we shall be able to make a true judgment of whether further regulation is really needed.

Coal Industry (Water Supply)

5.16 am

Mr. Bill Etherington (Sunderland, North): When the list of subjects for the debate was published, I thought that I would do what I usually do, and that is begin to make my speech at 8 am, just as the debate is due to end. However, I have been very fortunate, and I am pleased to be able to continue the Adjournment debate that you chaired a week ago, Madam Deputy Speaker, when my hon. Friend and much-cherished neighbour the Member for Sunderland, South (Mr. Mullin) first referred to the possible effect on water supplies in the north-east should the coal mining industry in that area die.

One reason I chose this subject is that, last week, many questions remained unanswered. Although this is a difficult subject for most lay people to get a grip on, Members of Parliament do not have to be experts to have an opinion on most subjects. Our constituents expect us to take notice of expert opinion and try to reach a conclusion on the issue.

Until the late 1950s or early 1960s, my constituency and, indeed, what was the town of Sunderland before it became a city relied for its drinking water almost entirely on bore holes. That was an expensive way of providing water, because it required complex pumping arrangements.

Most hon. Members are aware that, when the Kielder reservoir was mooted in the 1950s, it was to cope with what was expected to be burgeoning demand from the expanding Teeside industrial sector—an expansion which, sadly, never came about. The Kielder was far too large for the needs of the area. When the Kielder reservoir was built, the system supplying the north-east was by means of a pipeline to the River Tyne, the River Wear and the River Tees. The pipeline intersected the three rivers between 25 and 30 miles from the coast. From that time on, bore holes in and around Sunderland were gradually closed, and more and more water was taken by abstraction from the River Wear. My constituency now relies almost entirely on the abstraction of water from that river.

The nearest plant at Chester-le-Street, which takes water out for the purposes of purification and transfer into the water supply system for Wearside, is 20 miles downstream from where that water enters the River Wear from the Kielder reservoir pipeline. This information may be mundane and boring but it explains the fears of my constituents should mining cease in the north-east.

The way in which the matter has been handled by British Coal and the Government reminds me of that great Prime Minister, H. H. Asquith, Earl of Asquith and Oxford, as he became, who was immortalised—perhaps not for the best of reasons—for the phrase, "Wait and see." No politician or anyone who has any sense should use that phrase to answer a question. Such a reply could be a millstone around their necks for the rest of their lives. Yet that is precisely what representatives of British Coal say in response to the fears vented by local authorities and people in the north-east.

Mining in the north-east began in the western extremes of the coalfield, which were quite shallow. Mining gradually worked its way east, to a great depth. It so happens that the one remaining colliery in County

Durham, Wearmouth in my constituency, is the deepest shaft mine in the north-east. It is at the bottom of the basin that consists of the coal measures.

In the past 100 years, as the western parts of the coalfield have been worked out, water has migrated from the cavities created by the roadways and the collapsed coal faces. For many years, British Coal operated a series of pumping stations, spread out inland, to prevent those vast quantities of water from reaching the coastal pits. Until relatively recently, there were eight coastal collieries, which were served by a fan of inland pumping stations. Gradually, those pits have been closed.

When the Minister replied to last week's Adjournment debate, he said that, in the 40 years since nationalisation, 107 collieries have closed. He claimed that that had not affected the water table or drinking water supplies. That reply misses the point, because, although the pits have been closed, the pumping has, until now, gone on unabated and kept the water table artificially low. It has remained at that level for the past 40 years.

I do not want to be alarmist, because many people spoil a good argument by exaggerating the possible effects of certain action. Nevertheless, British Coal has expressed one opinion about the water pumping which has been contradicted by the reservations expressed by environmentalists and the National Rivers Authority. They are not prepared to accept the opinion of British Coal.

The argument is about how long it will be before the subterranean water returns to its original level in the water table and about its quality when it finds its way into the River Wear. The old mine workings have created an entirely different underground environment from that which existed when the ground was solid. The coal measures contain permeable and impermeable beds through which water runs and forms Artesian wells at the bottom of the deepest measures.

In the past, various water companies bought water from the then National Coal Board. They did, however, on occasions, stop buying it, because it was considered unsuitable for processing into drinking-quality water.

I, like many others, have met British Coal spokesmen about this issue. The vagueness of their replies leaves one more worried than before the questions were asked. For one thing, no one can give an exact estimate of when the water will start issuing from the mineshaft, nor can anyone say what its chemical properties will be.

Still, the coal board contends that there is nothing to worry about. It may have nothing to worry about, because by the time the problem arises, British Coal may no longer exist, but eventually someone will have to pick up the tab. Already my constituents and the rest of the people supplied with their water by the Northumberland water authority are having to pay higher bills because of the construction of the massive Kielder reservoir. It is a pity that it cannot be put to better use, and the water sent to the midlands and southern England where it is badly needed —but that is a problem for another day.

Within the past week all Members of Parliament have received a letter from the Director General of Water Services in which he explains that the country is having great difficulty complying with EC water quality regulations. He goes as far as to suggest that some of the criteria should be made less stringent, so that we can comply with them more easily. At least we are being honest with the EC about our water quality; several other countries are not bothering to be. I understand, too, that the regulations are shortly to be tightened up further, which will only make matters worse. Anyway, the regulator estimates that compliance with the current regulations will cost the average householder another £100 a year.

Our worry is not that we will suddenly lose our water supply in the north-east; we are worried about the costs if British Coal, as seems likely, is proved wrong. I seem to remember the coal board being wrong about a lot of things in the past. On its analysis we should still have 80 collieries operating. We were told that there was a golden future for them in the late 1990s, but we now have fewer than 20 pits.

British Coal may say that it knows all there is to know about pumping water and about geology. It does not know, however, about the chemical properties of the water that it produces, about the water's effect on supplies, and about the ability of the regional water companies to deal with the problem.

I would feel more confident that the problem will be adequately dealt with if the water companies had not been privatised. The consumers are now having to pay for most of the investment, and for the vastly enhanced salaries of the people who took over the industry and got themselves a nice cushy number. These private bodies seem more concerned with selling off land and running hotels than with water.

If problems arise, Northumbrian Water is likely to turn to the Government for a subsidy to help overcome this foreseeable problem. As British Coal has one opinion and the environmental experts have another, I hope that the Minister will announce that the Department of the Environment will set up a commission comprising a geologist, a hydrologist and other experts to give us an independent report. I have heard no statement from the Northumbrian water authority, so I do not know its position, but the National Rivers Authority, with which the basic responsibility lies, is far from happy with what is being said by British Coal.

In last week's debate, we went through many of the arguments, and I have tried not to repeat them tonight, but there is one thing that everyone should know, even if they know nothing about the supply of water. Everyone should know that, if one creates a void, something fills it. There are hundreds of square miles of voids at various levels throughout the whole of county Durham and most of Northumberland.

I do not think that the problem will have a great effect on the River Tees because it is on the edge of the coalfield but, as the water table rises and water percolates into streams and eventually into the River Wear, there will be insurmountable problems in the 20-mile stretch from where the Kielder water pipeline meets the River Wear and the furthest pumping station downstream at Chester-le-Street. It is important that the debate continues until someone provides some answers.

It is no good one authority saying that it is worried while another says that it does not need to be. That is far from satisfactory. Any Government who were rightly concerned about the issue would be starting to make inquiries in their own right.

5.30 am

Mr. Robin Cook (Livingston): I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland, North (Mr. Etherington), on the dawn of the last day on which the

[Mr. Robin Cook]

House will sit before the summer recess, on giving the House an opportunity to return to a matter that has concerned it throughout the parliamentary year.

My hon. Friend drew attention to one of the effects of the decline of the coal industry which may have been insufficiently noted in our debates. While some of us have dealt with the economic and social impact of closure on local communities, my hon. Friend rightly and properly drew attention to the incalculable impact on the environment and, specifically, on the water supply.

I hesitate to follow my hon. Friend in talking about the water supply of his area or the impact of the closure of the pits on that supply, because he has shown such great knowledge. Having visited some pits, however, I was extremely impressed by the complexity of the charts and maps of the underground workings. I visited Markham, which has now closed. A chart of the underground workings covers an entire wall of the manager's office, going back 120 years. Each successive decade is represented in a different colour, one on top of the other. It is an extraordinarily graphic representation. Indeed, it entered my mind that the Tate gallery might pay enough for the objet d'art to keep the pit in operation for another six months.

When one examines such a chart, what comes across is the fact that no one knows what the final impact of ceasing to pump in such areas may be on the water supply and water flow. My hon. Friend is right to draw attention to the wide-ranging, and to a large extent unknown, consequences which may have a permanent impact on the environment, just as the closure of the pit will have an immediate impact on the area's economy and employment prospects.

The debate takes place in the wake of the publication of British Coal's annual report, which highlighted the cost to British Coal of ceasing work at some pits. It was clear from the bottom line losses in the report that, in the past year, it has proved much more expensive for British Coal to try to close mines than to keep them in production. My hon. Friend highlighted one of the additional costs of the closure of pits, which could well flow to the Government. It is a cost that has not hitherto been reflected in considering whether it would be profitable or costly to close the pits.

My hon. Friend had the good sense to make the terms of the debate wide, and he has thereby attracted to the Dispatch Box two spokespersons on the energy rather than the environmental side. I congratualte him on that, because it gives us the opportunity to explore some of the questions on which we have attempted to press the Government in previous debates.

May I therefore invite the Minister to update us on the answers to some of our questions? I say "update", but to be honest that is rather charitable, because, when we last debated the matter three weeks ago, we received no answers to our questions. May I tempt the Minister by saying that I understand why the Secretary of State, addressing a crowded House in prime time and in a fevered atmosphere, may overlook the need to answer questions posed by the Opposition, but we are speaking frankly, openly, in sober terms and in a modestly attended Chamber. If the Minister needs further temptation, may I point out that *Hansard* will not be printed until the House has risen and that he can therefore risk being more frank with us?

The Minister will be aware that it is now almost four months since the Government published their White Paper on the coal review. He will be aware that the central solution that they adopted was a subsidy on coal from the 12 allegedly reprieved pits. None of those 12 pits has yet seen extra contracts signed for its coal between British Coal and the generators, nor is there an immediate prospect of a contract being signed.

I want to press the Minister on some of the background against which the negotiations took place and to put to him three points on which I should be grateful for his guidance and which would help British Coal and the 10 remaining reprieved pits in seeking extra contracts. I am aware that this is a late hour, and I notice that the Minister is not supported by his entire private office. He may wish to write to me rather than reply to my points today, but it would make a refreshing contrast from our previous debates and it would send me off to the summer recess in a sweeter mood if I could have an answer to the questions that I am now going to put.

The first question is, what is now happening between the Government and the generators about stock drawdown? The most immediate reason why the two generators do not wish to place extra contracts for coal is that they have 35 million tonnes of it on their doorstep. They have taken the view that it is cheaper for them to burn the coal that they have already paid for than to place contracts, however competitively priced, for more coal. My judgment is that that may be in the short-term interests of the generators but it is not in their long-term interest, and it most certainly is not in the long-term interest of energy supply in Britain. The short-term effect of not purchasing that extra coal could be permanent closure of the extra pits that are looking for those contracts.

The White Paper promised action and committed the Government to entering into a dialogue with generators about the rate at which they draw down stock. If I recall correctly, during the debate the Minister for Energy said that talks were now proceeding. It is not immediately obvious from the impact on the rate at which generators are drawing down or attempting to draw down stock that those talks are having a significant effect.

May I therefore press the Minister to tell the House whether talks have taken place with the generators? What is the Government's objective in those talks, and to what extent do they hope, within the immediate future, to secure an agreement that might then concentrate the minds of generators on buying extra coal from British Coal?

My second point arose in previous debates. If the Minister can conclude this matter the debate will have had the happy effect of drawing together some of the unanswered threads of previous debates. When we debated the White Paper, the President of the Board of Trade was pressed from his own Back Benches about the interconnector with France. He was specifically pressed by the hon. Member for Romford (Sir M. Neubert) about the requirement that we were making of the French to obtain common carriage through the French grid to Spain, Italy, Switzerland and other countries that might wish to purchase our electricity.

We recognise that it is difficult to get the French to purchase our electricity. They do not need it, and even if they did they probably would not buy it. However, they

have no right, under European legislation, to deny us common carriage across their grid to neighbouring countries that need our electricity and might be tempted to purchase it, and in doing so facilitate the export of coal in the form of electricity.

I and many of my hon. Friends find it incomprehensible that we continue to import such large volumes of electricity from France, meeting base load need in the south of England, when France will not even accept the common carriage of our electricity to third countries for sale—for no other reason than that such common carriage would provide them with competition on the sale of French electricity to those countries. It cannot be right that there is a Community obligation on us to import French electricity when there is not a parallel Community obligation on the French to provide that service of common carriage.

In reply to the hon. Member for Romford, the President of the Board of Trade said that he was aware of the issue. He gave the impression—after all, a tense vote was approaching—that action was being taken on that front. I very much hope so. I press the Minister to share with us details of what negotiations are now proceeding with the French, and what progress there may be on obtaining common carriage across the French system. If we could secure that, there is every possibility that Britain could significantly enhance its coal burn for electricity that it could provide to countries where it would be extremely competitively priced.

My third question to the Minister on which I would be grateful for his guidance either this morning or in the next few days by letter is: what has happened to the nuclear review? The White Paper said that it would be brought forward from 1994 to this year. The nuclear review has a close and immediate impact on the subject that we are debating this morning.

The White Paper followed the report of the Select Committee, which clearly spelled out the extent to which the nuclear levy is more than sufficient to meet the cost of decommissioning nuclear power stations, and the excess is providing a subsidy to the operating costs of Nuclear Electric, which confers on it a substantial competitive advantage against coal, and results in the rather odd economic outcome that, although electricity from nuclear power is more expensive than electricity from coal-fired power stations, it is cheaper for the electricity companies to buy it.

I may have missed something in the past few days, but I have not seen any announcement about the nuclear review—I confess that I have been unable to reach any of my research staff in the past hour as I have been thinking about the debate—but I am aware that there was an expectation that it would be announced before the House rose. Could the Minister guide us on when we can expect that the nuclear review will be announced and what its remit will be? In particular, could he remove the anxiety among those who want to see a broad-balanced strategy towards energy policy and those who are particularly concerned about the place within that of the coal industry?

Could the Minister also remove the anxiety that the nuclear review, when it comes around, will be narrowly focused on how the Government will manage to achieve their ideological objective of privatising the nuclear industry? Will he assure us that, as well as looking at that question, which I am sure that the Government will look at, the nuclear review will also look at the issues of the economic evidence of the nuclear industry and the extent to which the nuclear levy may provide it with a competitive edge against the coal industry which works against the interests of the most efficient use of fuel mix in British power stations?

There is one specific issue on which it would be helpful if the Minister could remove anxiety and concern from the minds of those in the House before we rise for the summer recess—or, in our case, before we adjourn for breakfast. Twelve pits were "reprieved" in the White Paper. The closure of two of those 12 pits has already been announced. That leaves 10 pits for which, as yet, no extra contracts have been signed. Without extra contracts, the future of those 10 pits remains deeply insecure, and the stability of their reprieve is under a major question mark.

Does the Minister have any information to suggest that any of those 10 pits will close during the recess? The future of those pits is an issue to which the House will have to return. I press the hon. Gentleman for an assurance that that issue will not arise while the House is not sitting. I would not wish a circumstance to arise in which hon. Members' summer holidays were interrupted by the need to recall the House to discuss further pit closures.

It would be extremely helpful if the Minister could give an assurance that, if it turns out that our fears are well founded and that the future of some of those pits is in doubt, that issue will not arise while the House is not sitting, and that the House will have the opportunity to return before there are any further additions to the long list of pit closures that has studded this parliamentary year.

5.45 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade (Mr. Patrick McLoughlin): I congratulate the hon. Member for Sunderland, North (Mr. Etherington) on securing this slot in the Consolidated Fund debate. I, like him, was under the impression that we might not reach this subject—but fortune has possibly shone on him. I shall deal with the matters raised by the hon. Member for Livingston (Mr. Cook) in a moment; first, I want to deal with the speech of the hon. Member for Sunderland, North.

A number of the hon. Gentleman's points are really matters for my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Environment. I cannot add too much to what he said during an Adjournment debate on 20 July, in which the hon. Gentleman participated. My hon. Friend said —I endorse his remarks—

> "The consequences of mine closures are complex. It is clearly an offence for mine owners, such as British Coal, to cause pollution of water courses, regardless of whether a mine is active or abandoned. I do not think that there is any dispute about that, and there need be no argument about it. Responsibility for avoiding pollution rests with the discharger. Discharges from active mines are covered by the system of discharge consents that are operated by the NRA.
>
> We are aware of the issues that have been raised about the legal provisions causing discharges from mine workings. The question was referred to in last year's report from the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution on freshwater quality, which recommended"—[*Official Report*, 20 July 1993; Vol. 229, c. 332.]

My hon. Friend then outlined what was particularly recommended.

There is no doubt that these matters are being continuously considered. The hon. Gentleman said that he

[Mr. Patrick McLoughlin]

wanted to ensure that the debate would continue, and he has shown us tonight that it will continue and will be watched carefully. That is only right.

The hon. Gentleman made a rather strange comment, which I felt was both inaccurate and out of place. He said that the trouble with privatisation was that the consumer has to pay for investment. That has always been the case. Both before and after privatisation, whether as a taxpayer or directly, the consumer has always had to pay for investment. It is wrong to think that, before the water authorities were privatised, people did not have to pay for investment. Since privatisation, the water companies have made substantial investment, which will lead to improved quality in our drinking water. I should have thought that that would be welcomed by everybody.

The hon. Member for Livingston referred to the recent debate in which my hon. Friend the Minister for Energy made it clear that the conclusions of the White Paper were reached only after listening to a wide range of opinions, not only from Her Majesty's Opposition, but from the Select Committee on Trade and Industry. We listened to what people said to us and took into account all the evidence that we received. We considered the independent reports which were commissioned and, in particular, we listened to the Select Committee's recommendations.

Many different opinions were expressed, even among the experts, but the main common theme from many people was that there was the prospect of an increased market if coal could be made available at world-related prices. The estimates of the size of the market varied. The Select Committee suggested in its report that the overall market might be as large as 313 million tonnes over the next five years. Our consultants suggested figures—based on high and low scenarios—of between approximately 200 million and 260 million tonnes. Figures from others were different again, as we made clear in the White Paper. We responded to those views. We accepted the main recommendation of the Select Committee and offered a subsidy to help coal obtain the extra market.

My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade made it clear when the House voted in favour of the White Paper's conclusions that we could give no gurantees, and that remains the case. There can be no guarantees of the precise market for coal—that is not within our control or the control of private coal producers or British Coal. We have given the coal industry a fresh opportunity to compete, backed by public subsidy, for the extra market that so many commentators believed existed. British Coal is continuing to pursue that market vigorously.

I also remind the House of the second message that came through during the coal review: that British Coal would be better placed for a long-term, viable future if it could be given time to build on improvements in efficiency and cost reductions already achieved. The hon. Member for Livingston referred to his visit to Markham Main colliery, where he saw the coal workings. I accept that the hon. Members for Sunderland, North and for Barnsley, Central (Mr. Illsley) will have seen many such maps—as I have. Therefore, the detailed workings that have taken place underground do not come as a surprise to us.

Reference was made to the maps going back more than 100 years. We are dealing with an extraction industry which has seen many changes. One of my memories stems from the early 1960s, when I walked over a large area of disused coal mines where the West Cannock site used to be. Over a number of years, coal mining districts have experienced radical changes in their make-up and in the availability of work in the coal industry. That is not new to the industry or coal mining communities.

British Coal is continuing its efforts to improve productivity and efficiency and cut down costs. We are giving the industry the prospect of an increased market for coal by providing a subsidy. British Coal is also committed to making available to the private sector pits which it no longer wishes to operate. The recent letter from the chairman of British Coal to Members of Parliament shows that the corporation has been honouring its commitment.

British Coal has now advertised 19 pits for sale. Whether or not those pits ultimately find a successful home in the private sector will depend on the market, which it is not for the Government to determine. However, I understand that British Coal has received numerous expressions of interest in the pits advertised. That suggests that there are private companies which believe that there is a market for the coal which they could produce from the pits. Indeed, many of them, as well as independent analysts, said as much to us in their evidence to the coal review. They argued that private sector companies could substantially increase efficiency and reduce costs and therefore find additional markets.

The hon. Member for Livingston asked a number of questions. First, he asked about the French interconnector. I will give him the latest position. If I miss out any points, I will write to him, because I am keen for him to have a good recess, which he asked for.

On electricity trade with France, the Government have published a summary of their legal advice which is clear. Action to cut off imports through an interconnector would be a breach of Community law. The non-levy status of Electricité de France could not be removed without giving it the benefit of levy payments. That would mean that British consumers would end up paying more for their electricity.

There are a number of positive developments. Following earlier discussions with the then French Government, EDF recently reviewed and changed its bid price to supply into the pool for England and Wales to bring them more closely into line with its short-term marginal supply costs.

Last month, my hon. Friend had useful discussions with Mr. Longuet, the new French industry Minister. In the light of that meeting, officials are pursuing the issue of trade across the interconnector and EDF's non-leviable status. The future pattern of trade across the interconnector will depend on the operation of commercial contracts. The White Paper noted the evidence to the Committee that net exports from France to the United Kingdom could progressively but significantly reduce after 1995.

A United Kingdom generator has signed a contract for £100 million to export electricity to France over the next eight years at periods of peak demand in France during the winter. That shows in the clearest and most practical way that there are opportunities for United Kingdom generators.

The hon. Gentleman asked about the review of the nuclear industry. I am afraid that what I say to him today will not take us much further forward from the questions that he has asked in the past. The Government will bring

forward the review to later this year. Draft proposals for the scope, timing and format of the review have yet to be made. The Government will make further announcements in due course. I know that that will not bring much favour to the hon. Gentleman but I will draw his questions to the attention of my hon. Friend the Minister for Energy.

Mr. Cook: I raised another matter which the Minister may wish to pursue in writing, if not in this debate. I hope that he does not lose sight of it either way. The rate at which the generators draw down coal stocks on site is critical to the immediate prospects for any extra contracts for British Coal. Unless the generators can be persuaded —the Government have the power to do this—to moderate the rapid rate at which they propose to run down the stocks, there is little prospect of extra contracts, which would provide a permanent and secure future for the 10 pits to which the Government claim to have given a reprieve.

Mr. McLoughlin: I apologise to the hon. Gentleman. Since the publication of the White Paper, action has been taken to review the level of the stocks necessary for security purposes. Discussions with the generators are continuing. Coal stocks will continue to be the mainstay of security for the electricity system. We will not allow them to fall below a level that would put supplies of electricity in jeopardy.

My hon. Friend must use his powers under the Electricity Act in a rational and defensible manner for their intended purpose. We cannot use them as a means merely of covertly subsidising British Coal. The Committee recommended that stocks should be kept at 20 million tonnes of coal, although it did not explain the rationale behind that figure. The figure is irrelevant to the debate, because stocks held at power stations at that time were more than 30 million tonnes. At present, stocks at the pithead are more than 13 million tonnes.

The whole question of stocks is rightly being addressed. It is obvious from the figures I referred to that substantial stocks already exist. I therefore do not see our stocks falling to a basically unacceptable level. Obviously, I take the hon. Gentleman's point.

As I said, in this parliamentary year—the end of which we are approaching—coal has featured strongly in the political arena. I hope that what I have said in the debate and on other occasions shows that we are concerned about the future of the coal industry and that we rigorously question the way in which we can best ensure its future and a market for coal. Those have been our guiding principles in taking forward the discussions that we have had in the past year, and they will also guide us in the future.

Limited List Prescribing

5.59 am

Mr. James Couchman (Gillingham): I declare an interest in the pharmaceutical industry, and it is contained in the Register of Members' Interests. The hon. Member for Makerfield (Mr. McCartney), who is on the Opposition Front Bench, would remind me if I did not make such a declaration. I am an adviser to the Kent company and major pharmaceutical manufacturer Pfizer Ltd., and I have been a friend of the industry since coming to the House.

I have no regrets about inviting the Minister to join me at this early hour in the morning to debate this important topic. However, I greatly regret that it should be left to me to bring this topic to the House on the last morning before the House rises for the summer recess, so that we may discuss a proposal made as long ago as 12 November last year, the day of the autumn statement, by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health.

Since that time, apart from an Adjournment debate initiated by my hon. Friend the Member for Basingstoke (Mr. Hunter), the Government have contrived to keep the issue out of the House. I regret that the debate is not taking place in prime time when the House is packed with hon. Members who are outraged by the Government's proposals.

In her statement on 12 November last year, my right hon. Friend made much of the fact that the drugs bill was at its highest ever in 1991-92, that in England it was £2·317 billion, and the increase in 1991-92 was 11·5 per cent. She also made much of the fact that that growth could not be sustained, and she said that she would take measures to restrain the increase in the drugs bill. Those measures would include renegotiation of the voluntary pharmaceutical price regulation scheme by which the Government and the industry have decided price for many years, and she said that the negotiations would be with the aim of restraining companies' profits from sales to the national health service.

My right hon. Friend also said that the selected list scheme was to be extended. Under that scheme, particular drugs in specified therapeutic categories may not be prescribed under the NHS where effective alternatives are available at lower cost. In making regulations, Ministers act on the advice of the Advisory Committee on NHS Drugs and rely for their legal base on schedules 10 and 11 of the General Medical Services Regulations 1992, which list banned drugs.

Implementation is based on the advice of the advisory committee, the chairman of which is hardly independent as he is none other than the deputy chief medical officer in the Department of Health. The terms of reference have been amended for the new round of restrictions, and membership has been extended to take account of the new categories. It would not be of great advantage to list the terms of reference in detail, but they are quoted as

"to advise the UK Health Ministers about the composition of schedules 10 and 11 to the NHS (General Medical Services) Regulations 1992, and the corresponding schedules in the Regulations in Scotland and Northern Ireland (except those items which are in Schedule 10 because the Advisory Committee on Borderline Substances has advised that they are not considered drugs in the circumstances of general practice) in order that drugs to meet all real clinical needs at the lowest possible cost to the NHS are available in the

[Mr. James Couchman]

following categories: mild to moderate pain-killers, indigestion remedies, laxatives, cough and cold remedies, vitamins, tonics and benzodiazepine sedatives and tranquillisers."

That list of seven categories arose from the original institution of the limited-list process in 1985, at the behest of the then Secretary of State for Social Services, my right hon. Friend the Member for Sutton Coldfield (Sir N. Fowler), ably assisted by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke), then Minister for Health.

I well remember the row provoked by the original proposal to limit the number of drugs that might be prescribed in those categories on the NHS. A doomsday scenario of sorts was set up by the British Medical Association, the royal colleges, the pharmaceutical industry, various patient groups and so forth. We were visited by the godfathers of the American pharmaceutical industry, who came over to intimidate us into accepting that this was a very bad idea; however, the intimidation backfired. It was just the sort of thing that my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rushcliffe enjoys in his usual adversarial manner.

What really stiffened the resistance of those of us who were inclined to take the industry's part at that time was a disgraceful campaign by the United Kingdom subsidiary of Hoffmann La Roche, which was busy trying to defend its high-priced tranquillisers.

The year 1985 was about tranquillisers, and about remedies—frequently quack remedies—for minor ailments with self-limiting symptoms: coughs and colds, and mild and moderate pain. Eventually, the original list that the Government put up—involving some 30 drugs in those seven categories—was increased, as a result of the hastily contrived advisory committee, to 129 products. I believe that some 150 products are now included in the seven categories. The position relating to minor ailments has persisted to this day.

We were originally told that there would be savings of £100 million; that was later revised downwards to £75 million. Somewhat evasive answers were given to questions within a year of the institution of the limited list, and since then it has been impossible to find out whether any savings have been made. However, one thing definitely has happened as a result of the seven categories: in those categories, no new chemical entity—no new significant product—has been produced since 1985. I shall say more about that later, because it is very important.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State intends to develop 10 new categories of ailment for which there will be limitation. I think we should list them for the record, because this is effectively the first debate that we have had on the issue. My right hon. Friend proposed that the 10 new categories should be anti-diarrhoeal treatments, appetite suppressants, treatments for allergic disorders, hypnotics and anxioytics, treatments for vaginal and vulval conditions, contraceptives, treatments for anaemia, topical anti-rheumatics, treatments for ear and nose conditions and skin treatments. Perhaps three of those areas are more significant than the others. I think that the areas that are particularly worrying are skin treatments, contraceptives and treatments for vaginal and vulval conditions, which include quite serious illness.

There has been an outcry from patients' organisations, individual patients, doctors and, predictably, the industry.

I should like to remind my hon. Friend the Minister just how important the pharmaceutical industry is. It is one of our most successful industries. It has £7 billion-worth of sales a year. Almost 50 per cent. of that produce is exported. A trade surplus of £1·3 billion is produced by the industry.

The industry is also good at reinvesting its profits into research and development. It searches for new and better products. About 18 per cent. of its United Kingdom turnover—£1·4 billion—is invested in research. That compares favourably with other areas of manufacturing industry, which spends an estimated 2 to 4 per cent. of its turnover on research. The pharamaceutical industry employs 100,000 people in high-grade jobs. It does much to improve the esteem of British science throughout the world. We have some extremely good research workers in the industry, and we should cherish it for them.

Medicines produce an economic remedy for many ailments. The House will not be surprised to hear that the industry contrasts pharmaceutical remedies with invasive techniques such as surgery and other advanced technological treatment of patients. Five of the world's 20 most prescribed medicines were discovered in the United Kingdom. That includes the No. 1 product in the world. That gives an impression—I am sure that my hon. Friend the Minister does not need reminding of it—of just how important the pharmaceutical industry is.

I now wish to deal with the effect that the proposal of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will have on patients. It is worth saying that the reason why the drugs bill continues to increase is not simply because pharmaceutical companies put their prices up. Rather, it is because many more people are living to a much greater age. It is without doubt that the elderly, particularly those between 75 and 85, are substantial consumers of pharmaceutical products. The Government have encouraged doctors to hold screening clinics, which have identified many hundreds of additional patients who require medicines—for example, for high blood pressure, late onset diabetes and asthma.

The other fact that has increased the prescribing costs of general practitioners is the increasing tendency for hospitals to prescribe the minimum quantity of products to patients who are being discharged from hospital. The Government themselves have suggested that pharmaceutical treatment can be cost-effective. I pray in aid Lady Hooper when she was junior Minister for Health in 1989. She said:

"High-cost medicines can be very cost-effective in raising the quality of patients' lives and are under no threat from this Government."

In 1989, when the National Health Service and Community Care Bill was going through the House, my right hon. Friend who was then the Minister for Health and is now Secretary of State for Health said:

"Our interest lies in cost-effective prescribing, not cheap prescribing. We are quite prepared to pay the price for innovative new medicines which will significantly improve the quality of patients' lives."

The much-quoted former Secretary of State for Health, my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rushcliffe, said:

"we have repeatedly made it clear that every patient will be entitled to the drugs which, in the general practitioner's opinion, the patient requires."—[*Official Report*, 23 January 1990; Vol. 165, c. 732.]

In the working paper "Promoting Better Health", the Government outlined their commitment to increasing the

emphasis on preventive care, recognised that that might result in increased expenditure on drugs in general practice, and said that they are committed to meeting such an increase—should it occur.

During the progress of the Bill which became the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990, there was much debate about the effectiveness of high-cost drugs as opposed to low-cost drugs. The Oxford region was particularly prone to high-cost prescribing, but in terms of the overall cost of health care, it was seen as very beneficial.

Of particular concern is the fact that 85 per cent. of prescriptions are dispensed free of charge to those on low incomes, the elderly, the chronically sick, pregnant women and children. They will, in the main, be directly affected by the Government's proposals. Doctors are already told by their family health service authorities how much they may spend through their indicative prescribing scheme—a scheme which costs the taxpayer a good deal of money to administer.

One aspect of the debate on pharmaceutical products is that we pay little regard to the fact that pharmaceutical products can be an effective and cost-effective form of treatment for many patients.

Later, I shall return to the recent report on sufferers from heart disease. It is extremely worrying that many people suffering from undiagnosed heart conditions are taking no medication—and even those who are now face limitations on their drugs.

Substantial concern has also been expressed by the Family Planning Association, which points out that, of the 35 brands of contraceptive pills, 22 have different formulations. It is a matter of general knowledge that the best pill for one woman may be the worst for another. There is general concern in family planning circles that, because the newest formulations—which might be the best for younger women—may be more expensive, some women will be forced to accept a less satisfactory treatment or method of contraception. That seems to fly in the face of the Government's "Health of the Nation" strategy, which the FPA strongly supports in giving priority to reducing the number of unplanned pregnancies.

The director of the National Eczema Society, Tina Funnell, highlights the concerns of patients with skin diseases, some of which can be extremely debilitating and very unpleasant. She states:

"Extending the selected list will increase demand for expensive hospital treatment. One in five of the population suffers from skin disease at some time, and responses to treatment are enormously variable. Our concern is that to reduce patient choice to two or three products in each therapeutic area will mean poor compliance with treatment. Exacerbations can quickly become acute, and these will require far more expensive in-patient care."

That is a worrying comment from a society dedicated to those who suffer from eczema. Similar concerns have been expressed by the Psoriasis Association, the Acne Support Group, the National Kidney Foundation, Help the Aged, Age Concern, the National Association of Women's Organisations and the Osteoporosis Society.

All these important consumer groups have expressed their worries about my right hon. Friend's proposals for two basic reasons. First, they say that it will lead to a limitation of existing medicines currently supplied by doctors. Secondly, and more importantly, they say that it will lead to a blight on further advances and improvements in treatments that are desperately needed in all the therapeutic areas, but particularly for skin complaints.

Patient groups realise and recognise—better, it seems, than my right hon. and hon. Friends the Ministers and their civil servants—that companies simply will not risk investing up to £200 million and 12 years of time in developing a new treatment that wins the approval of the Committee on Safety of Medicines, only to have the product blacklisted by the Advisory Committee on NHS Drugs, which is now known, I believe, within the industry as the price control committee for NHS drugs.

Innovative companies based in this country will go on developing new treatments, but many of them will not necessarily seek to make them available in this country. New British-made medicines will continue to treat millions of patients throughout the rest of the world, but NHS patients may be denied access to those advances simply because they will not be licensed or marketed here.

There will be an important knock-on effect on clinical trials, which currently are carried out by our good scientists in this country. Traditionally, companies carry out clinical trials in the countries where they aim to seek licensing approval. If companies cease to seek licences for new products in this country, it is bound to lead to a curtailment of clinical trials carried out by clinicians in our major teaching and university hospitals. That brings me back to the £1·4 billion worth of research moneys that are put in each year by the companies for research into new products.

The medical profession has expressed profound disquiet about the proposal to extend the selected list. Surveys show that 70 per cent. of general practitioners want these proposals to be withdrawn. They follow Dr. Alistair Donald, president of the Royal College of General Practitioners, who recently told a meeting of my colleagues in this House that he and the college are opposed in principle to the limited list concept and a resolution condemning the proposals was carried at a recent meeting of British Medical Association local medical committee representatives.

Doctors are worried about it; patients are worried about it; and the doctors find other senior representatives to express these concerns for them. For example, Mr. David Bromham, consultant gynaecologist at St. James's University hospital, Leeds, and chairman of the National Association of Family Planning Doctors, has expressed his concern quite vividly, as have dermatologists at the Hammersmith hospital and gynaecologists at the John Radcliffe maternity hospital, Oxford.

According to the industry, it would appear that the Government want to renegotiate the pharmaceutical price regulation scheme as though the limited list did not exist, and that they want to extend the limited list as though the PPRS did not exist. That seems to fly in the face of reality. Companies believe that if the Government expect them to come to terms with reality, the Government should be expected to do the same.

Health Ministers have repeatedly justified extending the limited list by pointing to the 12 to 14 per cent. annual increase in the drugs bill over the past two years. That increase, they say, is unacceptable. But why is it unacceptable? As I said earlier, the growth is due in the main to the ageing population and to the Government's

[Mr. James Couchman]

encouragement of doctors to identify new patients who require treatment for high blood pressure, the late onset of diabetes and asthma.

The Government's "The Health of the Nation" survey, published just two weeks ago, shows that almost 75 per cent. of over 7 million United Kingdom adults who are suffering from raised blood pressure, at levels that expose them to the risk of premature death from a heart attack or a stroke, are not receiving any medication. For those patients, and their families, it could be argued that the growth in the drugs bill is unacceptably low, not unacceptably high. By spending money now on medicines to prevent or delay heart attacks and strokes, the Government will save millions of pounds in the longer term in hospital and disability costs associated with those two conditions.

No doubt when my hon. Friend the Minister replies he will claim that the price control committee—or the Advisory Committee on NHS Drugs if he prefers it—will always look favourably on advances in treatment that may emerge in future. Sadly, the industry has lost all faith in Government assurances because only last July my hon. Friend the Minister for Health assured three large companies that the Government had no plans to extend the limited list. That assurance proved worthless within a very few weeks.

In the 10 new therapeutic categories to be covered by the limited list, there are currently 200 projects in research and development, no fewer than 56 of which are for skin complaints like psoriasis and eczema and 14 of which are aimed at bringing about improvements in contraception. There is a real prospect that some of those projects will be abandoned. Perhaps more significantly, if they do reach fruition, they may not necessarily be submitted for licensing in this country. As I have said, patients in other parts of the world will benefit from advances and advantages from which NHS patients will not. That is entirely unacceptable.

At a recent public meeting in London, a senior Department of Health official, Mr. Melvyn Jeremiah, said that it is the Government's intention to ensure that new products do not elbow out tried and trusted products. I do not believe that that remedy is acceptable to this House or to patients. We might sum that up as, "Long live leeches." It will not give any reassurance to the innovative companies that the Government will, in future, look favourably on newer, more expensive products.

The implementation of the limited list this time is vastly different from what happened in 1985. The Advisory Committee on Drugs—the price control committee—comprising expert consultants, doctors and pharmacists, is using most peculiar tactics. It is telling companies that they must agree to bring their prices down to a reference which the committee will determine arbitrarily, or it will recommend to Ministers that their products should be blacklisted.

That seems to be stretching United Kingdom and EC law to the very limits. I suspect that it may be challenged at some stage. It is no better and no worse than blackmail. Companies may not be screaming "blackmail" in public, but they are certainly communicating that message back to their parent companies in various parts of the world and that is having a disastrous effect on investment decisions.

I will not weary the House with too many quotations. However, Mr. Michael Bailey, a director of Glaxo, our largest national pharmaceutical manufacturer, said that

"curbs could mean companies scrapping research rather than invent new products which never make it on to the limited list.

What is the point of me spending millions of pounds researching a product that the Government will just blow away?"

Mr. Bailey asked that question at the annual meeting of the Welsh executive of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. That is an authoritative voice from within the industry to which we should pay some heed.

There is also some doubt about how precisely the committee is determining its reference prices. Reference prices are viewed with grave suspicion throughout Europe because they can be quite arbitrary. For instance, I am told that for some topical skin products the committee is fixing a reference price for a 100 g tube of ointment, irrespective of the potency of that ointment. Potency can vary by a factor of 1:3. That means that a tube of 100 g of one product is really equivalent to a 33 g tube of another product. That is extremely worrying. The matter is summed up by Mr. Paul Mason, another official at the Department, who, at a recent meeting, was heard to say that the committee

"does give some indication where it can of"

what might be a reasonable price reduction, basing its calculation on "comparative average prices". When asked to define more clearly the criteria it used to determine acceptable prices for reimbursement, he conceded that the committee found the pricing issue "very difficult to handle", noting that

"it is not an exact science by any means".

That gives Mr. Behrendt, director of the United Kingdom pharmaceutical subsidiary of Bayer, according to a recent article, every good reason to say, as he did recently, that

"The Government has, in effect, introduced a system of reference pricing [paying for a drug at the price of the cheapest product in its area]"—

that is his definition—

"through the back-door. This is very unfair. If innovative products can no longer create a premium, there is little point launching new products on the market."

My hon. Friend the Minister and his colleagues at the Department would do well to heed those warnings. Any savings that the Government hope to achieve by the proposed measures will be vastly outstripped by the costs of lost inward investment and the consequential losses of employment and export opportunities. It is economic madness. A senior executive who has worked in the industry for nearly 30 years recently told me:

"I have never known companies in the industry so angry with what is currently happening in the UK. They cannot understand why an industry that has contributed so much to patient care and to the UK economy over so many years is being treated in this way."

In a recent letter to a chief executive of a major German-owned company, I believe that my hon. Friend the Minister wrote:

"We do not believe that the PPRS and the Selected List Scheme are inimical. The Selected List Scheme covers only a small proportion of the total pharmaceutical market".

A small proportion? The categories in the extension to the limited list alone cover almost 25 per cent. of all NHS prescriptions, not to mention those seven categories in the original list that must account for at least another 5 to 10 per cent. We are probably talking about a third of all NHS prescriptions, and that blows out of the water the claim that the PPRS and the selected list scheme are not inimical.

It seems to me that, if we are talking about that as a small proportion—it is about 150 million prescriptions a year—there seems to be a very odd sense of proportion prevailing at the Department.

Will my hon. Friend explain why three major foreign-owned companies were told in June or July last year by my hon. Friend the Minister for Health that the Government had no plans to extend the limited list scheme? I pray in aid also the question that was asked by my hon. Friend the Member for Newark (Mr. Alexander) about that aspect. Unfortunately, that question has gone adrift, but I hope to refer to it shortly.

Will my hon. Friend also state why the Government are not prepared to wait for the report of the joint strategic working party which they set up and which comprises representatives from the Department of Health, the Treasury, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, but interestingly omitting anyone from the Office of Science and Technology? Why does he not wait for that working party to report before implementing those controversial measures?

My hon. Friend the Member for Newark and I, together with several of our hon. Friends on the Back Benches, have signed an important early-day motion that also asks the Government to wait before introducing the proposals.

I should like to express the industry's belief that, on this issue, it has won the support of patient and consumer groups, the family doctors and hon. Members. It deserves, at the very least, for its case to be fully debated before the proposals are implemented or final decisions are taken to implement them. Today's debate does not represent a proper debate in prime time.

If the Government seek to introduce the proposals through the back door and without a proper debate and a vote at the end of it, the industry will feel demoralised and betrayed by the British Government. If the Government are so convinced that they are acting in the best interests of patients and taxpayers, they should have no fear of such a debate. They should be prepared to put their case to the test by seeking the democratic approval of the House.

6.35 am

Mr. Roger Gale (Thanet, North): First, I apologise to my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham (Mr. Couchman) and to my hon. Friend the Minister for missing the opening remarks of my hon. Friend's speech. I must also declare an interest as a consultant to the pharmaceutical industry. Above and beyond that, I have a constituency interest because Pfizers at Sandwich employs many of my constituents.

I do not believe that anyone on the Conservative Benches, and possibly very few Members on the Opposition Benches, would question the need to control public sector borrowing and public spending. In that context, the Department of Health must consider its budget as much as any other Department. We all appreciate that. That also means that, within the Department of Health, as much consideration must be given to the control of the drugs budget as to the control of any other expenditure, either on primary or secondary health care.

Following on precisely from the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham, I wish to question the efficacy and validity of seeking to use the blunt instrument of the limited list to achieve those necessary budget controls.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health has expressed concern about the fact that, in the past year, the drugs bill rose by 11 per cent. The first question that must be asked is: 11 per cent. of what? The implication has always been that that increase represents an 11 per cent. increase in drug company profits and that, therefore, those massive multinational companies are making money out of the sick. It is felt that that money is badly spent and that we should control that expenditure.

We must, of course, review the expenditure to ensure that we are getting value for money, but we need to understand what that 11 per cent. buys before we say that that increase is too great. We need to consider that expenditure in the broader context of health care and general provision. If 11 per cent. spent on drugs is keeping people out of hospitals—and, of course, it is—that money is not only well spent but it means that, in the end, less money is spent. That money is better spent than money spent on hospital beds.

When the first limited list was introduced it was suggested that it would result in savings to the health service of, let us be generous, £80 million per year. That is not an insignificant sum of money, but no evidence suggests that any real savings have been effected on behalf of the health service as a result. It is possible to argue that about £80 million has been saved on the category of drugs in the limited list. It would be more accurate to say that £80 million has not been spent on those particular drugs.

Any general practitioner would reveal that he has often found himself in the ludicrous position of having to prescribe two drugs, at greater expense, to do the same job as that performed by one drug on the limited list. It is abundantly clear to any primary school mathematician that, far from saving money, the real effect of the first limited list was to cost the NHS more—although I concede at once that the money spent on certain drugs was reduced.

Today, I ask my hon. Friend the Minister again a question that I have been asking for a long time and to which I have not yet had an answer: can he tell us of any real saving to the health service or the nation resulting from the first limited list? Does he seriously believe that the introduction of a further limitation will have any helpful effect on the health service budget?

My hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham rightly referred to the effect on investment in the pharmaceutical industry that the first limited list had—an effect from which the industry and its investment programme are only just recovering. He also mentioned the effect on investment of the current proposals. The industry has advanced various plans to assist the Department in controlling costs. My hon. Friend mentioned that a review committee has been set up, and that it comprises Government representatives, medical experts, and representatives of the industry, for which we are grateful. Indeed, the Secretary of State quickly conceded that it was necessary to put representatives of the industry on the committee, and I do not doubt that that representation will be invaluable. It is sad, however, that the committee is not to be allowed to deliver its findings before at least some of the effects of the limited list are introduced and then felt.

Until now, it has been generally accepted that the United Kingdom has offered the best research and development base for this valuable industry—the best in

[Mr. Roger Gale]

Europe, and probably in the world. The quality of our research scientists, the way we go about the job, and the results that we have delivered to the health services of the world have all been second to none. The value of the industry to UK Limited has been colossal, but it is clear that that value will diminish because of the pressures being brought to bear on the industry.

No one suggests that the industry should be given carte blanche to spend and charge as it likes, subject to no controls of any kind. But we must seriously consider the European option. There is considerable over-capacity in pharmaceutical manufacturing throughout the EC, so companies are having to pay heed to what they do and where they do it, and the United Kingdom is no longer their first choice. That is very sad.

In the longer term, it cannot be helpful to public spending to drive away an industry which, for many years, has produced so much tax revenue for the Treasury. We have not paid enough attention to the European option hitherto. The Minister may say that in the short term it is possible to demonstrate falls in drug prices resulting from the mere threat of the imposition of a limited list. And it is true that some companies will have to reduce their prices to marginal costs just to keep their products on sale, once they have recouped the costs of investment, research and development and production.

Where will the seed corn investment for tomorrow come from, however? It is blandly assumed that the profits of these companies go to the shareholders. Of course, some of the profits do, and I do not suppose that the Minister would wish to deny shareholders a due return on their investment. In this industry, however, probably more than any other in the country, or the world, an enormous proportion of the money made after many years developing a drug goes back as seed corn for the development of tomorrow's drugs. It is an industry which cannot stand still unless, as my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham wryly said, we go back to the days of the leeches.

What evidence do I have for my alarmist suggestion? A company in Scotland was offered regional aid to extend its premises. It was a modest extension, requiring about £3 million of investment. The European headquarters said that, in the current climate, it does not regard the United Kingdom as a favourable country for investment so it will not build the extension as a direct result of the limited list. It is not a case of "may not" build it; it has already been decided.

Pfizers at Sandwich, the company so properly and honourably represented by my hon. Friend and which employs my constituents, has invested massively in new research and development facilities. They are extremely impressive, being some of the finest in the world, and they are on the doorstep of my constituency, located in that of my hon. Friend the Member for Thanet, South (Mr. Aitken). It has a large vacant site, awaiting the rebuilding of part of its plant. It is not being rebuilt and, in the present climate, it is difficult to believe that it will be rebuilt. That will mean that further investment will have been denied to the United Kingdom as a direct result of what is to some extent a knee-jerk reaction to a short-term problem.

It is important that we consider the national interest. If I am right, and if the expenditure on drugs is very largely justified to curtail the expenditure on people being treated in hospital rather than at home, the social effects are not inconsiderable. If mum or dad is in hospital, he or she cannot work. If a child is in hospital, mum or dad still cannot work because he or she has to visit the child. The same could apply to grannie or grandpa. The cost to the family in travel and time, and the cost to business and industry in terms of productivity, will rise. We shall end up paying more in unemployment benefit, income support and housing benefit because more people will be in hospital.

We have a proud record, largely due to the reforms implemented by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and her colleagues. The Government have made great progress in hospital and primary health care, and we can and should be proud of that fact. It would be tragic if a short-term decision, taken without due attention to the national interest across the board, and which affected one section of one Department, were to damage the United Kingdom's interest.

I hope that the Minister will be able to go some way to reassure an industry that is very worried about its future.

6.38 am

Mr. Ian McCartney (Makerfield): Good morning, Madam Deputy Speaker. I also wish a good morning to the Under-Secretary of State for Health, the hon. Member for Bolton, West (Mr. Sackville), and the hon. Members for Gillingham (Mr. Couchman) and for Thanet, North (Mr. Gale).

I listened with interest to the hon. Member for Gillingham. I congratulate him on securing this debate. For many months, he and I have clashed on issues relating to the pharmaceutical industry, but this morning there was much common ground between us, especially on the efficacy and effectiveness of the Government's proposals. I cannot, however, go along with his doomsday scenario for the industry. I sometimes think that the industry is its own worst enemy. In putting a strong case to the Government, it sometimes over-eggs the pudding with allegations about the loss of jobs and investment, although I take seriously what the hon. Member for Thanet, North said about the need to ensure that we have a financially sound arrangement in terms of the Government's own monetary targets. It must be sound to ensure the effectiveness of the range of products that is available to NHS patients and a return on capital for the industry and new jobs for the NHS and for the world market.

Before dealing with some of the problems that are associated with the Government's proposals, I should like to tease out from the Minister the Government's policy on the price regulation scheme. On the Second Reading of the Medicines Information Bill, I told the Minister that the industry would come back to him about this issue and I asked whether the Government had an effective policy on the price regulation scheme. The scheme does not work satisfactorily for the industry and does not offer public accountability. Secrecy abounds on the price regulation scheme; it is even more secret than the defence contractors' debate. In general, there is more openness in debates on defence contracts than on price regulation, which surely cannot be sustainable. I look to the Minister to say how he will remove the secrecy that surrounds these discussions and negotiations.

For some years, the industry has had a reasonably good deal out of the national health service. It is a matter not of us and them but of a joint arrangement that has ensured a flow of income and profits for the industry which have been reinvested. The price regulation scheme has allowed the industry profit ceilings on the capital employed, which has provided a method of ensuring that it has an adequate return on research and development. Sufficient leverage is built into the price mechanism to ensure that the money deployed on research and development is returned to companies through the bill that they hand to the national health service.

The industry has been able to extend the parameters of its research and development bill by considering what it provides in post-marketing surveillance. The Government have allowed the industry to develop this area to the point where it is no more than promotion masquerading as research. We must consider the limits on advertising and promotion to see how effective they are and whether this method of securing the support of GPs is the best for the health service and patients.

Such campaigns encourage doctors to switch patients from current drugs to new ones. We should ensure that the monitoring of the performance of drugs is effective, and adverse reactions should be recorded to ensure that meaningful data are available to the Department and the industry. If monitoring is poor, the Government must take steps to ensure that the system is strengthened and developed. If necessary, the industry may have to change post-marketing surveillance.

The hon. Member for Thanet, North mentioned the need to deploy profits. It is true to say that in the past the industry has got away with murder in terms of some of its activities. It has, through the Department, been able to increase prices for new products to compensate for delisted medicines. It got around the original limited list proposals.

The Government introduced the limited list as a method of curtailing the cost of drugs to the NHS, but the industry was able to transfer that limited cost reduction to other products. What steps is the Minister taking in the current price regulation scheme to prevent that from happening, or, if it happens, to ensure that the companies concerned give a more than adequate reason for price increases on new products? Will the Government be publishing the National Audit Office report on the price regulation scheme? That report has been available for some time, but, so far, the Government have chosen not to publish it.

The hon. Member for Gillingham, in his thoughtful contribution, set out in graphic detail what is of most concern. The issue of the limited list has come a close second to the issue of sub-post offices in the postbags of hon. Members. The interest has not been engineered by the industry, although it has rightly made its view clear, for the most part in a balanced way. In the main, it has come from individuals affected by the proposals, particularly those who suffer from skin disorders and women who use the contraceptive pill.

It is vital that, when the Government come to their conclusions, before they make announcements, they come first to the House for an open and frank debate. We do not need—we hope that this will not happen—the Government to use the summer recess to make announcements, thereby preventing hon. Members from commenting on the proposals. A significant amount of lobbying has been going on, trying to get the Government to change their mind. Therefore, it is important that the Government make a statement in the House on how they will respond to the requests for a fresh look at their proposals. I hope that the Minister takes that into account.

I shall deal with skin diseases and contraceptives. Some 15 per cent. of GPs' time and 6 per cent. of all new out-patient referrals result from skin diseases, and 20 per cent. of the population will at some time contract a skin problem. From September 1991 to September 1992, GP consultants in that sector were as follows. For eczema and dermatitis, 11·6 million GP consultations; for psoriasis, 1·9 million; and for acne, 3·3 million. We are not talking about a minor area of NHS activity. We are talking about a significant proportion of the time spent by GPs and of referrals to local district general hospitals. Nor is it an insignificant proportion of prescriptions for treatments. Many of those treatments are required for the long term, as the complaints are painful.

I should like to quote Dr. Michael Beck, a consultant dermatologist. I have chosen his from the many letters that I have received, because he is a constituent of the Under-Secretary, whose constituency of Bolton, West is a marginal one. Perhaps the letter will help him to concentrate on the issue. Dr. Beck is chairman of the British contact dermatitis group, affiliated to the British Association of Dermatologists, and serves on the medical advisory panel of the National Eczema Society. He covers many of the hospitals in my area—which is cheek by jowl with that of the Under-Secretary—and in that represented by the hon. Gentleman.

In a letter to the Under-Secretary, Dr. Beck says:

"the implications of a reduction of prescribable items for skin disease is causing grave concern to our patients. Those of us responsible for their care are equally perturbed by the potential consequences. I don't wish to land you with the huge range of arguments against this significant restriction in prescribable dermatological preparations at this time. Suffice it to say there are very strong grounds for suspecting that patients' health will be affected and livelihoods will be lost with what I believe ironically will be an eventual financial loss to the Government. Doubtless you will be aware of the huge numbers of persons affected by significant skin disease [eg prior to the introduction of Statutory Sick Pay, when we had relevant statistics available, dermatitis accounted for more days lost from compensated occupational disorders than all others put together].

It is my view that the political consequence to the Conservative Party may also be significant, bearing in mind the numbers of persons who are likely to be adversely affected."

It is not usual for a consultant to write in such language. He is clearly saying that it is not just a matter of efficacy in health terms; it is a bad financial deal for the Government. The Government will quickly find that it will cost more to withdraw products than it would to introduce the limited categories, as suggested. There will be no net savings from the proposals.

Choice is very important. Skin is highly variable, so responses to treatment vary enormously. The appropriate treatment can be found only by trial and error. Many patients develop an intolerance to the medication, resulting in the need to switch to another treatment. Patients can also develop contact dermatitis, an allergic reaction to one or more of the ingredients in a medication. The current range of branded products usually means that a suitable alternative can be found.

Unlike tablets, a topical formulation can be regularly compared with, or substituted for, another. Differences between topical formulations are fundamental to patient

[Mr. Ian McCartney]

compliance. The patient has to accept the texture, colour, odour and absorbency of the medication. Irritation, staining potential, presentation and general ease of use of the product are what the doctors want to continue. With the loss of choice and a limited list, potentially a significant number of people might have their treatment withdrawn. That is unacceptable.

Doctors have submitted detailed information to the Department of Health about why the limited list will not save money. If the Government cannot listen to the industry, but instead believe that it has an axe to grind, they should at least listen to those who write the prescriptions. They are clearly and starkly telling the Government that their proposals are a false economy.

I cannot understand why the Government are putting forward such proposals on contraception. During the last few months the Minister has become known within the Government as the Minister of conscience and family morals. He has had a great deal to say about that, as has his hon. Friend the Member for Bolton, North-East (Mr. Thurnham). It is a pity that the Minister has not had much to say over the past decade while many district health authorities have slashed expenditure on family planning clinics. The Department of Health has done nothing to prevent the withdrawal of that core service. A decade on, we see the consequences of that in what the Minister, through "The Health of the Nation", is trying to do to reduce the unacceptably high levels of unwanted pregnancies and abortions.

Recently, one-parent families have been targeted as scapegoats—and, indeed, over the weekend grandparents were also targeted. At the same time as the Government are making a moral attack on one-parent families, they are making the unbelievable proposal to withdraw oral contraceptives or put them on to the limited list. There will be no net savings from the Government's proposal, but there will be an increase in unplanned pregnancies and abortions. That is unacceptable to all hon. Members. Whether or not one is in favour of abortion legislation, it is a defeat in any circumstances when a woman has to seek termination. It is a personal tragedy, but it is also a tragedy for the Community and for society as a whole. If there is anything that we can do to prevent unplanned pregnancies and abortions, we should do it.

Oral contraception in the United Kingdom is already the cheapest in Europe. We get a very good deal on the price of contraceptives. Family planning is a good investment—for every £100 invested, we can expect a return of more than £500 in saved benefits and other costs to the state.

We should not limit women's choice; it is unacceptable for women to have their choice of contraception products for family planning limited. Not only is a woman's individual choice limited, but the efficacy and safety of many of the products is also reduced. A woman who starts to use contraceptives at an early age will use them over a period of more than two decades. She must ensure that the product which she uses does not have undesirable side effects.

The industry has done a tremendous job in developing and improving oral contraceptives in the past two decades. A huge investment has been made into research into oral contraception, which is still improving and will continue to do so. Just when that investment is being made, the Government announce proposals which find no support from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Birth Control Trust, the Family Planning Association, women's organisations, general practitioners or the British Medical Association. During the current debate, I have not found anyone who supports the proposals. When the Minister winds up the debate, will he tell us who supports the proposals? Is the Treasury simply looking for an easy way to make immediate, short-term cuts in the drugs bill at the expense of state spending over a longer period and women's health in general?

At present, between one quarter and one third of sexually active women in the United Kingdom use oral contraceptives. Of women under 30, up to 48 per cent. use oral contraceptives. Of those aged between 31 and 40, 19 per cent. use them, and of those aged over 40, 7 per cent. use them. Its use among younger women is widespread because it is the most effective and appropriate form of contraception for most women. It also provides the best value for money, in terms both of preventing pregnancy and of cost to the national health service. Barrier methods, intrauterine devices, the sheath, the diaphragm and injectables are all less effective, and provide a worse deal for both women and the NHS than oral contraceptives.

Why have the Government made the proposals? It cannot be to save money as the proposals clearly show that it would take only two additional pregnancies for every 100 women currently using oral contraceptives for the small net saving on one woman's drugs' budget for one year to be wiped out. I do not believe that the calculation of two out of every 100 women is an overestimate—I believe that there will be an increase in unwanted pregnancies. That is historically what happens, and it will happen again.

During 1984, when there was the scare involving the pill and breast cancer, the number of terminations in the United Kingdom rose dramatically. In 1988, during the publicity about AIDS and the advice to men to use condoms, there was a further ratcheting up of the numbers of terminations as women came off the pill and relied on men to use condoms. The proposals constitute an ineffective way of implementing family planning in the United Kingdom, and we should not pursue such policies now—indeed, ever. If the Government are serious about achieving the targets contained in "The Health of the Nation" White Paper, they must make an early announcement stating that the proposals for oral contraception will be abandoned as quickly as possible.

The termination of a pregnancy costs, on average, £200. It costs £270 for an overnight stay, and £140 for a day case. The average cost to the NHS of deliveries is £1,217. That includes GP costs and the care of any infant who must go into a special unit because of difficulties as a result of premature birth or other difficulties which, unfortunately, may occasionally arise.

On the grounds of efficacy, and in terms of what the medical profession is saying, it is much better to use the pill than rely on males or females to use alternative methods that prove to be less effective than oral contraception. I want the Minister to set out his position clearly.

A letter I received from a constituent GP summed up the matter as follows:

"For the sake of saving a few pence a week in the drugs bill, women will experience unpleasant and worrying side effects which will send them back to their GPs time and time again.

It is even possible that the development of new contraceptive pills will grind to a halt as drug companies pull out of the market. The consequences of this will be to reduce further the pool of available contraceptives at precisely the time when specialists say its needs expanding."

That puts the matter into perspective.

I will conclude not simply because the hon. Member for Gillingham is giving me a sign—I usually take signs from my Deputy Chief Whip on such matters. The hon. Members for Thanet, North and for Gillingham and I have managed to put a constructive case to the Minister and I hope that he will respond. It is a pity that the two-man rebellion that we saw this morning did not happen on Thursday or we might not have been on opposite sides of the ring. I hope that the Minister will respond in a much more positive way.

7.11 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Mr. Tom Sackville): Madam Speaker, I will follow the hon. Member for Makerfield (Mr. McCartney) and wish you a good morning. He forgot to greet the Government Whip. I hope that I do not clash with the hon. Gentleman at this time of the day. He has been more constructive than he sometimes is about the drug industry. In a previous debate about pharmaceutical matters, I remember him talking about the pharmaceutical industry ripping off the national health service. I am glad that he has not resorted to such language today.

I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham (Mr. Couchman) on securing this debate. He is a great friend of the industry. In the time that I have been in this job, no hon. Member has sought to speak for the whole industry in the way that my hon. Friend does.

Having been through the Medicines Information Bill with my hon. Friend and the hon. Member for Makerfield, I can attest that my hon. Friend put in a sterling performance. I shall say a few words about his regret that there has been a lack of parliamentary discussion on this matter to date, without lecturing him about how things work—he has been in the House for a long time—but for a more general audience. He will realise that the Government's priority is to propose legislation in any Session. It is not necessarily our first duty to introduce debates on such matters. That is the prime duty of the Opposition and any Back-Bench Member who wishes to raise an important matter on behalf of constituents, constituency interests, industries or whatever. Obviously, the Opposition have the opportunity to raise such matters at any time.

My hon. Friend the Member for Thanet, North (Mr. Gale) has a strong interest in this subject. He made a powerful case, to which I will refer later.

My hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham and the hon. Member for Makerfield spoke about savings resulting from the limited list exercise. Those are hard to compute, because it is impossible to say what would have happened if some other event had not taken place. However, it is self-evident that an exercise that depresses consumption of certain products is likely to save money. It is argued that alternative products are dispensed and that that diminishes the savings. That may be true in some instances, but to say that a preparation that is not dispensed is always replaced by another is probably fanciful.

The hon. Member for Makerfield spoke about the price regulation scheme and about opening discussions on it. He also spoke about publishing the National Audit Office report. I shall write to the hon. Gentleman about that, and I note what he said about the need for discussion and announcements on these matters.

Drugs are a powerful weapon in the war against illness, but, of course, they cost the NHS a great deal. The biggest element of NHS expenditure is pay, which accounts for about 70 per cent. of total spending, but the drugs bill accounts for about a third of the remainder. As my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham said, the NHS drugs bill reached its highest level in 1991-92 at £2·3 billion in England. Last year, it rose by a further 14 per cent. We cannot ignore that and must analyse the matter to determine whether we are getting value for the whole of that increase. We must keep the issue under close scrutiny. Against that background, we need to be alert to ensure maximum cost effectiveness.

Mr. Couchman: I spoke at length in the debate and I hesitate to intervene. When my hon. Friend analyses the reasons for that increase, will he undertake to separate the portions that are due to Government policy in seeking to prevent illness and the portion that is purely an increase in the cost of pharmaceutical products?

Mr. Sackville: It would be foolish of us to suppose that the drugs bill would not continue to rise. We have to make sure that the rate of rise is kept under review, because all health resources are precious. I have no doubt that in the years ahead we shall experience continuing pressure on NHS expenditure.

One important development of prescribing behaviour is to be seen in the GP fund-holding scheme. We have already seen the difference in the rate of rise in prescribing costs between fund holders and other GPs. General practitioners with funds have shown that they have a direct interest in improving the cost effectiveness of prescribing. That is welcome, and they can retain any saving on drugs to reduce demand on the hospital referral element of the budget. That is not just theory: it has happened in practice. The prescribing costs of fund holders in 1991-92 increased, on average, by 3 per cent. less than those of other GPs, and we are confident that that was done without any loss of quality in prescribing.

Mr. McCartney: Is it not also true that, where family health services authorities have introduced extensive generic prescribing policies and encouraged general practitioners—whether or not they are fund holders—there has been a significant budget saving?

Mr. Sackville: That is true. There are all sorts of ways of trying to improve the quality of prescribing, and I do not think that some of the earlier references to indicative prescribing schemes are appropriate. I seem to remember that, when some of these schemes were announced, there were cries of alarm from the medical profession; I think it fair to point out that some proved to be unfounded.

The selected list scheme should be seen as only one element in a wider strategy to control the rise in the NHS drugs bill. As has been said, a group of products was announced in 1985, including seven therapeutic categories.

[Mr. Sackville]

Despite initial scepticism, it has not proved difficult or costly to administer; nor—I stress this—has it prevented patients from receiving the drugs and services that they need. I know of no case that has been made to attempt to prove that that has happened, although it was widely predicted by the industry and others at the time. Experience of the scheme has demonstrated that downward pressure can be exerted on the drugs bill without detriment to patients; that must be the key to any action that we take in this regard.

We now propose to extend the scheme to include 10 further categories. They cover a range of products at varying price levels, and offer scope for savings while enabling all clinical needs to be met. Let me emphasise some important aspects of the scheme. Decisions on which drugs may no longer be available will be made on the advice of the advisory committee. Despite what was said by my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham about the chairmanship of the committee, it is an independent body consisting of experienced doctors, dentists and pharmacists, appointed following nomination by relevant professional organisations.

The committee's membership has been increased to ensure that it has the necessary expertise to review new categories of drugs. For example, it now includes a consultant dermatologist, a consultant gynaecologist and a family planning doctor. It is free to take whatever outside expert advice it deems necessary.

The committee's remit is to ensure that drugs to meet all real clinical needs can be provided as economically as possible. That is central to the argument.

The hon. Member for Makerfield mentioned contraception. It is entirely untrue to say that the removal or review of constituents of the list will force women into abortion or off the pill, and impose contraceptive duties on men. As the hon. Gentleman may know, many oral contraceptives are currently available on prescription. Some duplicate others; I will not go into detail, as that would prejudge consideration of the list. However, if we thought—and if the advisory committee feared—that women would be forced off the pill, we would take no action that would lead to such a result.

Let me repeat that it is a priority of our NHS policy to ensure that the appalling rate of teenage conceptions—which is five or six times the rate in neighbouring countries in northern Europe—is contained. That is an appalling national record and we shall not take any action that will cause further deterioration.

The exercise cannot be characterised as a limitation in responding to patients' needs. If that was the case and if women were forced off the pill, the committee would not have done its job properly. I have no hesitation in saying that. Obviously, the Family Planning Association and family planning doctors are worried. They do not know the outcome of the review. They may fear the worst. But I am bound to give the hon. Member for Makerfield that reassurance.

A huge number of dermatological products are available. The committee will have to decide how many of them are efficacious. If it finds that some are being prescribed at NHS expense which are not efficacious, it will have to look hard at whether those drugs should be prescribed at NHS expense or at the price at which they are currently sold. It would be irresponsible of us not to consider that. All the doomsday predictions about the effects and outcome of the review are premature.

All sorts of medical groups have made it plain that they are worried. I stress that the expert committee is there to ensure that there is a full range of drugs to meet all clinical needs. That is its remit. It does not have a Treasury remit or any other remit.

The committee will ensure that manufacturers are informed as soon as possible if their products are not to be considered. Companies will be given an opportunity to make representations against any provisional view that a product should not be prescribable. In the past few months, many individuals and organisations have made representations to the Government about the selected list scheme. They have argued that they should be given an opportunity to make their views known. We have listened to all those representations. I have met several delegations. We have considered how we might respond to them.

We have decided that, with immediate effect, we shall announce approximately a month before an order is laid the likely coverage of an order to add products to the selected list. That will give hon. Members and the public and any other bodies or individuals an early opportunity to make their views known about what is proposed.

In addition to anxieties about patient welfare, it has been claimed that extension of the selected list scheme threatens Britain's successful pharmaceutical companies. I do not accept that view for several reasons. I do not need reminding about the value of the pharmaceutical industry to the United Kingdom. It is one of the few great research-based, exporting, manufacturing industries left.

The United Kingdom represents 3 per cent. of the world market in consumption of pharmaceutical products. The new categories of drugs being considered by the advisory committee represents a small proportion of that. In the context of a single market, it is fanciful to assume that some restrictions on sales here, or some restriction on the list of products available for dispensing, would control decisions on investment, research and licensing here. If there are reasons for a company to move its manufacturing, research or licensing abroad, in a single market context, it is free to do so and should do so. To suggest that the introduction of some measure of control—matched by controls elsewhere in Europe—will result in companies moving overseas could, in some instances, be an empty threat. We must place that in context. We enormously value this country's pharmaceutical industry.

I am sure that the business managers noted the requests to debate those matters, which are of enormous importance. However, there has been a great deal of doomsday prediction. This country has a strong and vibrant pharmaceutical industry. To say that we are going back to the age of leeches is dangerously premature.

Gipsy Sites

7.30 am

Sir David Mitchell (Hampshire, North-West): I raised the problems caused by gipsies, tinkers, nomads and new age travellers in December 1991 and in May 1992. I apologise to my hon. Friend the Minister for the hour, but not for raising that matter again, for the scenario is changing.

The problem is in two parts. The first relates to the large number of vehicles and people that descend on my part of Hampshire and other parts of the country pre-solstice—later drawing large crowds mainly of youngsters to a noisy festival. The second relates to smaller groups of nomads who travel in caravans and converted buses. They take up residence on sites that are often unsuitable and remain there weeks and months with no proper sanitary arrangements, accumulating unsightly rubbish, and leaving filth behind when they eventually depart.

In our experience in Hampshire, the Public Order Act 1986 is a most effective way of expelling the first group from private land. The Minister may recall that a large settlement arrived at Stockbridge Down two years ago. They were moved on using the 1986 Act, but then they settled on some green lanes where there was a public right of way as well as private property. Section 39 of the 1986 Act does not apply to green lanes.

I suggested that that legislation should be extended to apply to such situations. The then Minister kindly arranged for the Minister of State, Department of the Environment to arrange a meeting between Home Office, Department of Transport and Department of the Environment officials, to which I made a presentation together with a representative of Hampshire county council and the deputy chief constable.

I was delighted to receive a letter earlier this year from my right hon. and noble Friend the Minister of State, which stated:

"Your general interest and concern in this issue and your suggestion about extending section 39 of the Public Order Act 1986 to include green lanes and byways open to all traffic were most helpful in our discussions as to how best we might proceed . . . We propose that section 39 should now be extended to cover minor highways, lanes and byways open to all traffic . . . As well as changes to section 39 we also propose to take measures to deal with illegal raves. We propose to give the police the power, where 10 or more people have gathered on a site and where it is believed that a rave will take place, to direct those people to leave. It would be a criminal offence to ignore the direction."

That is most welcome, and will go a long way to ensuring that, pre-solstice, mass concentrations of travellers will no longer frighten my constituents. I use the word "frighten" intentionally, because that is the effect.

However, I did not keep my hon. Friend the Minister up all night for a debate that started at half-past 7 in the morning simply to thank him. The second problem is the small groups of half a dozen or so who often camp for longer periods. They are part of some 3,900 to 4,000 unauthorised site dwellers throughout the country. I understand that there are some 4,800 county-provided sites and 2,100 private sites. My statistics, though, go back to 1989. If the Minister has more recent figures, I shall find them interesting and helpful.

I had a long letter from the Minister dated 31 March, for which I thank him warmly. He analysed the problem and spelt out the way forward, as he saw it. According to my hon. Friend, the existing system has, first,

"failed gipsies and failed the local communities."

I agree. Secondly, it has not reduced

"the incidence of illegal camping . . . local authorities should have stronger powers to deal quickly and effectively with illegal camping."

My hon. Friend also said that the Department proposed to

"give local authorities a new power to direct trespassers to remove their caravans from land. Failure to comply . . . will be a criminal offence. We also propose that it will be a criminal offence to return to the same land as a trespasser within three months."

I agree. My hon. Friend will hear the loud "Hear, hears" coming up from Hampshire——

Mr. Peter L. Pike (Burnley): Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Sir David Mitchell: I have a lot of ground to cover, but I shall give way to the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Pike: Does the hon. Gentleman not agree that if the Minister were to respond to the present consultations by removing the right of local authorities to provide sites, a duty that exists now, we should not solve the problems to which he referred but would create more of them and that the solution is to provide both private and public sites that are small and acceptable?

Sir David Mitchell: The hon. Gentleman has referred to a point to which I was about to turn. I am sorry that I gave way to him.

As I was saying, the Minister will hear loud "Hear, hears" from Hampshire regarding that proposal.

The third point in my hon. Friend's letter is that the existing system does not provide sufficient accommodation for gipsies. I agree. It follows, logically, that steps should be taken to provide more accommodation.

How will the Minister take these steps to put right the under-provision that he recognises? He sets that out in his draft circular of 26 May. The under-provision is a matter of sites for nomad encampments. At present, there is a duty on the county council to provide sites. There are insufficient sites, so the Minister tells us, so does he intend to strengthen that duty? No, he intends to abolish it.

If there is no duty, how will the special needs of gipsies be met? Will it be met by relaxing the strict nature of planning controls so that either gipsies have their own camp sites or farmers use set-aside land for private sector provision? No. The Minister's main intention is, first, to reflect

"the plan-led nature of the planning system".

That means, in practice, that, if a local plan says it is open countryside and that there is to be no development there, it will be enforced—no matter that there is a deserted chalk quarry, or a gravel pit, hidden from sight by surrounding trees, out of the way where it does no harm to anybody. That site will not be allowed to be used, because it will be outwith the local plan.

No matter that there is a hamlet of some 20 or 30 houses, with contiguous, half-hidden sites. That hamlet does not exist in the planners' eyes, because the planners have declared the area to be open countryside and it is forbidden that there should be any development in that sort of country. If my hon. Friend wants to know more about that, I urge him to look at the case of the Day family

[Sir David Mitchell]

in my constituency, a family of settled gipsies who sought to stay on their own land and who are under threat of being moved. An appeal that went to my hon. Friend's Department was heard by an inspector appointed by my hon. Friend, and was turned down, purely because it was outwith the plan that my hon. Friend intends fully to enforce.

Does my hon. Friend intend to ensure that local authorities give special consideration to the needs of gipsies? No, he is going to withdraw the previous guidance stating that special consideration could be justified for gipsy sites in respect of protected areas including green belts. That is a double no, and a double blow.

Planning applications in respect of the gipsy community should be treated on the same footing as those from anyone else. However, in our over-populated south-east of England and with tight planning controls, the prospect of obtaining planning consent for gipsy sites under the new conditions outlined by the Minister is virtually nil.

I want now to consider the evidence given to the Department in response to the consultation document. Why has my hon. Friend the Minister not published an analysis, or placed in the Library of the House an analysis, of the responses that he has received? Is it because the advice has been generally unhelpful? Is it because it has shown virtually no support for the Minister's proposals on site provision? Is it not true that most respondents wanted to keep and to strengthen the present system?

My hon. Friend the Minister is well aware of the conclusions of the Cripps report of 1976 and the Wibberley report of 1987, which stress the importance of private site provision. In response to the Minister's circular Hampshire county council stated:

"Traditional Gypsies generally have the greatest difficulty obtaining planning permission . . . There is no evidence to suggest that traditional Gypsies will be more successful in the future in obtaining planning permission."

The measured terms of the Hampshire county council response to the circular states:

"If the slight advantage they have, by virtue of the advice given in the Department of the Environment circulars 28/77 and 57/78 is removed, then the prospects are likely to worsen. The County Council sees no prospect of a significant reduction of the numbers of Traditional Gypsies on legal and illegal sites if a main part of Government policy is to expect them to make their own provision from the same starting point as the settled community, and without the present small advantages stemming from Department of the Environment advice."

No doubt the Minister has been to the DOE library and has read the responses. Is he aware that my research shows that the Council for the Protection of Rural England is concerned that the replacement of the statutory duty to provide sites is likely to increase the problem of identifying suitable sites? It believes that the overriding objective of gipsy site policy should be to secure sufficient sites in the most environmentally acceptable locations.

The Country Landowners Association feels that the provision of gipsy sites should continue, while gipsies should receive encouragement to provide sites themselves. More local authority sites should be provided on local authority land. To some extent, the Caravan Sites Act 1968 was successful.

The National Farmers Union states that the present provision of gipsy sites is unsatisfactory. There are not enough of them, and some are poorly managed. The NFU is against absolving local authorities from their present duty. The National Trust states that a repeal of the duty to provide sites will result in lack of incentives to local authorities to provide sites.

The Town and Country Planning Association disagrees most strongly with the repeal of the 1968 Act duties and believes that there is no good reason why travellers should not receive assistance at a level similar to that received by other sectors in the provision of places to live and work.

The Association of County Councils believes that the proposals do not provide a solution that is intellectually coherent, acceptable in humanitarian terms or workable in practice. I agree with that. Response after response informs my hon. Friend the Minister that he has got it wrong. He rightly consulted, but he appears to have ignored the responses that he received.

I want now to consider the draft provisional circular on gipsy sites and planning of 20 May. What does that document tell us? I will not read the whole document—I do not have time and I would not seek to do so—but I shall quote the essence of it:

"The proposed removal of the local authorities' duty to provide gypsy sites is expected to lead to more applications for private gypsy sites."

That is quite right. It goes on:

"Local planning authorities will need to be aware of the accommodation and occupational needs of the travelling community".

Hear, hear, but what is being done about that? It goes on:

"It will be important for local planning authorities to be ready to discuss gypsies' needs at an early stage"

Very nice. It goes on:

"Authorities' plans may"—

not "will have a duty"—

"identify locations suitable for gypsy sites . . . Other areas which may"—

I stress "may"—

"be suitable for gypsy sites might"—

not "must", not "should"—

"include vacant land or surplus local authority land."

So it goes on. There are pages and pages saying not very much. It states:

"Authorities should"—

not "must"—

"take a positive approach in considering planning applications for private gypsy sites . . . There is, however, no special status attaching to gypsies in determining planning applications."

In practice, that means that not a single proposed gipsy site in Hampshire, and certainly none in the Test valley, will ever be given consent. Gipsy sites are unpopular. They are an unpopular decision to be taken. Unpopular decisions can be relatively easily taken by large authorities, because only a small section of representatives will kick up a fuss. However, when the matter moves from county size to district or borough size, the furore when a gipsy site is proposed will ensure that it will be turned down by the planners.

My hon. Friend's document consists of pages and pages, but it does not do anything to help provide for the sites that are required. I ask the Minister to draw back now before it is too late. I understand that he intends to introduce a Bill following the Queen's Speech in November. I staged this debate to say, first, that the proposals on mass disturbance and the Public Order Act 1986 are excellent; and, secondly, that the proposals to curb illegal camping are okay, provided that alternative

provision is made. But the proposals to remove the county duty to provide sites and let gipsies take their chance like everyone else with the planning system are deeply flawed.

Local authorities will use their powers to move gipsies and nomads off unauthorised sites, and, like the Arcadians, they will go—but where? To another, probably more unsuitable site, causing more nuisance for local residents than the original site that they were on. The Minister should take back the proposal and think again, and, with respect, listen to the consultation responses that he has received. It is better that he does that now than incorporates a ministerial banana skin in a November Bill.

I now wish to refer to unauthorised sites occupied by nomads. Parish councils and constituents alike have three principal complaints about such sites: they are insanitary —there is the comment about going into the bushes with a spade in the hand, or even none—rubbish and litter around the sites, and their unwashed appearance.

I put a constructive point to the Minister. One of the main components of a successful policy will be the provision of transit sites, which are better chosen by the local authority than by the nomads who are driven from site to site. Such transit sites need four things: first, a bit of waste ground, well away from housing; secondly, two lavatories; thirdly, one stand pipe for water; and, fourthly, a skip for rubbish—nothing else.

That costs a lot less than providing public housing for nomads who do not want it. Most of them live on £44 a week income support. They do not draw housing benefit. It is far more economic and makes far more sense to give them a loo, a water supply and a skip for rubbish than to criminalise them by taking away their existing unauthorised site and failing to make alternative provision.

7.49 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. Tony Baldry): I will try to deal with the points raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Hampshire, North-West (Sir D. Mitchell) in the comparatively short time available to me. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Pike) intervened to make it clear that there should be a continuing duty in terms of public provision. I will also address that issue.

My hon. Friend has had a continuing interest in this matter. In an earlier debate, he referred to three main concerns—illegal camping by small numbers of people in caravans sited on green lanes; large convoys of new age travellers who descend on my hon. Friend's constituency during the summer solstice on their way to Stonehenge; and ravers who are associated with the new age travellers in setting up unlicensed music festivals. We have taken steps to tackle those concerns—steps which have been welcomed by my hon. Friend.

My hon. Friend is concerned that our reform of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 will not ensure that a sufficient number of sites will continue to be made available. I urge my hon. Friend to discuss his concerns with hon. Members from constituencies in Avon and Somerset. Despite the statutory duty on local authorities under the Act, which has been in force for more than 25 years, the provision of sites in Avon is woefully inadequate. Continuing disputes arise between districts and the county about the location of those sites. Every application is subject to considerable contention in the local communities and each application is politicised.

Despite the operation of the 1968 Act for more than 25 years, few districts in Somerset are designated as offering adequate provision for caravans. That Act, which commanded all-party support, was introduced with the best of motives, but it simply has not worked. Less than 40 per cent. of local authorities have made adequate provision under the terms of that Act so that they can become designated. In reality, even those that have been designated would need to make further provision because the Act was deeply flawed in its estimate of the number of gipsies for which it needed to make provision.

We think that the time has come for that to change. As my hon. Friend has made clear, the 1968 Act has failed local authorities, local communities and the gipsies. For that reason, we believe that in future travellers should seek to make provision through the planning system.

Many travellers already have made provision through that system and many private sites exist. I have two in my constituency, which offer 50 pitches each. In the 10 years in which I have been a Member of Parliament, I have never had any difficulty with either of them. I have never received any complaint about them; nor has any question been raised with me about them. The sites are well managed.

The planning system is perfectly capable of making the necessary provision. My hon. Friend the Member for Hampshire, North-West is concerned that no gipsy site will ever receive planning permission in the Test valley should we opt for that system. With due respect, my hon. Friend is wrong, for two reasons. Firstly, the Test valley district council and every other district council will have to make provision within its local plan for reasonable provision of gipsy sites, just as it must make provision in the local plan for every other planning contingency. That is what the planning guidance circular is all about—ensuring that local authorities make adequate proposals and provision for travellers in their development plans.

Then, if a local authority unreasonably refuses applications, an appeal is possible. I am determined that the planning system should operate fairly. At present, it does not explicitly recognise gipsies' special accommodation needs. Local planning authorities are required only to have general policies in their structure plans, which are seldom translated into detailed policies and local plans.

Planning applications from gipsies are nearly always treated as departures from local planning policies. That is why we have issued, in draft form for public consultation, planning guidance which will require local planning authorities to include specific gipsy site policies in their local plans. That will give gipsies confidence in the system and encourage them to follow the rules.

In the past, in incidents such as the one that my hon. Friend described, when gipsies have sought to make their own provision and have had their applications refused, and inspectors have then turned them down on appeal, this has almost always happened when gipsies have bought land, moved on, and sought to set up pitches without planning permission. Then, when the local authority has tried to take enforcement action, the gipsy family concerned have applied retrospectively for planning permission, and if it has been turned down, they have appealed. Not surprisingly, inspectors have said that it was wrong to flout the planning system in that way.

I have every confidence, however, that, if gipsies make proper applications to local planning authorities, they will be provided with planning permission. Moreover, they will be able to see that local authorities make proper provision

[Mr. Tony Baldry]

within their development plans. If they do not, I have no doubt that the National Gypsy Council and others will draw our attention to the local authorities that they do not believe are making such provision. The Department can intervene in the development plans concerned and tell the local authorities that they are failing to make adequate provision.

This will be a far more effective way of proceeding than the present cumbersome system, in which the Secretary of State's only recourse in such cases is to serve a statutory direction under the 1968 Act. A direction was served on Avon some years ago, but despite the application of the stick, adequate provision has yet to be made.

The National Gypsy Council and others have welcomed the increased provision for private sites. The council, in response to the consultation paper that we issued in August 1992, said:

"private sites are beneficial to all concerned: to gypsies because they offer them the security of a legal home and a base from which they can send their children to school; to local authorities and central government who are spared the expense of developing and managing sites; and to the local settled community by the reduction in numbers of unauthorised encampments . . . private gypsy sites are in locations where the gypsies who live on them will want to be; they suffer none of the problems due to incompatibility which are sometimes found on local authority sites; and once private sites become established, families on it quickly prove themselves to be good neighbours."

So the gipsies themselves have welcomed our proposals.

My hon. Friend asked why we do not publish a detailed analysis of the consultation. That would be very difficult, given the sort of responses that we obtained. They were often based on complete misunderstandings. For instance, press reports had led quite a few of those responding to believe that we intended deliberately to force gipsy families away from their traditional lives into domestic residential housing. There was never any suggestion of that. It was a red herring, but it affected many of the responses.

Also, as my hon. Friend said, some of those responding merely wanted taxpayers to continue to provide a 100 per cent. grant. That has failed in the past. We have invested £56 million in the public provision of gipsy sites since 1968, but fewer than 40 per cent. of local authority areas are properly designated as having made adequate provision for gipsies.

I very much hope that my hon. Friend will accept that the measures that we have—

It being Eight o'clock, the motion for the Adjournment of the House lapsed, without Question put.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Ordered,

That Mr. Michael Ancram be discharged from the Committee of Public Accounts and Mr. Robert Jackson be added to the Committee.—*[Mr. MacKay.]*

Sergeant Robin Feddon

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. MacKay.]*

8 am

Mr. Eric Martlew (Carlisle): I rise, after a very long night, to request the Minister to order a board of inquiry into the death of Sergeant Robin Feddon. Tomorrow is the second anniversary of his death, but his mother has still not received a satisfactory explanation of the events that led to the death of her son. She is a constituent of mine whose husband, brothers and sons have all served with the British Army. She is proud of that tradition and of the fact that her son, Robin, served with distinction in the Gulf. She believed in the fairness of the Army and in British justice, but, almost two years after her son's death, her faith has been shattered by the Ministry of Defence's failure to order a board of inquiry into her son's death.

I relate what happened. The Feddon family was based in Munster in Germany with the British Army. Sergeant Feddon was with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, but served with the Hussars. On 28 July 1991, Mrs. Feddon left the family home at 1.20 pm, believing her husband to be alive. She returned at 1.30 pm with a friend, Mrs. Pritchard, and found him hanging by a skipping rope in the cellar. Mrs. Feddon and Mrs. Pritchard left the house without trying to save Sergeant Feddon. They did not seek help for at least 10 minutes—some argue that it was 20 minutes—but at 1.50 pm the guardhouse received a report about the incident. At 2.6 pm, Sergeant Feddon was pronounced dead.

Before the funeral, Mrs. Feddon went to Holland on holiday with her boyfriend and Sergeant and Mrs. Pritchard. Mrs. Feddon decided to have her husband cremated in Germany rather than bringing the body home for burial in this country. That ruled out the possibility of a coroner's inquest. Mrs. Feddon received moneys totalling £165,000 from Army gratuities and insurance policies.

Sergeant Feddon's brother claims that the widow told him that Robin had drunk half a bottle of spirits on the morning before he died. The post-mortem results record no alcohol in his bloodstream. Sergeant Feddon's mother says that Sergeant Pritchard phoned the family to say that Robin had been receiving psychiatric treatment, but the medical records show that that was not so.

I have stated the facts. I am not accusing Mrs. Feddon of any crime; this is not trial by Parliament. I am relating the events to make it clear that it was not a usual death, or suicide, if that is what it was. It was unusual in the extreme; it was bizarre, yet there has been no inquest or Army board of inquiry to which witnesses could be called under oath.

Army regulations state:

"Matters to be investigated in accordance with Defence Council policy. The Defence Council declare that, as a matter of policy, the matters set out below are usually to be investigated by a board of inquiry."

The first of those matters is

"Unnatural death abroad.

(1) Of any person subject to military law, other than death by enemy action."

That certainly applied to Sergeant Feddon.

Since Sergeant Feddon's funeral, his family have been pushing for further investigations. They have written to the Ministry of Defence, to Robin's commanding officer,

to generals, to the Attorney-General and to the Prime Minister. I have written to two Ministers on five occasions and have had two meetings with Viscount Cranborne. On the first occasion, I had to threaten to seek an Adjournment debate because he refused to see me. I last wrote to him on 28 February requesting a board of inquiry; I have yet to receive a reply.

I advised the family that to take the matter further I would have to seek a debate in Parliament, which would mean making it public. They agreed that that was the only action remaining to them because of the Government's reluctance to hold a board of inquiry. I again telephoned Viscount Cranborne to see whether he would hold a board of inquiry before I applied for an Adjournment debate. Again, he refused.

Two articles appeared in *The Guardian* on 13 July. The first dealt with my call for an inquiry and the other reported the suicide, or death. They were written by a Lobby journalist. It says much for the family that after two years they decided that the story should be dealt with in a responsible way. David Hencke wrote the article in a responsible way. Many of us can imagine how the tabloids would have handled the story.

The family have been careful and patient, yet the Government have treated the matter with contempt. The Minister may argue that now is not the time to hold a board of inquiry because two years have passed since Sergeant Feddon's death. The fault for that lies with the Army and Defence Ministers, not with the family. Army regulations state that a board of inquiry should have been held, but it was decided not to hold one.

If nothing else, I hope that the Minister will at least say that such an incident will never happen again. *The Guardian* article reports Lord Cranborne as saying:

"I agree that formal proceedings might have prevented subsequent recriminations. The need for a board of inquiry in such circumstances is being reinforced."

That is an admission by the Army that a board of inquiry should have been held, that a mistake has been made and that the matter should be rectified in the future.

That is not good enough. I do not accept that an investigation by the military police is a substitute for a board of inquiry or an inquest. If Sergeant Feddon had died in the United Kingdom, there would have been a police inquiry and a public inquest, at which witnesses could have been cross-examined under oath. That was not the case, so I do not accept the argument that, if there was a police investigation, that should be the end of the matter. It is nonsense to say that there should be one law for the Army and those who serve overseas and another for civilians in this country.

There has been a cover-up. I do not know why there has been a cover-up and I am not accusing anybody of committing any crime. I am just saying that justice should be done and should be seen to be done. I hope that the Minister will be able to tell the House that the Government have given great thought to the matter, consulted the Minister in the other place, and decided that there has been a mistake and that there should now be a board of inquiry so that, on the second anniversary of Sergeant Feddon's death, his family will know that all the facts of the case will be made public. Then, perhaps, his mother can get on with grieving for her son.

8.10 am

The Minister of State for the Armed Forces (Mr. Jeremy Hanley): The hon. Member for Carlisle (Mr. Martlew) has taken this opportunity to bring to the attention of the House the sad facts surrounding the case of Sergeant Feddon. This is by no means the first opportunity that the hon. Gentleman has had to air the facts of the case, and I know that he knows the facts intimately. I very much hope, for the sake of the Feddon family, and not least the children, that it will be the last. He said that letters to my noble Friend Viscount Cranborne had not been answered, but he must admit that he has had two meetings with the Under-Secretary of State for Defence as a result of those letters, and has received full explanations. I hope that he will regard those meetings as replies to those letters.

Of course, I understand the distress of Sergeant Feddon's parents. The hon. Gentleman said that this is not a trial by Parliament, but it seemed to me to be getting pretty close to it. He said that there has been a cover-up, but I believe that the facts will show otherwise. I hope that this morning will be the end of the matter.

At about 13.55 hours on Sunday 28 July 1991, as the hon. Gentleman said, exactly two years ago tomorrow, the Royal Military police, Munster, received information that the apparently lifeless body of Sergeant Robin Feddon had been found by his wife, Mrs. Juliet Feddon, in the cellar of their married quarter. It seems he had committed suicide by hanging himself with a skipping rope.

The scene was visited by the investigating officers of the special investigations branch of the Royal Military police and the senior medical officer. The senior medical officer pronounced Sergeant Feddon dead at 14.06 hours, the cause of death to be determined by post-mortem examination. It was established that the body had not been disturbed and, after photographs had been taken, the body was removed to the mortuary. No letter was found and there was no obvious evidence that Sergeant Feddon had intended to take his own life. A full military police investigation subsequently took place. The results of this investigation are copious and detailed, but I consider it important that I devote some time to enlarging upon its outcome.

Mrs. Juliet Feddon was interviewed at length and it transpired that, following an argument between Sergeant and Mrs. Feddon at a mess function in the early hours of Saturday 27 July, Mrs. Feddon stayed with friends. Sergeant and Mrs. Feddon agreed to meet at their quarter on Sunday 28 July to discuss their differences.

On that Sunday Mrs. Feddon was accompanied by a female friend who remained with the two Feddon children in a nearby park while Sergeant and Mrs. Feddon talked. Mrs. Feddon recounted that she and her husband reached an amicable agreement to divorce and at 13.20 hours she told her husband that she was going to the play park to collect the children.

Mrs. Feddon stated that the children were reluctant to return with her to the quarter but were persuaded to do so by the promise of an ice lolly each. On reaching the house Mrs. Feddon went to the freezer, which was kept in the cellar, to get the ice lolly. On reaching the cellar she saw her husband hanging by his neck from a skipping rope tied to some water pipes near to the freezer. Mrs. Feddon estimated that this was about half past one.

Shocked, she ran back up the cellar steps and told her friend what had happened and that she was going to seek

[Mr. Jeremy Hanley]

help from a neighbour. She stated that she went to the house of a neighbouring Army captain where a barbecue was being held. Mrs. Feddon stated that she was understandably shocked by the discovery of her husband's body and too frightened to approach him.

Mr. Martlew: In fact, both Mrs. Feddon and Mrs. Pritchard went in. In *The Guardian* article from which I quoted, Mrs. Feddon said that she thought that her husband was alive at that time.

Mr. Hanley: I do not have the information that Mrs. Feddon thought that her husband was alive at that time. I believe that she said that she thought that he was 99 per cent. dead. What exactly that means, I know not. All that I know is that she was understandably scared. I have had a report from a psychologist who says that when a person finds another hanging one of a number of normal reactions is to leave the scene immediately.

The hon. Gentleman might want to put himself in Mrs. Feddon's place. Is it a duty to cut down someone who is hanging? Is it a duty to try to lift his feet to try to relieve the weight? Is it a duty to try to ascertain whether he is dead? I submit that it is one of the normal reactions to be so scared with what one has found that that person departs from the scene immediately to try to get help.

I am not saying that that is the only reaction. It may not be the way that the hon. Gentleman would react in such circumstances. Certainly, Mrs. Feddon said that she was so shocked that she left the scene immediately. Her friend also stated that she, too, was scared of going down to the cellar and that she also went to seek help after Mrs. Feddon's departure from the House. I agree with the hon. Gentleman that both women left and neither of them felt that she could approach the body.

A statement taken from another Army captain who was a guest at the barbecue confirms that he witnessed his host with Mrs. Feddon telephoning the emergency services. She was certainly distressed. At almost exactly the same moment the emergency services received a call from another neighbour of the Feddon family, a staff sergeant, who had been approached by Mrs. Feddon's friend.

I have gone into some detail about what transpired on that afternoon because I know that the hon. Gentleman and, indeed, Sergeant Feddon's family have expressed some concern at the time that elapsed between the initial discovery of the body and the arrival of the emergency services. The hon. Gentleman has also called into question whether Mrs. Feddon might be guilty of any crime by not cutting down her husband's body immediately. Some people may regard that suggestion as distasteful and inappropriate. I have tried to explain that it is regarded as one of a range of normal reactions. In any event, I am advised that there is no evidence of any criminal conduct on Mrs. Feddon's part. I also ask that the hon. Gentleman makes allowances for the shock that any wife might feel in such appalling circumstances.

The investigating officers found no evidence to suggest foul play and that conclusion was supported by the results of the post-mortem examination. As the hon. Gentleman said, subsequent tests showed a nil alcohol level in Sergeant Feddon's body. Again, as the hon. Gentleman said, his medical records made no reference to his ever having undergone psychiatric treatment—nor is there any evidence of anyone alleging that he had had such treatment. The special investigation branch concluded that Sergeant Feddon's death was an act of suicide and that the other details were merely hearsay.

The hon. Gentleman referred to insurance moneys and payments from service charities. I am not sure what he is implying, but again it is true that it would be quite normal for someone to take out insurance policies, especially when her husband went off to the Gulf or to some other such episode. No doubt it is another detail that could give rise to suspicion in the minds of those who, perhaps, were unprepared for what happened.

My sympathy and that of the Ministry of Defence remains with the whole of Sergeant Feddon's family. I know that my officials, in responding to their many inquiries, have been courteous and understanding at all times. I have been through the complete file in the few weeks since I have taken on these responsibilities. Nevertheless, the fact remains that a very thorough investigation was carried out and a number of additional inquiries made by the Feddon family were followed up.

Once the investigation was concluded, Mrs. Feddon, as next of kin, was at liberty to choose to have her husband's body either repatriated to the United Kingdom or cremated in Germany. She elected, quite within her rights, to arrange a cremation in Germany and her husband's remains were then repatriated to the United Kingdom. Incidentally—the hon. Gentleman referred to it as a detail which might cause suspicion—that meant that Sergeant Feddon's death was not subject to a coroner's inquest as it would have been had his body been repatriated to England or Wales prior to cremation or burial. It would not have been subject to an inquest if it had been repatriated to Scotland or Northern Ireland, so the inconsistency is not total. However, the purpose of an inquest is to establish who the deceased was and how, when and where he died. It does not apportion blame or address matters of civil or criminal liability.

The hon. Gentleman is also aware that the brigade commander exercised his discretion not to convene a board of inquiry into the case on the basis that such an inquiry would unearth no further relevant facts. The brigade commander was within his rights not to hold a board of inquiry, since although it is Ministry of Defence policy that a board of inquiry should be held into any unnatural death overseas, Queen's regulations do not make that mandatory where the death has been investigated by another form of inquiry or investigation. In this case, the special investigations branch of the Royal Military Police had made a full investigation.

The hon. Gentleman has since requested that a board of inquiry be convened at this late stage. I understand that the reasons for the delay related to the facts as we set them out, but we must deal with the matter from this point. Lord Cranborne refused the hon. Gentleman's request on the ground that witnesses could not be compelled to return to Germany to attend if a board of inquiry were held there, and civilians cannot be compelled to attend wherever a board of inquiry is held. No further physical or witness evidence is therefore likely to emerge now. I have to concur with Lord Cranborne's conclusion that a board of inquiry, which would necessarily have to be based upon the investigating team's original findings, would achieve nothing now. Indeed, I consider it vital that we keep at the forefront of our minds the well-being of Sergeant and Mrs. Feddon's two children on whom any further inquiry could

only have a traumatic effect. Indeed, I feel that the likely publicity generated by raising the matter in that forum might be most undesirable for the children. The hon. Gentleman said that the tabloids had not got hold of the story, but it has been published in *The Guardian*, so it is in the public forum and available for whatever treatment the tabloids wish to give it. For the sake of the children, I hope that it is not subject to such treatment.

A board of inquiry is not a criminal court and cannot be used to conduct criminal proceedings. The primary purpose of such a forum is to establish the effectiveness of a unit—or, as in this case, of the emergency procedures followed—and assess whether the appropriate measures were taken. I do not believe that any of those factors were in question in this instance.

As the hon. Gentleman knows, we have undertaken to review the Army's practice with regard to boards of inquiry with a view to considering whether they should be held as a matter of course in cases of unnatural or violent death. There is some inconsistency between the three forces. The results of that review are not yet known. However, even if a board of inquiry were to be held in every case, including this one, there would doubtless still be some who would not accept its findings, any more than they might have accepted the findings of a thorough investigation by the military police.

Since these tragic events transpired, Sergeant Feddon's family have continued to make complaints either directly to my Department or via the hon. Gentleman. Many of those complaints have contained accusations against, among others, Mrs. Feddon which are based upon hearsay and which cannot reasonably be discussed in this place. The investigation into Sergeant Feddon's death was necessarily based primarily on the witness statements of all those present or associated in some way with the case. In many cases, the individuals have been interviewed more than once and on no occasions have the families' claims been supported by factual or witness evidence.

I can only repeat, therefore, the same conclusions which have been imparted on numerous occasions before. I am content that the matter has been investigated to the fullest extent possible and that nothing could or would be gained by reopening the case, certainly not by a board of inquiry. In such circumstances there is often a strong feeling that blame should be apportioned. I appreciate the feelings of the family, but ask them, for their own sake, to come to terms with their loss. The evidence points incontrovertibly to the original finding of suicide.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-four minutes past Eight o'clock.

House of Commons

Tuesday 27 July 1993

The House met at half-past Nine o'clock

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

PETITIONS

Hertford County Hospital

9.34 am

Mr. Bowen Wells (Hertford and Stortford): This petition of 60,000 odd signatures to save the Hertford county hospital has been gathered assiduously by the Save Hertford County Hospital Campaign Committee led by Raymond Slater. It is addressed

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Parliament assembled. The humble petition of Raymond P. Salter ROH (RAOB) of 20a St. Augustines Drive, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire, vice chairman of the "Save Hertford County Hospital Campaign Committee" and the many thousands whose signatures are appended hereto, showeth that:—The Hertford county hospital is under threat of closure by the local health authority. The Hertford county hospital is a listed building, as also the site, and is in a conservation area. It is the only hospital readily accessible by public transport to the many small villages surrounding Hertford and to the neighbouring town of Ware. There is a need for the Hertford County Hospital to provide a wide range of services, and to have the facility of recovery beds to ensure patients in the area are properly cared for and to include respite and long-term care.

Wherefore your petitioners pray that your honourable House support the refurbishment and retention of the county hospital on its present site.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

To lie upon the Table

Timex Dispute

Mr. John McAllion (Dundee, East): I wish to present a petition from the sacked Timex workers in Dundee. The petition expresses their

support for early-day motion 2310 which condemns the Timex Corporation for the inhuman and brutal treatment of the sacked Timex workers and which calls for support for a worldwide boycott of Timex products. Because of the legal shackles on British trade unions which prevent them from calling on the support of their fellow trade unionists, it is only by means of the petition and under the cloak of parliamentary privilege that the sacked Timex workers are able to make public their support for the boycott of Timex products.

The petition reads:

We therefore request that the House of Commons urge Her Majesty's Government to use its influence to persuade the Timex Corporation to reverse its policies towards its own employees in Dundee.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

To lie upon the Table.

Sub-Post Offices

Mr. Paddy Tipping (Sherwood): I have the great honour to present a petition from the people of north Nottinghamshire. There are 12,500 names on the petition, which calls for the retention of sub-post offices in north Nottinghamshire. I should like to thank the people who have organised the petition and the 30 sub-postmasters in the Sherwood constituency who have made this petition possible.

The petition reads:

The humble Petition of sub-post office users in Nottinghamshire sheweth that they are against the removal by the Government of the right to receive pension and benefit payments at local post offices.

Wherefore your petitioners pray that your honourable House request the Government to give people the right to choose to receive pension and benefit payments at their local Post Office, recognising the benefit of this to the individual and the community.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

To lie upon the Table.

Mr. Charles Kennedy (Ross, Cromarty and Skye): I wish to present a petition on behalf of individuals, local post offices and community councillors within the Ross, Cromarty and Skye constituency which is signed by more than 8,000 constituents expressing alarm and concern about the continued provision of a widespread local post office network.

The petition reads:

The Humble Petition of the undersigned Residents of the Ross, Cromarty and Skye constituency sheweth that we express deep concern that the Government proposes to privatise post office services and compulsorily transfer Social Security payments from post offices to banks, and we oppose these measures jointly and severally as they threaten the very survival of rural post offices and deny the efficiency and convenience of the present system, especially in rural areas.

Wherefore your petitioners pray that your honourable House will do everything possible to impress upon the Secretaries of State for Trade and Industry and Social Security the need for an autonomous post office service in the public sector and to abandon plans for the compulsory transfer of Social Security payments to banks.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, etc.

To lie upon the Table.

Bus Services (Deregulation)

Mr. Alan Milburn (Darlington): I wish to present a petition on behalf of residents in Darlington concerned about the effects of a local war between bus companies which has put up to 239 buses per hour into Darlington's town centre. Residents are sick of the congestion and disturbance caused by their once quiet streets being used as the battleground for that war between local bus companies. They have signed the petition urging the Government to take action because the Transport Act 1985 has created this mayhem by deregulating bus services.

The petition reads:

Wherefore your Petitioners pray that your Honourable House will halt Darlington's bus wars by ending the deregulation of the bus and coach industry and by returning to local councils the power to regulate bus services in the interests of residents.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, etc.

To lie upon the Table.

Charing Cross Hospital

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—*[Mr. Lightbown.]*

9.41 am

Mr. Clive Soley (Hammersmith): I am grateful for this opportunity to debate the future of Charing Cross hospital.

The underlying philosophy of the national health service often divides the political parties, but on the Charing Crosss there is an almost unique identity of views between Conservative Members and across the spectrum in west London. Liberals, community groups, management and medical staff at the hospital and trade unions have supported the campaign. Hardly anyone has not been involved in campaigning to keep Charing Cross hospital. I make no apologies for saying that our purpose in the debate is to try to influence events following the recent publication of the London implementation group and the review reports as well as, earlier in the year, the Tomlinson report which led to the hospital's possible closure.

I ask the Minister not to dismiss the debate as special pleading. I know how easy it is for people to assume that, just because a hospital is under threat, everyone will unite to save it. There are good and coherent arguments for saving Charing Cross hospital. I shall leave time for one or two Conservative Members to intervene, but I want to focus on the future role of Charing Cross hospital. Therefore, I hope that the Minister will see my speech not as a negative approach of special pleading but as showing the way forward.

I acknowledge, as do most people, that the NHS must change. I have never taken the view that there is never a case for closing a hospital; that is not appropriate or realistic. I also accept and have long believed in the concept of community care. Properly funded community care reduces hospitals' workloads, as does changing technology, such as day operations; they will inevitably increase patient turnover. All that is to be welcomed.

Counterbalancing factors include the aging population, resulting in people who need greater health care in the later stages of their life. Hammersmith and Fulham and its surrounding area has also been dramatically affected by the opening of the Chelsea and Westminster hospital. I shall not say too much about that. I had and have strong views about the cost of that hospital and the decision to build it when circumstances would obviously change. But that is water under the bridge: the hospital is there. However, that gives us the opportunity to consider the provision of health care in west London in order to make the best possible use of the existing resources. If the matter is approached from that angle, any proposed closures will, I hope, fit into that structure, rather than simply closing the hospital in order to remove the 2,500 beds that Tomlinson recommended should be lost in London, a proposal which is worrying many of us at the moment.

The hospital is 20 years old and that, in itself, makes it rather special. It was purpose built to a high standard with good facilities. The estimated cost of building and equipping it today would be some £450 million—half a billion pounds. The hospital is on a 16-acre site, which is not only a good size but allows flexibility and development —an important factor in its favour. It is also, to use a phrase current in the health service, a one-stop shop providing many supporting services in addition to operations and treatment.

The hospital has good transport links, which is not true everywhere in west London. Local people are acutely anxious that, if the accident and emergency department is closed, an ambulance may have to travel down Fulham Palace road, which will be particularly difficult if Chelsea and Fulham are playing at home, in order to reach the other hospital. That is a major transport problem. I know the arguments about ambulance paramedics' extra provisions, but I am not satisfied with the way in which they work out the figures for getting from A to B in ambulances to have enough confidence in their ability to transport a seriously injured person from Hammersmith Broadway to the accident and emergency department at the new hospital.

The hospital has a high volume of patients, which is an asset for undergraduate teaching. It has eight lecture theatres which are linked by a unique closed circuit, fibre optic colour teaching system, which is one reason why Tokai University in Japan has selected the hospital as its United Kingdom centre of excellence for Japanese undergraduates. That fibre optic network links a number of hospitals, enabling undergraduates to watch operations in different settings without leaving the area in which they are being taught. That is part of the hospital's teaching facility which is of profound importance to the health service, not just in London but nationally.

With all those advantages one might well ask why on earth we are even thinking of closing such a valuable asset. The answer lies in the Tomlinson report, which suggests the loss of 2,500 beds, and, to some extent, in the building of the Chelsea and Westminster hospital, to which I shall not return other than to say that it was justified on the basis that it would replace five other hospitals, and it did just that, taking up the services of those five hospitals. It was not intended to replace Charing Cross hospital. The concept was rather that there should be one hospital on two sites.

Clearly, the key issue is the Tomlinson report which basically suggested the closure of the accident and emergency department, the phasing out of the district general hospital approach and an emphasis on speciality services there. There are flaws in that argument, not just in the figures but in the philosophy behind that report. That is not to dismiss the Tomlinson report, which is a high-status report which deserves to be taken seriously, but there is a growing view, well founded on evidence, that some of Professor Tomlinson's figures are flawed. Perhaps the best example of that is the research done by Professor Jarman, which was published in an article in the *British Medical Journal* a few months ago. One of the critical factors in the Tomlinson report is the proposal to close Charing Cross and the need to lose 2,500 beds in London. The article said that London has about the same number of beds as the national average and the Charing Cross area is 20 per cent. below average for acute beds.

John James is the chief executive of the Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster commissioning agency. He said:

> "Living in this part of London, you are less likely to be admitted to an acute hospital bed than the average for London as a whole, or for the rest of the country. It is quite substantially lower."

The problem is not that Professor Tomlinson was just plain wrong; it is more complicated. He was asked to look

at acute services in inner London. Charing Cross deals with a different area and other services. One of the failings of the report—this cannot be laid at the door of Professor Tomlinson—is that we needed a review of the wider London needs, not just acute services. He did not look at the whole of London or at services such as geriatric, psychiatric, maternity and so on. When one looks at those services, one sees a different approach to the argument. That is why we need a different philosophy.

Our argument—I say "our" because it includes community groups, general practitioners, management, trade unions, medical staff, some Conservative Members and others—is different and we want the Government to look at that carefully before making any decision to close Charing Cross. Our argument is that closing the accident and emergency and the district general hospital facilities at Charing Cross is a mistake, even if the Government concentrated other specialties there. Surely the growing weight of evidence, not just in this country but overseas, is for a move towards science-based hospitals. That is profoundly important in the west London area. Such hospitals would provide, as Tomlinson says, a one-stop health shop, accessibility—we all accept that Charing Cross has that and it is indicated in the reviews—modern buildings and site flexibility. All that is present at Charing Cross. Also, although I do not agree with the philosophy of a market approach for the health service, Charing Cross pays its way in the market. The Minister must address that point, as it is that by which the Government are saying hospitals should be judged.

Closing the accident and emergency facilities would inevitably undermine the hospital's other facilities. At present, cancer patients who have complications such as renal failure, respiratory failure or neurological or psychological difficulties can all be treated on site. That is important, because patients do not have to be moved from a specialist hospital to a general hospital for treatment and then moved back again. That is a big advantage and it is one reason why in so many areas that have large populations there is a move towards science-based hospitals which have a wide range of facilities on site.

In reality, Charing Cross hospital is already the trauma centre for west London. It handles some 60,000 new accident and emergency patients per annum. I obtained that figure from the hew health authority the other day. Over 100 major trauma cases per annum are admitted through accident and emergency and a further 200 per annum are admitted via neurosurgery. That is equivalent to the model trauma centre that the Government recommend people to visit in Stoke-on-Trent. If the Government want to save money, people from the south of England who want to visit a trauma centre could visit Charing Cross instead of travelling to Stoke-on-Trent.

Charing Cross has a high reputation. One of the medical staff was selected, with the hospital, to treat George Bush when he visited Britain as President of the United States. Charing Cross is well located should there be a major accident of the type that happened in Amsterdam when the aircraft crashed. It is well located to be the trauma centre for west London, or perhaps even for a wider area. The facilities are there. If the Government make the mistake of closing Charing Cross or forcing it to concentrate on particular services, at some stage they will have to focus on the need for a trauma centre in or near London. Why do that when the facility exists already?

I want to put some positive proposals to the Minister. If the Government really want to improve health care in west London, they need to look at Charing Cross as not only a trauma centre, but as a hospital that should be linked, not so much with the Chelsea and Westminster hospital—although I do not rule that out—but with Hammersmith hospital. Hammersmith is an internationally known and world-famous hospital with enormously respected postgraduate teaching facilities. I am not arguing for the closure of Hammersmith, because the sites do not fit into each other and I am advised that it would take at least five years, or perhaps 10, to move one site to another. However, there is no doubt that a proper working link between Hammersmith and Charing Cross would produce a world-class hospital. Charing Cross could be used as the trauma centre with accident and emergency and district general hospital facilities, and Hammersmith could be used as the postgraduate research teaching and general research facility, together with some of its other functions. Such a hospital would offer enormously good facilities to the people of Hammersmith and Fulham and a much wider area of west London.

I accept that decisions about how such a link should be developed and how close it should be would have to be made by medical staff, the management and so on. However, I have no doubt that such a link would be useful. I do not want to give the impression that there is a quick saving on all this. The Government have a problem about how much they are prepared to spend on the health service, but closing one site and moving to another is not a cost-effective argument. I do not want to anticipate the speech of the hon. Member for Fulham (Mr. Carrington), but I think that he may deal with that aspect. My argument is that we should have a science-based hospital in that area.

If the site was closed and sold, even in the slightly expanding property market, I should be surprised if the site would fetch £15 million or £20 million. It may fetch more in a year or two, but it is not a particularly valuable site. Sadly, that is even more true of the Hammersmith hospital. Not many developers want to locate modern premises next to Wormwood Scrubs prison, although it may advise them of some of society's problems if they did. The capital invested in those sites and the expertise of the people working there should be used to produce the science-based hospital about which I have been talking.

The Bow Group is not something that I usually pray in aid. However, its paper estimates that there will be a cost of £100 million in additional capital expenditure simply to relocate services, beds and pre-clinical facilities if Charing Cross were to be closed. The Bow Group is watching the Minister. It has done its research well. I have read the document and I am impressed by the arguments.

Charing Cross has been able to reduce the cost of its 1993-94 services by 18 per cent. compared with 1992-93. It was an enormous burden for a hospital to have to achieve and it was difficult for a manager to make such a dramatic cut. That is one of the reasons for the morale problems in the hospital. Everybody was worried about the future of the hospital and their jobs.

There is a real opportunity to improve health care in west London. It could be done in the way that I have described with a science-based hospital providing world-class facilities in the west of London. I urge the Minister to consider the arguments seriously before any final decision is made.

9.59 am

Mr. Matthew Carrington (Fulham): I am pleased that the hon. Member for Hammersmith (Mr. Soley) has secured this debate and I am grateful to him for allowing me to intervene in it. He and I have been trying together to get Adjournment debates on the subject, and I am glad that his name came up. I congratulate him on his effective speech.

Charing Cross hospital is in my constituency, but of course it serves a wider population than my constituents; it serves the constituents of my hon. Friend the Member for Brentford and Isleworth (Mr. Deva) and those of the hon. Member for Hammersmith. In one sense Charing Cross is not a local but a regional hospital, although it serves a large local population as well.

As the hon. Member for Hammersmith said, the threat to the hospital originates from the Tomlinson report and from earlier reports on the future need for health care in London. The threat was based on the assumption that London had too many hospital beds for its population, because a decreasing population in London meant that fewer beds were needed, and also on the assumption that as health services outside London improved there would be less need to bus patients in to major centres of excellence in London. To some extent that is true, but the research by Professor Jarman of St. Mary's hospital in Paddington, to which the hon. Member for Hammersmith referred, shows that that process has already taken place. The *British Medical Journal* of 19 June revealed that the number of beds in London, especially in the north-west quadrant in which the Charing Cross hospital is located, has already been reduced, so that inner London now has no more beds per head than are available elsewhere in the national health service as a whole.

The reasons for that are straightforward. First, we have already closed a great many hospitals in London. The Chelsea and Westminster hospital replaced five other hospitals, resulting in a substantial net reduction in the number of beds. Moreover, London, especially west London, has certain characteristics which affect both my constituents and the constituents of the hon. Member for Hammersmith. There is a large transient population, a population of people commuting into work, and a tourist population. There are also refugees. All those people throw pressures on to hospitals as opposed to primary health care facilities and their needs must be catered for.

The length of the waiting lists for hospitals in the area proves that that is a reality. London waiting lists can largely be explained by reference to the nature of the population and the use that that population makes of health facilities. Nowhere is that more true than at the Charing Cross hospital, where the waiting lists are still substantial despite the opening of the new Chelsea and Westminster hospital. The accident and emergency unit is still heavily used.

Another myth about London's health service has helped to cause the threat to the Charing Cross hospital. The story is that, with 15 per cent. of the population, London receives 20 per cent. of NHS resources. On one level, that is true. London does have 15 per cent. of the population and it does receive 20 per cent. of the resources. However, there are two straightforward reasons for that. First, teaching and research are carried out in London to a greater degree than elsewhere. The special health authorities have not yet been brought into the internal market, although that is about to happen. Although teaching and research are compensated for in the calculation of the sums allocated to London for health care, no one in teaching or research—or, indeed, in the NHS in general—believes that such calculations are an exact science. If anything, they do not compensate sufficiently for teaching and research.

Secondly, London has to cater extensively for commuters, tourists, refugees and all the other problems of inner-city life, which throw a greater weight of need on to NHS resources. Perhaps 20 per cent. is too high a proportion for London, but I have yet to meet anybody who understands what is going on in London's health care who believes that it would be possible to reduce London's share to the 15 per cent. that would equate with its 15 per cent. share of the population.

Charing Cross is a large hospital, with 790 beds on a 16-acre site. It is also an excellent hospital, which came out well in the London specialty reviews. Its cancer services, neurosciences, plastics and burns units and its renal work were all highly commended. Closing the hospital would be extremely expensive and difficult. One would be closing more than just the acute beds. About one third of the hospital caters for geriatric and mental health patients of one sort or another. All those services would have to be relocated elsewhere.

Mr. Nirj Joseph Deva (Brentford and Isleworth): Does my hon. Friend agree that Charing Cross is also a major trauma centre? For example, one of the busiest international airports in the world is at the other end of the motorway and if an accident such as happened in Amsterdam were to happen in London, Charing Cross would be the only hospital capable of giving the appropriate emergency treatment.

Mr. Carrington: My hon. Friend is absolutely right. What he said highlights one of the key factors affecting Charing Cross hospital—its superb location. It is on the A4, which is one of the best routes out of London, and is easily accessible. Three underground lines service it and five bus routes pass its front door, so it has good connections with the public transport system—better, in fact, than those of any other hospital in west London.

Tomlinson was trying to achieve two things—to improve patient care and to save money. Closing the Charing Cross hospital would not improve patient care. The hospital services a deprived population which continues to use it extensively. The need for such a hospital in that inner-city area has never been greater. As my hon. Friend the Member for Brentford and Isleworth and the hon. Member for Hammersmith have said, the hospital is also ideally located as a trauma centre.

The Tomlinson report was also about saving money. There is no question about the fact that closing Charing Cross hospital would cost a considerable amount. Simply relocating the facilities at the Hammersmith hospital site would cost a substantial sum, and relocating the medical school would cost £60 million, so there is no saving of money to be made. I urge my hon. Friend the Minister to consider the proposals carefully and to decide that the Charing Cross hospital has a future role in west London's health care.

10.7 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Mr. Tom Sackville): My main role today is to congratulate the hon. Member for Hammersmith (Mr. Soley) on initiating a debate of enormous importance to his constituents and to tell him that I have listened carefully to what both he and my hon. Friends have said, which will be carefully studied. I was glad that the hon. Member made such a constructive speech. I especially noted his remarks about Professor Jarman and about trauma centres—a subject of considerable importance and one of great personal interest to me—and his views on the future of the Hammersmith and Charing Cross sites.

As the hon. Gentleman said, this is not a partisan matter, and that fact should be taken carefully into account. I was impressed by his tribute to the views of the Bow Group on this subject—I see that two former members of the Bow Group are sitting on the Benches behind me. The alliance between the hon. Gentleman and my hon. Friend the Member for Fulham (Mr. Carrington) is impressive and demonstrates the intensity of their feelings on the subject under discussion.

The hon. Gentleman has not rejected the concept behind Tomlinson. He spoke constructively about the report and is aware of the need for change. Therefore, I shall not go over all that ground. He is also aware of the six specialty reviews that were set up as a result of Tomlinson to form a major part of the decision-taking process. With all these outstanding decisions he will forgive me if I do not go into detailed arguments on the points he raised. Everyone is aware that there is a problem of substantial duplication of some specialty services in London which may work against the provision of long-term, high-quality, patient care. Therefore, decisions must be taken.

Where are we now? The London implementation group under Sir Tim Chessells will make recommendations to Ministers in the autumn in the light of the specialty reviews, the option appraisal of central London hospital sites, which is already under way, the outcome of the recently published review of special health authority research and the views of health care purchasers and academic interests. There is a great deal of work to be done before proposals are developed further and there will be full public consultation on any major changes that are proposed as a result.

What, then, are the implications of those various processes for Charing Cross hospital? As the hon. Gentleman knows, there has been no decision as yet. Many factors will be taken into account. We have asked the London implementation group, working with the regional health authority and local health authorities, to bring forward detailed proposals by the autumn for the future of Charing Cross hospital, having regard to the Tomlinson report's option for closure, the site appraisal and the local review of accident and emergency services. The recommendations of the specialty reviews will also need to be fed into the consultation process on the joint Charing Cross-Chelsea and Westminster trust application, which ends in early August. No decision will be taken on that application until the other reviews in west London have been completed.

If I had more time I would have said more in detail about the extent of accident and emergency services at Charing Cross hospital. All that I will say is that in the light of the outcome of the reviews and other outstanding decisions, the district health authority has concluded, rightly in my view, that it would be premature to make a decision on the future of those services at Charing Cross at this stage. I listened carefully to what the hon. Gentleman said on the subject and I can assure him that there is no question of allowing any such services to close unless it is proved beyond doubt that alternative facilities are available.

I should like to make a few general points in conclusion. First, a feature of Tomlinson is that if London has too many acute beds and there needs to be a reduction in their number, it must be accompanied by the provision of better primary care. The hon. Gentleman probably knows that there are plans for an additional £43 million for improving primary care in London and £170 million over the next six years for capital developments. Some of that money is earmarked for the Hammersmith area—in other words, the area of the Charing Cross hospital.

Secondly, the Government realise how unsettling and difficult all these outstanding decisions are for staff, patients and hon. Members' constituents. These are difficult times while decisions are awaited. I must make it clear that it is the Government's intention to come to a decision at the earliest possible moment, depending on all the reviews that are now under way having reported and all the information being taken into account.

What is happening in London mirrors what is happening in the great conurbations in the rest of the country. These are painful decisions, but where they are necessary, they must be taken with a view to the best operation of the health service over the coming years——

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): Order.

Adoption Leave

10.15 am

Mrs. Cheryl Gillan (Chesham and Amersham): I am delighted to have the opportunity before I take my bucket and spade to the seaside to raise a matter on the Adjournment which concerns me and several of my constituents.

I introduced a ten-minute Bill earlier in the Session for which I was privileged to have cross-party support, and I should like to follow up some of the general points that I made then. I welcome my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Employment to the Front Bench. I am delighted that she is in the House to listen to the debate and I hope that when she replies she will indicate that she has an open mind on the subject.

Adopting mothers do not have in law the right to return to work or to maternity leave. We need to pay attention to this group because this small section of the population has dropped through the net. In many respects, they have a raw deal.

I want to highlight a specific problem relating to two constituents, Dr. Estelle McAndrew and her husband Graham Anderson. Dr. McAndrew met her husband in Dundee in 1983 and went on to qualify as a general practitioner in 1985. He became an interior designer and they married in September 1988. They now live in my constituency. Both want a family but, sadly, no happy event has been forthcoming. As a doctor, Estelle McAndrew realised that all was not right. After many tests the only diagnosis was unexplained infertility. The couple decided to try gamete intra-Fallopian transfer, which is similar to in vitro fertilisation, but it has not worked. It is fair to say that only a miracle could give them the child or the children that they want—a miracle or adoption.

Armed with that thought, in June last year they decided to attend an open day for couples interested in being considered for adopting a child. They were fortunate, as Dr. McAndrew acknowledged, to be chosen to start the assessment procedure in August. By November, they had been approved by the panel as suitable potential parents. I am sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you can imagine their great joy at receiving this news and their great disappointment at what has transpired since.

Dr. McAndrew is a GP at the Cowley community surgery in Uxbridge. On hearing that she and her husband had been accepted for the adoption process, her senior partner, Dr. Haydn Daily, duly approached the Hillingdon family health services authority to obtain locum payments. Yesterday, I telephoned the FHSA warning it that I was raising the matter on the Adjournment, but I have not received any response. Locum payments are put towards the cost of another doctor when, for example, a GP is on pregnancy leave. Dr. Daily wished to cover Dr. McAndrew's absence when a baby was eventually located for the couple to adopt. The FHSA rejected the application. In February, Dr. McAndrew appealed to the family health services appeals unit, but to date no decision has been forthcoming.

Since discovering that she did not qualify for the same treatment as a doctor giving birth, Dr. McAndrew decided to consult other interested bodies. She has received the support of the general medical services committee of the British Medical Association and the Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland. The BMA supports the view that payments should be made to women GPs who take time off for adopting a child and who employ a locum during that time. That would bring them in line with the regulations concerning confinement and even those concerning sickness.

The BMA has put forward recommendations to the Department of Health that an appropriate amendment be made to the regulations, in this case the statement of fees and allowances. However, the Department rejected that view, which seems hard to understand, particularly in the light of the successful Opportunity 2000 scheme, which is benefiting women throughout the country. With one hand we seem to be giving opportunities to women and with the other we seem to be taking them away.

The Whitley councils for the health services have also been in correspondence with my constituent. Special leave for adopting a child is covered in section 12 of the General Whitley Council handbook, but when they contacted Hillingdon FHSA they received the same reply—that the decision not to grant payment during adoption leave was based on the absence of any such provision in the FHSA. Hospital doctors, trainees and nurses can all get cover and leave for adoption under those rules, but the provisions do not apply to GPs. My constituent would be better off in that respect if she were a hospital doctor, which is hardly an incentive for women to become GPs. At the same time, however, she was hearing that other FHSAs were using their discretion and giving leave and locum cover to GPs who were adopting children.

I took the matter up with the Department of Health and received a reply that does not satisfy me that we are taking the right approach. And it certainly does not satisfy my constituent. After all, she is asking only to be treated in the same way as if she were sick or pregnant. According to the Minister, maternity locum allowances to pregnant doctors were introduced to reflect the fact that there were clear physical and medical reasons why a woman GP should be absent from the practice around the time of confinement. They were also to see the baby through the perinatal period until it became stabilised in feeding and general care. The Minister went on to say that GPs were independent self-employed contractors and, therefore, did not receive separate payment in respect of absence from the practice, except during sickness and confinement.

That response does not go far enough and the reasons given are not the only ones for not allowing locum cover during confinement. The real reasons may be based on the needs of different parents, which is something we constantly hear about in connection with every other aspect of the health service except, conveniently, this one. I would suggest that sickness and maternity locum cover are also granted to help maintain the standard of health care given to patients of the practice, who may otherwise have less time spent on them if the other partners in the practice were forced to shoulder the case load while their female partner was absent. Perhaps it is also to ensure that general practice is an attractive career for women, with the same conditions as any other medical career. Surely it is obvious that one of the main reasons is to assist in the continued provision of the service to patients. But women practitioners are covered only when sick or biologically pregnant, not when they adopt. When they adopt, the FHSA regulations leave them on their own.

Dr. McAndrew and her husband have been approved to adopt a new baby or a small toddler whose needs will be indistinguishable from those of any other child of that

age. Their needs as parents will be indistinguishable from those of any other new parents. If anything, they may be marginally greater, as there is no nine-month period in which to get used to having a baby in the family. Although Dr. McAndrew may not be breast-feeding, she will certainly find herself up during the night having to perform the same tasks that she would had she given birth to the baby. The family will have to get used to their new responsibilities extremely quickly. A baby for adoption may arrive at short notice.

Even if Dr. McAndrew wanted to return to work within a short period, that might not be possible as the adoption prerequisites often insist that the mother remains with the child full time until the adoption is approved. It does not take long to work out that giving that commitment may cause problems with the adoptive mother's job.

Thus, the choice comes down to either adopting a child or keeping a job, which appears to be the choice that we are giving Dr. McAndrew and many other potential adopters. Can it be right? Let us consider the matter coldly and dispassionately. The child would be the state's responsibility unless adopted and would have to be looked after at the state's expense. Just when the state is relieving itself of a financial burden, it is potentially robbing the citizen who is providing the saving of the wherewithal to do so. That is not prudent or sensible.

Also to be considered within the cost equation is the investment that has already been made in training the individual—in this case, a doctor. A large proportion of that cost has already been borne by the state, which is potentially discouraging the individual from utilising her expensively attained skills. If she chooses adoption rather than adoption and career—if that is possible—the state will lose.

The problem does not concern a large section of the population. A relatively small number of adoptions take place every year and, of those, only a handful are of babies or small toddlers. However, it is about time that we removed the uncertainty and extended the protection that the law gives to pregnant workers to adopting mothers by providing similar parameters.

I introduced a ten-minute Bill on adoption leave arrangements earlier in this Session and was pleased to have cross-party support. This is not a political but a common sense issue. A small section of our society has been missed out from protection and legislation. To consider the full implications we would need accurate statistics and, although both Barnardos and the British Agencies for Fostering and Adoption have helped me, I cannot get accurate statistics. The headline topic on adoption at present is the seemingly racially correct attitude of social workers to mixed-race adoption. That issue and the one that I have raised have highlighted the difficulty in obtaining accurate statistics on adoption since the Adoption Unit returns were abolished. We would have more accurate information if the Department still compiled statistics. We could then see how many children were being placed with inter-racial families and how many babies or toddlers were being adopted by working mothers. Although some information is available from local authorities and the agencies that I mentioned, the picture is not complete. It is another area which requires re-evaluation so that the extent of the financial implications can be accurately assessed.

There are many other issues on adoption, not least the prerequisites for terms and conditions of employers. For example, parents seeking to go on the adoption register must often approach their employers and ask what terms and conditions they would be given, were they accepted on the register. That often causes much strain between employer and employee. If the employee is subsequently not put on the register, it can cause difficulties in the workplace for the potential adopting parent. Those issues need to be sorted out, but today I have brought the matter to the House's attention for Dr. Estelle McAndrew and her husband. I hope that my hon. Friend the Minister can assure them of a satisfactory outcome to the deliberations on adoption and that she can ensure that the issue is covered in the forthcoming White Paper. I also hope that my hon. Friend will send a firm message to her colleagues in the Department of Health that locum cover should not be hit and miss. It should not be a question of one FHSA in one part of the country allowing the locum cover and another FHSA not allowing the cover. We want that cover to be extended to all GPs.

I am not asking for complex legislation; I am asking merely for guidelines to level the playing field. Dr. McAndrew certainly seeks such assurances. As she told me yesterday on the telephone, she and her husband would like eventually to adopt up to three children, perhaps even a small family unit. We do not want any more barriers to be put in her and her husband's way.

In a recent letter, my hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health said that GPs were "the cornerstone" of the NHS. Surely adoptive parents are the cornerstone of family life—a family and an opportunity that adopted children would not otherwise have. Dr. Estelle McAndrew is both a GP and a potential adoptive mother. Can we ensure that she gets a fair deal?

10.30 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Employment (Miss Ann Widdecombe): I first congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Chesham and Amersham (Mrs. Gillan) on securing this Adjournment debate on adoption leave. As she said, she made this matter the subject of a recent ten-minute Bill and before that she tabled an unsuccessful amendment during the Committee stage of the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993. She therefore has an extremely honourable record of trying to raise the issue successfully. She regards the issue as being of great importance both to her constituents and in general. I am afraid that I shall not be able to give her the categorical assurances of change that she seeks this morning. Nevertheless, the sheer determination and persistence with which she has addressed the subject will convince her constituents that they have an extremely worthy representative in my hon. Friend.

I should apologise to my hon. Friend for being perhaps the wrong Minister to answer the debate. She has chosen to make the thrust of her debate the question of locum payments to GPs. Adoption, adoption prerequisites, the rights of those who are about to adopt, GP contracts, locum arrangements and FHSAs are all the responsibility of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health. However, I can give my hon. Friend an undertaking that I shall draw to the attention of my colleagues in the Department of Health the issues that she has raised today, including the specific issue of the White Paper and whether the matter

[Miss Ann Widdecombe]

might be addressed within those confines. I cannot anticipate my right hon. Friend's reply, but I can ensure that she is made aware of the many important issues raised in the debate. The reason why I am replying to the debate, perhaps to my hon. Friend's dissatisfaction, is that the issue of rights for adoptive parents goes well beyond the self-employed and GPs. If we agreed that any changes were necessary, they would be the responsibility of the Department of Employment and that is why I am answering the debate today.

Before I embark on the substance of my reply to my hon. Friend, I extend my congratulations to her constituent on being approved for adoption, and I wish her well in her desire to adopt up to three children. My hon. Friend referred to a miracle as being the only way in which her constituent could enjoy motherhood rather than rough adoption. I sincerely hope that that miracle takes place and that she will have that joy as well as the joy of adoption.

I now turn to the general issues raised so eloquently by my hon. Friend. My predecessor, the hon. Member for Derbyshire, West (Mr. McLoughlin), replied to the debate in Committee to which I referred earlier. He explained that the Government did not consider that adoption leave was an appropriate matter for legislation. We remain of that view despite my hon. Friend's eloquent pleading to the contrary.

The Government believe strongly in the need to recognise the contribution of working women and to assist those who wish to combine a career with family responsibilities. We committed ourselves in our election manifesto to taking action to enhance maternity rights and we have, of course, fulfilled that commitment. As hon. Members know, the Government introduced in the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993 provisions that will significantly extend and improve the already substantial package of maternity rights that women enjoy.

The Act gives all natural mothers, regardless of their length of service or hours of work, a new right to a minimum of 14 weeks of statutory maternity leave during which all their non-wage contractual benefits will have to be maintained. It gives them comprehensive new protection against dismissal on maternity-related grounds and new rights in relation to suspension from work on maternity-related health and safety grounds. Furthermore, a much longer period of absence remains available to the 62 per cent. of working women who meet the qualifying conditions: two years of service working 16 hours per week or five years of service working between eight and 16 hours a week. They will continue to be entitled to return to work after a maternity absence lasting up to 29 weeks after the week of childbirth. Those are important new provisions which will be a real help to many women who wish to combine a career with family responsibilities.

As always, there is a balance to be struck between increasing the rights of employees and placing extra burdens on business. We are convinced that the provisions of the new Act correctly strike that balance. To add further to employers' costs by making additional improvements in maternity entitlement or, as my hon. Friend suggests, extending it to a category of mothers who do not at present qualify at all would be going too far. If employers are overburdened by regulation, they will find it more difficult to recruit and to retain staff, and job opportunities will be lost.

Mrs. Gillan: Can my hon. Friend tell me whether any statistics have been compiled about how many women fall into that category? I believe that we are talking about a very small number of women. It is probably negligible rather than oversized, which is the impression being given.

Miss Widdecombe: I hope that I did not give the impression that we are talking about an oversized number. I shall turn later to the statistics that my hon. Friend requires. I especially wish to address then not only the issue of the number of adoptive parents but, perhaps more importantly, the number of those who adopt within the period with which my hon. Friend is concerned—during the adoptive child's babyhood.

The Government's reasons for opposing the extension of statutory maternity entitlement to adoptive mothers do not, however, rest solely on the extra burdens that such a change would impose on employers. Even if my hon. Friend's question was answered entirely to her satisfaction and it were proved that this category is very small, we are satisfied that legislation on the matter would, for other reasons, be quite inappropriate.

I of course recognise that adoptive mothers can sometimes face difficulties in combining work and family responsibilities, just as is the case with natural mothers. My hon. Friend described that eloquently, and I am sure that all of us recognise in our imaginations the picture that she painted of the burdens on new mothers, be they natural or adoptive. To that extent, I sympathise with my hon. Friend's motives in raising this issue, and with the problems to which she referred in her speech. I can assure her that the Government have given careful consideration to the suggestions that have been made from time to time regarding the introduction of statutory leave and other rights for adoptive mothers. During her short time in the House, my hon. Friend has on several occasions succeeded in concentrating our minds on that issue.

We have concluded, however, that the sort of considerations that have framed provision for natural mothers simply do not apply to the same extent in relation to adoptions. The purpose of the statutory maternity provision is to safeguard the mother's career while allowing her a period in which to prepare for and recover from childbirth and to nurse and care for the baby in the early stages of its life. In the case of adoptions, there is, by contrast, no question of the mother having to prepare for or physically recover from childbirth. Furthermore, in most cases, adoption does not entail looking after a baby in the early stages of its life. Only about 15 per cent. of adoptions in England and Wales are of children under one year of age. Adoptions can and do occur up to the age of 18, sometimes after a period of long-term fostering. It is not therefore possible to draw a direct parallel between the position of natural mothers and that of adoptive mothers.

Natural mothers who wish to return to work have a clear timescale in which to operate and can give their employers reasonable notice of their intentions. That allows the employer to make adequate arrangements for temporary cover and so on. Again, that is not the case with adoptions, as the timescale for adoption can be extremely uncertain. Sometimes, the child is placed with its adoptive

parents at extremely short notice, and the timing of any court hearings can also be difficult to predict. Those factors would create significant administrative problems for employers in addition to the burdens to which I have already referred.

My hon. Friend drew attention to the fact that natural mothers have nine months in which to prepare for the forthcoming arrival of a child in their home. By the same token, the mother has nine months in which to come to arrangements with her employer. That does not apply to adoptive mothers. Moreover, it would probably be impossible from the point of view of drafting simply to extend the existing maternity provisions to adoptive mothers. The timing of the statutory maternity leave period, for example, is linked to the expected week of childbirth and—bearing in mind the uncertainties to which I have just referred—it would be no easy matter to modify the legislation so as to adapt it to the very different circumstances that apply to adoption.

Correctly drafted provisions taking account of all the various conceivable differences between the situation of natural mothers and that of adoptive mothers would inevitably be extremely lengthy and highly complex. Such legislative complexity would not, in the Government's view, be justifiable, particularly in view of the relatively small number of cases involved. Fewer than 1,000 babies under a year old are adopted each year. Bearing in mind the smallness of that number and the complex and lengthy administrative process that I have described, it is the Government's view that this matter is best resolved through individual agreements rather than statutory provision.

For those reasons, we remain firmly of the view that legislation is not the answer in this case, but we hope that employers whose circumstances permit them will view sympathetically requests for leave in such circumstances and we welcome such action by employers. The Government are considering guidance to companies and individuals on leave for adoptive parents. That might include guidance to help people understand their existing rights, as well as examples of good practice by employers. However, the best method of issuing such guidance—and, indeed, the nature of the guidance itself—has yet to be resolved.

My hon. Friend concentrated most of her remarks on the difficulty experienced by her constituent, Dr. Estelle McAndrew. General practitioners are independent contractors for the provision of general medical services. Matters concerning them are therefore matters for my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, as I said at the beginning of my reply. However, as self-employed professionals, GPs are responsible for their own maternity leave arrangements including arrangements in circumstances where they are adopting children. It is, of course, the case that current maternity rights, like other employment rights contained in the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978, apply only to employees and not to individuals who are self-employed.

I should not like hon. Members to gain the incorrect impression that adoptive mothers—or, indeed, fathers, who have been largely ignored today—who are employees have no rights whatever under the employment protection legislation. On the contrary, they benefit from the same comprehensive framework of statutory employment protection rights as other employees. If an adoptive parent is unreasonably dismissed—for taking time off, for example—he or she may have grounds for a complaint of unfair dismissal. That would be subject to the usual qualifying criteria. The industrial tribunal would then decide whether the dismissal was in fact unfair in all the circumstances of the case.

In addition, if there is a contractual right to take time off and the employer refuses it, the employee may be able to sue for breach of contract in the civil courts. He or she may also be justified in resigning and then making a complaint of constructive unfair dismissal to an industrial tribunal—subject again to the usual qualifying criteria. As in the previous case, it would be for the tribunal to decide the case on the basis of all the relevant facts. If an employer denies an adoptive father time off when he would have given such time off to an adoptive mother—or vice versa—that employee is entitled to make a complaint of sex discrimination to an industrial tribunal, irrespective of length of service or hours of work.

In general, however, terms and conditions of employment are quite properly matters for agreement between employers and employees or their representatives without Government intervention. Matters such as adoption leave are most appropriately dealt with in that way—on a voluntary basis rather than by complex and unnecessarily burdensome legislation. The framework of statutory rights to which I have just referred provides a minimum level of protection on which the parties concerned are free to build in a flexible way, making arrangements that best suit their organisation and best accord with their own priorities, needs and circumstances and with what can be afforded. That of course includes what best fits the needs of individual employees.

I am confident that employers will in general view sympathetically the position of adoptive parents and will be willing to accord them any help that they can, consistent with the needs of their business. In our view, that approach, and not the imposition of further bureaucratic regulation, represents the best way forward.

In view of the constituency case that my hon. Friend has raised, it would perhaps be worth considering in more detail the arrangements that exist for GPs' pay in the case of mothers claiming for periods of confinement. As I have said, general practitioners are independent, self-employed professionals. They contract with the NHS for the provision of general medical services, and the payment basis of that contract is cost plus, by which their expenses will be reimbursed and they will receive a net income in addition. Expenses and income are reimbursed through a wide range of fees and allowances, and certain expenses are directly reimbursed.

As self-employed professionals, general practitioners are responsible for their maternity leave arrangements, including the employment of a locum to cover their absence, if necessary. In certain circumstances payments may be made in addition to the main range of fees, allowances and the reimbursement of expenses, which assist in part with the cost of a locum. One set of payments is for absence during confinement. Those are available to a doctor who remains on the medical list, held by the family health services authority, and intends to continue in general practice. The intention to return to practise within a reasonable time after the birth must be signalled by the practitioner when making the claim.

The payments, for a maximum period of 13 weeks, are intended to reimburse the general practitioner in part for

[Miss Widdecombe]

the cost of a locum or other deputy from outside the practice who has had to be engaged to look after the patients. From April 1993, payment can be made by the family health services authority up to a maximum of £393·50 per week. If the GP is absent due to illness before or after the maximum maternity payment of 13 weeks, other additional payments for sickness can be paid instead. All women practitioners who provide unrestricted general medical services and who receive a basic practice allowance are eligible. Payments to part-time practitioners or job sharers are modified according to the amount of time worked. There is no provision for additional payments to be made if a GP takes leave at the time of an adoption.

As I said earlier in respect of employment law, maternity locum allowances are paid to reflect physical and medical need for absence. The payment of locum allowances to adopting GPs was recently discussed with the general medical services committee of the British Medical Association.

My hon. Friend the Member for Chesham and Amersham drew our attention to representations on adoption that we have received from different parts of the medical profession. The consideration of those representations, any action that we can or cannot take in response, and any view that we may form as to their validity are matters for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health. I cannot become engaged in a discussion of the exercise of discretion by family health services authorities or of the detailed arrangements for locum absences. I am interested in my hon. Friend's statement, in that some discretion can be exercised under existing rules. I am sure that my colleagues in the Department of Health will also be interested, and may wish to consider that representation further.

I welcome my hon. Friend's words about Opportunity 2000. The Government have given their full support to that business-led campaign to increase the quality and quantity of women's participation in the labour force. The Prime Minister launched the initiative in October 1991 and has committed the Government, as an employer, to full participation in it.

My hon. Friend mentioned opportunities for women as GPs. The NHS, which is the largest employer of women in Europe, has set goals to increase the number of women managers, women accountants, women consultants, women members of health authorities and women members of NHS trust boards. Targets have been set for achievement by 1994—only a year away—as first milestones for the year 2000. Progress reports are included in the annual reports that health authorities and trusts submit to NHS management executives.

Mrs. Gillan: I am very pleased to hear what my hon. Friend says about the health service. Does she agree that, as it is potentially the largest employer of women in Europe, it is essential that clear guidelines are set out for the adoption of children?

Miss Widdecombe: My hon. Friend mentions an important point. At the risk of being repetitious and boring, I have to tell her that that is a matter for my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Health and that I will ensure that he is fully cognisant of the contents of the debate. I am sure that I will not have to do much to ensure that, as he will take an interest anyway. All the points that my hon. Friend has mentioned in her impressive speech and in her interventions will be considered by my right hon. and hon. Friends in the Department. I have become so interested as a result of my hon. Friend's eloquence that I should be most interested to see the outcome of whatever correspondence results from the debate.

As I would not like it to be thought that no rights exist for adoptive parents, let me remind the House what those rights are in more detail. There is no statutory right to time off for family reasons. I am sure that my hon. Friend will agree that one can think of a range of family circumstances, other than maternity and adoption, which would merit a compassionate and reasonable attitude from any sensible employer, but that is different from endeavouring to tie up those rights in statute. There is no statutory right to time off for a range of family reasons, of which adoption is one.

I received the impression today that it might seem that we were picking on adoption for exclusion from rights, but that is not so. Time off for family reasons remains a matter for employees to agree with their employers, in the light of the circumstances, and they will vary. There will be a difference between adoptive parents who are about to welcome a new-born child into the family—alas, very few have that pleasure in today's circumstances—and those who are about to welcome an older child who already has some skills in independent management. Many employers treat those circumstances and applications with the right amount of sympathy, and I hope that such guidance as may eventually be issued will enhance such a sympathetic attitude.

Adoptive parents who are unreasonably dismissed for taking time off have full rights before industrial tribunals, provided that they qualify through their length of service, as I detailed earlier. Those parents who have a contractual right to leave would be able to enforce it, as they would any other contractual right, and would be able to do so through the civil courts if necessary. An employer who denied an adoptive father or mother time off would have to show reasonable cause if that was followed by dismissal.

Finally, although my hon. Friend did not mention this, the problem would appear to be Europe-wide, for there is no European standard of provision. No common statutory pattern has been established in the rest of the European Community. If it were as straightforward as my hon. Friend implied, other countries would have full arrangements. A number of member states have some statutory arrangements for adoption leave, but they vary immensely in their range and scope. Other countries, like the United Kingdom, have decided that that can be determined only by the parties concerned in the light of their circumstances.

In summary, I congratulate my hon. Friend's constituent on acquiring a child. I sympathise with the difficulties that have arisen as a result of her self-employed status. We will examine the matter sympathetically. However, we remain of the view that statutory provision would be lengthy and complex for what my hon. Friend has rightly described as an extremely small number of cases, especially those involving new-born babies. For those reasons, I must resist my hon. Friend's recommendations.

Job Losses (Aerospace Industry)

10.59 am

Mr. Barry Jones (Alyn and Deeside): I draw the attention of Ministers to the front page of the *Evening Leader* of Friday 16 July, which says in large letters that the proposed axe for job losses at British Aerospace, Broughton was promulgated to the dismay of many of my constituents. I am pleased to see the Minister for Industry in his place. North-east Wales is a respected aerospace sub-region. There is Trefn Engineering in Llay, Cynamid in Wrexham, RD Precision in Deeside and the British Aerospace works in Broughton.

At Broughton, there are two companies—Airbus, which makes the wings of the airbus airliner family, and Corporate Jet, which makes the twin-engine executive jet that is capable of flying across the Atlantic. Last month, 269 Corporate Jet workers lost their jobs. Last week, 250 Aerospace workers learned of their redundancies. After those redundancies, the work force will be down to fewer than 2,500. It has been estimated that 1,250 jobs have been lost from Airbus and Corporate Jet in some 13 months.

Recently, our work force exceeded 4,000. I can remember when the apprenticeship school was large, and acclaimed as the best in northern Britain. Today, it barely exists. The redundancies that I am pinpointing relate not only to north-east Wales but to the north-west of England —to the great city of Chester, the large county of Cheshire, the Wirral and, indeed, Merseyside. There is a widespread work force. They are one of Britain's greatest reservoirs of skills.

The factory where the redundancies have been announced is arguably the finest in the civil field in western Europe. It is equal to anything on the west coast of the United States or in the territory of the former Soviet Union. Boeing is running scared of Airbus and is deeply concerned about how it will cope with the challenge. When I talk about Airbus, I am talking about skills, training, achievement and success. The Broughton work force are the best in their field, and I am proud of them.

I have seen the Broughton works grow. I have been able to journey to Toulouse and Hamburg to see the final assembly of the airbus product. It is heartening when we see this great project under way in Europe—it makes me more proud of my constituents. They are loyal to British Aerospace and they give of their best whenever they work on the production line.

I ask Her Majesty's Government whether they can assist British Aerospace in any way. Can they give British Aerospace short-term cash aid to hold back the redundancies? The work force have asked me to put that question to the Minister today. Can the Government persuade British Airways to buy the airbus? The work force believe that that would be a major boost. If we could persuade British Airways to fly the flag, it would help the employment scene greatly. What intervention will the Minister make to save the workers who are doomed to redundancy?

The work force are a small army of the finest plane makers imaginable. I want the Minister to agree that they deserve his help. Such a work force should not be put on the scrap heap. My constituents are paying dearly for the crass errors of judgment made by management at the highest level in the company. The previous board went into the property market and bought a motor car factory. Within days, the floor fell out of property and a deep recession saw car sales plummet. There were golden handshakes for departing board members, but redundancy notices were printed for my plane maker constituents. It seems that the new board is impelled to sell off parts of its empire—plane making to the United States and Taiwan. In British Aerospace, there seems to be a pressing need to get cash to balance the books to keep the shareholders happy.

Today, I raise my voice for my constituents on the production line and in the offices at Broughton. In all fairness, I must record my thanks to Mr. Sean Dyke, who heads the airbus operation at Broughton. He allows me access to his work force and takes me on conducted tours of the plant. I am grateful to him and to his management team.

Redundancy for each of those 250 workers means worry for a whole household. It means that there is a shortfall on the mortgage. There is a problem in paying the hire purchase on the car. The family may not be able to buy new school uniforms. That is a definition of financial crisis in any household. The holiday will probably be cancelled, and tension and worry will permeate the whole household. There is great anxiety even for those who are not made redundant.

Mr. David Hanson (Delyn): Many of my constituents in Delyn work at the British Aerospace plant in my hon. Friend's constituency. The concerns that he has expressed are shared by me and many of my constituents, because we have seen the great sadness that job losses bring about. We know about the lost opportunities, especially on the apprenticeship scheme. I fully support my hon. Friend in this debate. I hope that the Minister can give some positive help to assist this magnificent industry.

Mr. Jones: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for his loyal support. I look forward to working with him on behalf of the large work force at British Aerospace in Broughton.

I was about to ask the Minister whether there was a long-term future for the plant at Broughton. I believe that there is a future for it—indeed, there must be. That question is being asked by the work force as a consequence of the announced redundancies. Assurances from the Minister on this matter would be welcomed.

The work force are asking whether the work that is done at Broughton is likely to be sent somewhere else in the short or long term. It is natural to ask such questions at a time when redundancies have been announced. I have been told to ask the Minister whether Deutsche Airbus is seeking to take over work on the airbus wings. If British Aerospace continues to invest in research and technology acquisition, that cannot happen. Will the Government assist Britsh Aerospace in the vital field of research? Will they assist the company more generously in its aim of investment? That is the key question. It is a strategic question which relates not only to manufacturing and its future in Britain, but to the future of a great company, the largest employer in Britain.

I place emphasis on my question to the Minister: must there be 250 redundancies at the airbus factory? Will there be genuine negotiations about the redundancies? Mr. Mike Nesbitt, the works convenor, is now prepared to discuss anything bar compulsory redundancies—if necessary, he proposes short-time working. He and his senior stewards,

[Mr. Jones]

who have been constantly meeting to try to resolve the crisis, have even considered proposing lay-offs, which shows how serious they view their position.

I believe that Mr. Nesbitt and the stewards are reasonable and honourable men and women. All they want is to keep a winning team together until times are better. I am proud to say that the team has delivered time and again. When challenged by the company, by events or by competition they have increased their productivity. They have enhanced, developed and invested in their personal skills in response to Government policies.

Mr. John Beard is a senior trade unionist in north-east Wales, a magistrate and full-time official for the transport workers' union. He has reminded me that the work force is by no means full of luddites. He says, and I agree, that the leadership of the work force belongs to the 20th century. However, in its hour of need, after many great successes, after becoming famous worldwide and providing a magnificent product with which it is taking Boeing to the cleaners, it has asked for Government help. I am also asking on behalf of the company, as I believe that it deserves Government help because it makes a world-beating product. The work force deserve work, not dole. I want them to be helped, not abandoned, and, on their behalf, I am asking the Minister for that help.

I said earlier that, British Aerospace Corporate Jet division was also on the site. It produces an executive jet which is a brilliant machine. Today, the United States Government buy and use the machine, and have adopted it for military use. The machine is twin-engined and is capable of crossing the Atlantic. It ferries the rich and famous throughout the world. It even carried the Minister and me to Hatfield recently, when the Minister took the trouble to visit the factory. He was well received and made a good impression. He showed that he was fully briefed, and was welcomed by the management team with open arms.

The machine also carries Defence Ministers to Northern Ireland and western Germany. The machine even flies the Prime Minister, and I know that he has only praise for the pilot and crew. He does not use the inappropriate epithets which it is said he has used about Cabinet Ministers. I shall not go into that issue now—suffice it to say that the Prime Minister uses the magnificent machine, which is a gem of an aircraft. On test flights, displayed in its green factory livery, it screams over the local chimney pots, including my own. I want the machine to continue to be made—long may the green jets scream over Hawarden, Deeside and the mountains of north Wales.

Hundreds of my constituents make the aircraft, but 269 of those makers of the corporate jets lost their jobs last month. I know those people—some of them are known to me personally and some of them are my neighbours. I am sorry that some of them have had to put "for sale" notices outside their superb houses—a personal tragedy for them and a tragedy for the community which I represent.

Mr. Roger Smith, who leads the Corporate Jet work force at Broughton, has told me of the anxiety which affected morale after the loss of those 269 jobs. Morale has fallen among the airbus workers and the Corporate Jet workers, and I understand why. Mr. Smith is a highly skilled man, as are his peers. However, it appears that the British Aerospace Corporate Jet division is to be sold to Raytheon, the United States conglomerate, and Mr. Smith and I need answers from the Minister. I beg the Minister to give me those answers. If he cannot do so in this debate, I am sure that, as a conscientious, senior and considerate Minister, he will reply to my questions by letter when it is convenient for his Department to do so.

Whenever I receive correspondence from the right hon. Gentleman, it contains caring and detailed answers, which show that he and his official staff lean over backwards to assist me in informing my constituents who work at British Aerospace. I am grateful for that, and I hope that the tenor of my remarks shows that I wish to work with the Minister for the benefit of my constituents. I need answers, and I look to the Minister to help me—as well as Mr. Smith and Mr. McGlade—to help those who work on the shopfloor of the Corporate Jet division to serve their fellow workers.

I appreciate the way in which the Minister works in his Department, and I also thank the managing director of the Corporate Jet division, who, like Mr. Dyke, allows me access to the production lines and tries at all times to inform his employees in an exemplary way. However, we have not yet received the answers to serious questions. My complaints are not directed at management of airbus or the Corporate Jet division.

The individual destinies of my constituents are decided not at plant level, but at national board level, European level and Cabinet level, and at international conferences such as that of the G7 at Tokyo, which was attended by the Prime Minister and other Ministers. The destinies of my constituents among the plane-making work force are also being decided at Capitol hill, in Washington in the United States. They are decided at the oval office in Pennsylvania avenue. Those are some of the reasons why my constituents are worried.

The *Daily Post*, the regional newspaper in the north-west, north Wales and Liverpool, on Friday 23 July carried an article in its business section written by the business editor, Ian Herbert. The article refers to Mr. Richard Hook, a former British Aerospace executive who is keeping alive a British bid for the company. The former executive says that the agreement reached for the Corporate Jet division in the United Kingdom is an asset deal by Raytheon.

The report says that it will involve the transfer of existing craft, craft design and copyright and commitment to customers, but not liabilities, including the employment contracts of the work force at Broughton at Chester. The report goes on to say that industry analysts agree that the terms of the contract are ambiguous and may preclude the work force. It says that the contract may include just the craft and copyright—it is unclear, says a spokesman at *Flight International* magazine.

The short-term future of the Corporate Jet staff appears to have been secured by Raytheon's agreement to take craft from Broughton for another three years. But within the terms of the contract, that may mean that only modules are maufactured at the plant before transportation to the United States for assembly. Alternatively, Raytheon may feel that it would make more sense to construct the craft on the site where the parts are manufactured.

Mr. Hook, the former executive, said that the deal was complicated by the fact that the Corporate Jet operation was spread over three companies. Corporate Jets (UK) was set up by British Aerospace in May 1992 to control the

production lines of the 125 jet. Some of its assets and management were transferred to the United States by British Aerospace last November, when a new company, Corporate Jets, was formed. A third company, Arkansas Aerospace, purchased by British Aerospace in 1987, is now responsible for completion work on the craft. There is a quotation in the report from Mr. Hook, who said that he believed that Corporate Jets (UK) had not been purchased, only the drawings, craft and commitment to customers. He said that it was an asset deal.

On behalf of my constituents—the superb production staff at Corporate Jets—I must ask for answers to my questions. Is there a long-term future for the employees of Corporate Jets at Broughton? I want to be told that there is a future beyond three years, into the foreseeable future to the end of the century.

Have we seen the end of redundancies at Corporate Jets? When will the work force and my community be told that Corporate Jets has been formally and legally sold to Raytheon? On the selling day—indeed, before the transfer of ownership is finalised—I want a statement from the company and the Minister that the remaining work force is safe, that green jets will continue to roar from the runway at Broughton and that they will be made and tested in my constituency for the foreseeable future.

Given the magnificent record of my constituents, it would be remiss of me not to pose the questions now being asked by the work force, the whole community, Alyn and Deeside district council—which has taken a close interest in the matter—Broughton community council, Hawarden town council and all the other local councils, including Clwyd county council. They want those questions answered, and I pose them in good faith.

I want to guarantee that, under Raytheon, for the foreseeable future my constituents will continue to produce the 125 executive jet at Broughton. Simply to say that the status quo will continue at Broughton for three years will not be good enough. As it is, almost 100 jobs have already been exported from the site in my constituency to Little Rock in Arkansas. Incidentally, that is where the President of the United States of America and his wife are resident. There are some rumours, but I will not go into them now. Will the Minister answer the questions that are vital to the plane makers at Corporate Jets?

A constituent of mine, John Vaughan of Shotton, has written to me on the matter. He says that he wants me to be aware that British Aerospace is intending to out-source information technology lock, stock and barrel to outside companies, who will have complete control of British Aerospace's database, including design and business management. As the firms most likely to win the contract are American, this will not only mean more lost jobs in British Aerospace but compromise the security of important data and hamstring the development within British Aerospace of tailor-made systems and applications for future needs, which could have disastrous results on their future competitiveness. It could also be another loss of British expertise.

Mr. Vaughan is the network engineer at British Aerospace, Broughton. He says that this is another example of short-term monetary gain outweighing the future security of the British aerospace industry. Should that be the case, it is an important matter, and I ask for a response from the Minister.

Soon, there are to be 250 redundancies. I protest at the decision to denude some of my constituency of assisted area status. I make the strongest protest to the Minister for Industry, who stood at the Dispatch Box yesterday and announced that decision. I sought to catch Mr. Deputy Speaker's eye, but failed, so I say now to the right hon. Gentleman that he has done wrong by my constituency.

With 3,200 people out of work in Llay, Buckley and Deeside, and with 800 long-term unemployed, we should not lose that status. There is much to be done. Why should Deeside lose and the south-east coast gain? Wales appears to have had a very raw deal. It has lost and the the south coast has gained at its expense. Extra resources should have been pumped in so that other areas in Britain could have enjoyed an advantage.

Across the River Dee, opposite Deeside and a mile or so away, the Wirral area is to retain assisted area status. It just so happens that that is the constituency of the Secretary of State for Employment. What a surprise; what a coincidence that such a prized status survives in the Wirral, but not in those parts of my constituency that previously enjoyed it. That was a point made about other areas in Britain when the statement was so courteously made by the Minister yesterday.

I want to put on record the deep disappointment of the Redrow group. The Minister will be aware that St. David's park is unique in north-east Wales. The company that built that impressive park says that exclusion from assisted area status, without even the granting of intermediate area status, will be a serious blow to the park's attractiveness to inward investment. It says that this is particularly relevant while Chester business park retains intermediate grant status, this latter development sharing the same employment catchment region.

I draw to the Minister's attention the report on the British aerospace industry published last week by the Trade and Industry Committee. I back it totally, and I urge the right hon. Gentleman to study it and to say loudly that he backs the Committee's recommendations. I emphasise that the Committee says that he should commission a regular survey of the level of United Kingdom Government support for the aerospace industry compared with the support given overseas, and that as much as possible of the survey should be reported to Parliament and published.

It also says that applications for launch aid for smaller aircraft should be considered on their merits rather than imposing an arbitrary restriction of one third of total costs. I support the proposals, and I believe that they would help my factory and the industry.

My constituents are at the eye of the aerospace storm. Aerospace is our greatest exporter, our greatest employer and the national military defender—but for how long? Do the Government intend to keep British Aerospace at the top of the league, or will it, by default, be allowed to slide down to the second division?

We need a strategy from the Cabinet; we need money for research—perhaps another £80 million a year. We need Government leadership for the jewel in the crown of our manufacturing industry.

I want Britain to be a great nation again—a proud manufacturing nation. I want us to halt the erosion of our manufacturing base. I want us to be a nation capable of manufacturing the goods that we need rather than importing them. Above all, I make a plea for my constituents, the great plane makers of the airbus division

[Mr. Jones]

and Corporate Jets division. They are the best men and women, and have proved to the Minister that they can deliver. I seek from the right hon. Gentleman, indeed I beg him for, assurances that they will not lose their jobs. I know that he admires them, and I ask him to help them urgently.

11.31 pm

The Minister for Industry (Mr. Tim Sainsbury): I fully understand the concern of the hon. Member for Alyn and Deeside (Mr. Jones) for his constituents at Broughton. I am grateful for the way in which he has presented his concern to the House and for his remarks about my interest in the industry. It is an interest that we share.

As the hon. Gentleman knows, I visited the site last year for the roll-out of the 1,000th airbus wing, and I recall the obvious commitment of the work force in the airbus and Corporate Jet companies. I shall return to some of the particular points he made, but he has raised wider questions which need to be answered over the prospects of the aerospace industry in the United Kingdom.

I am the first to recognise the central importance of our aerospace industry. It is a key contributer to our economy and a major provider of employment, but I hope that we all recognise the difficulties that the industry is facing, not just in Britain but elsewhere.

Aerospace is an international industry—perhaps the most international of industries. It is inevitably sensitive to world events and changes. It is characterised by a large number of projects involving companies from more than one country, and has always been subject to cyclical change in demand.

The aerospace sector worldwide is now having to adjust to the worst downturn in its post-war history. The industry has been hit by the double whammy of recession in the civil airline industry and a global reduction in defence spending. All the world's major aerospace producers, not just Britain's, are having to adapt to those changes. They are all having to cut production, cut staff, which is regrettable, and restructure.

Boeing, the world's biggest manufacturer of commercial aircraft, announced that it would cut more than 28,000 jobs over the next 18 months. McDonnell-Douglas is cutting its work force by 10 per cent. this year, after a 20 per cent. reduction last year. The two main competitors of Rolls-Royce in the United States, Pratt and Whitney and General Electric, have announced cuts of up to 14,000 jobs.

All the major European producers have been affected. Deutsche Aerospace has announced 7,500 job losses this year, representing a 11 per cent. reduction in its overall work force. Aerospatiale of France is to lay off more than 2,000 workers next year in the cuts triggered by the world recession, in addition to 1,000 redundancies this year. The French aerospace trade association GIFAS has predicted that at least 32,000 jobs will disappear from its member companies by the end of 1994.

I know that this litany of job losses overseas is of little comfort to those in Broughton or elsewhere in the United Kingdom who have been affected by the personal tragedy of redundancy. I assure the hon. Gentleman that we understand only too well what that means. I appreciate also that it is little reassurance to those now facing an uncertain future in the industry on whose behalf he was speaking.

It is common ground that forecasts show that air traffic is set to double by the end of the century. Against the background of the immediate problems that the sector is facing, it is encouraging to find that many of the major civil programmes involving British manufacturers have fared rather better than those of some of their overseas competitors. Both Airbus and Rolls-Royce are increasing their share of world markets. The hon. Gentleman referred to Boeing being in fear of Airbus. That is not quite the way I would put it, but Boeing recognises that Airbus is an important and efficient competitor.

Today we heard the good news that the Taiwanese Government have endorsed a joint venture between BAe and the Taiwan Aerospace Corporation to produce regional jets. That will be welcomed by the 4,000 BAe employees at Woodford, as well as the many subcontractors involved in that work. The joint venture should ensure continued production, open up a wider market for the aircraft in the Asia-Pacific region and provide for the development of a successor aircraft.

Despite the difficult world market conditions, British companies are continuing to win major orders. Last year, the United Kingdom industry had a turnover of more than £10 billion of which it exported more than 70 per cent., or nearly £8 billion. For every year over the past decade, it has made a contribution to the United Kingdom balance of payments. The whole House will applaud those remarkable achievements.

The recently published report of the Trade and Industry Select Committee, to which the hon. Gentleman referred, said:

> "The United Kingdom industry is far from being a lame duck industry, seeking rescue from its own failure or protection from more efficient competitors. It is an area of United Kingdom technological strength".

I fully endorse that view, which is very different from the picture of an industry in crisis that others would have us believe.

In replying to the Select Committee report, the industry's major trade association, the Society for British Aerospace Companies, said:

> "The aerospace industry is not a lame duck in crisis looking to the Government for rescue packages. Rather it is a high technology jewel in Britain's industrial crown".

Of course the industry is not without its challenges, and I have already referred to its current difficulties. Every industry has to have regard to the market. I know that the hon. Gentleman has worked long and hard for the interests of his constituents at the Broughton site. I well understand his and their concern over the future of executive jet production at the site following the announcement of the proposed sale of Corporate Jets to Raytheon.

The proposal is currently being considered by the Director General of Fair Trading. I hope that, in those circumstances, the hon. Gentleman will appreciate that it would not be appropriate for me to comment before the director general's advice is received, but I can assure him now that my Department has discussed the future of Corporate Jets at Broughton with BAe, and we are continuing to keep in close touch.

I recall many flights in the aircraft to which the hon. Gentleman referred, including the one where we travelled together. I first started travelling in those aircraft when I was a Minister at the MOD.

Mr. Barry Jones: Was it without a parachute?

Mr. Sainsbury: Of course it was without a parachute; if I had had one, I am not sure it would have been much use.

The hon. Gentleman's praise of the aircraft makes me think that perhaps he has missed a career as a salesman. Perhaps BAe would recruit him in that task even now. However, the sale is a commercial decision by BAe. It is not the result of Government policy and Government support was not a factor in the decision to make the sale. As part of the sale agreement, BAe will secure from Raytheon a contract for the continued supply of wings and fusilages for three years. It is not for the Government to second-guess the commercial judgment of BAe or Raytheon.

I recognise the desire to ensure that, if the sale goes through, Raytheon makes a longer-term commitment to remain in the United Kingdom. If the sale goes ahead, we shall want to discuss with Raytheon and the Welsh Office whether there is any way that we can help bring that about. I am sure that Raytheon will also want to have early discussions with the work force about the future of the plant.

What are the longer-term prospects for the industry? The Select Committee's report states:

"There is no likelihood of a sudden decline in the short or medium terms."

The aerospace industry has out-performed the rest of United Kingdom industry in productivity gains—the hon. Gentleman referred to what has been achieved at Broughton. We are at last beginning to see the signs of recovery in the civil airline market. In the longer term, we expect to see air traffic doubling in 15 years, and doubling again in the 25 years thereafter. There will be good, long-term demand, both for new aircraft, to satisfy traffic growth, and to replace old aircraft.

The hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member for Delyn (Mr. Hanson) asked about Government support. We hope and expect that the industry will be in a strong position to benefit from the recovery in demand when it comes. The Government already provide substantial support for the industry. Since 1979, more than £1·2 billion has been paid in launch aid to support major programmes such as BAe's participation in airbus, which is particularly important to the hon. Gentleman's constituents, and the Rolls-Royce RB211 engine. The industry clearly believes that launch aid has been instrumental in keeping the United Kingdom aerospace sector globally competitive. No other United Kingdom industry enjoys that level of Government investment.

Also uniquely for a manufacturing industry, aerospace has a dedicated DTI-funded research budget—CARAD—currently running at more than £20 million a year. That adds to the already high investment that aerospace companies make in research and development, and is aimed at protecting the future competitiveness of our industry. The Broughton site has been a major beneficiary of Government investment and support: launch aid of nearly £250 million for the airbus A320, and more than £440 million for the airbus A330 and A340—all supporting the airbus division at Broughton, where all the wings for those aircraft are made. The site has also received more than £10 million in regional development grants and regional selective assistance.

We also, of course, play our part in less visible ways—for example, by supporting aerospace exports, and in providing more than £735 million in export credit guarantees over the past three years. We shall continue to discuss with the industry ways in which it is appropriate for the Government to help. We already have a close dialogue. That is not just my view, but the view of industry. Mr. Dick Evans, chief executive of BAe, who is well known to the hon. Gentleman, said:

"I think the dialogue between industry and individual companies and Government today is certainly better, in fact as good as anything I can recall in my own period of time in this sort of business."

I can tell the hon. Gentleman that I am committed to improving that dialogue still further.

An example of my Department's dialogue with the industry is our aviation committee, which is comprised of senior executives from the industry and representatives from the financial and academic institutions. It advises us on the needs of the United Kingdom aerospace industry so that they can be taken into account when developing and implementing policies that affect the industry. It recently set out, in what it called the national strategic technology acquisition plan—NSTAP—its assessment of what needs to be done to maintain the industry's technological competitiveness.

The Select Committee welcomed my decision to adopt the technological priorities identified by the industry in NSTAP. Those priorities will inform my Department's work in the design of its aerospace policies and its liaison with other public sector funders of research. That is the essence of the NSTAP recommendations. The NSTAP process will now continue so that, as industry's needs change and develop, the Government can take them into account.

All job losses, and certainly aerospace job losses, are to be deeply regretted, but, by taking the hard decisions on rationalisation—decisions that, as I have said, our overseas competitors cannot avoid and clearly are not avoiding—United Kingdom companies are acting to protect the longer-term interests of the industry. As I have emphasised, the longer-term prospects are extremely good for Broughton and other aerospace centres. They are protecting the longer-term interests of the country and importantly those employed in it.

Britain's aerospace industry is among the largest and most capable in Europe. Our companies are world class and world beaters. Most of the airliners bought throughout the world will have at least some United Kingdom equipment and systems on them. British companies have won contracts on the new Boeing 777 worth more than $1 billion. Our industry exports more than 70 per cent. of its turnover. By comparison, the United States aerospace industry exports less than a quarter of its turnover. Unemployment in the United Kingdom has fallen for the past five months. We have seen the first real but small increase in air traffic since 1990, but the problems facing the industry remain. However, I hope——

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Geoffrey Lofthouse): Order.

Stansted Airport

11.45 am

Mr. Alan Haselhurst (Saffron Walden): It sometimes seems that the debate on Stansted airport has been going on continually with few interruptions. The possibility of Stansted being London's third airport arose in the 1950s, if not in the late 1940s. The whole saga has been punctuated by studies, reports and inquiries, yet still we are here today once again considering whether what was done was right and what should be done in the future. It is a never-ending story.

I think that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will agree that political difficulties, rather than the needs of the civil aviation industry, have led to London having a three-airport configuration. The matter has not been as open to us in Britain as it was to the French when they decided to find a new site near Paris for the development of what they later called Charles de Gaulle airport, which, as far as one can see, can expand almost infinitely to cover all the needs that are anticipated for many decades ahead.

Britain has not had that luxury and the fact that we have not is partly explained by the fact that we do not have as much land available as the French and because successive Governments have been buffeted by the strength of public opinion, which has caused them to duck and weave and to find opportunities when they can for the development of precious airport capacity to serve London.

The case for Stansted, in the final chapter leading up to the development that we see today, was put on the basis that the 15 million passengers per annum capacity was essential to preserve London's competitive position. From the perspective of 1993, I am not sure that everyone would quite see it in the same light. Many more people now realise that if we are to maintain London's competitive position against the growing airports on the continent of Europe, the key is Heathrow. If we are to persuade passengers to travel on British airlines to an ultimate destination in Europe via London, we have to offer them the ability to interline from one aeroplane to another within the same airport complex. It is not the same thing to invite them to be bussed around the M25 from one of London's airports to another. In such circumstances, the competition—Paris, Amsterdam, Frankfurt—would be bound to win.

The argument has changed over the years. Since the decision was made to develop Stansted, the case for it is not quite so compelling, even, I suspect, to those within the BAA, as it might have been back in 1979. Certainly, from the point of view of the current management of Stansted airport, I suspect that things look rather different today from the way they might have seemed at that time.

The new terminal was opened in 1991 in the wake of the Gulf war; it coincided with the onset of recession; and it was accompanied by the scrapping of the traffic distribution rules which previously governed which airport in London could be used by particular airlines. Those three things, taken together, have considerably knocked the estimates that previously existed about the rate at which Stansted would develop. BAA could argue, fairly, that the Government invited it to make a planning application for Stansted and, although none of the factors to which I have referred which have dogged the expansion of Stansted could be said to be the direct fault of the Government, except possibly the decision on the traffic distribution rules—there were good arguments for that—BAA would argue that the Government have an obligation to it, as a private sector company, to assist it in making a success of its huge investment.

Even the opponents of the development of Stansted—those who live in the immediate vicinity—would concede that, if there is demand, it is reasonable that it should be satisfied. Their principal argument has been that one should not create demand by investment. If there are airlines knocking at the door wishing to use Stansted, that is a different argument. It so happens that it is American airlines that are currently trying hardest to use Stansted. Stansted would like to have a transatlantic service or services and there is some irritation and frustration at the fact that what people want cannot be achieved at present.

When American Airlines decided to pull out of Stansted, having attempted to operate a daily service to Chicago, there appeared on the horizon the renascent Trans World Airlines—not yet out of chapter 11 bankruptcy but expecting to be so at any time. It had previously shed its services to London, but now sees an opportunity to come to Stansted. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has been attentive to the arguments put by myself and others about the need to look at the possibility of obtaining another transatlantic service using Stansted. At the head of the queue seems to be TWA.

In recent weeks, my right hon. Friend has conceded, for the first itme, that Stansted has a special argument in its favour. I have the impression that he is prepared to seek to ensure that Stansted will gain some benefit from the negotiations that are currently taking place between the United States Government and the British Government to liberalise the air services agreement between our two countries.

Stansted's case is more urgent than that because credibility is involved. I should like to stress that TWA's case should be re-examined. I know that the argument is complicated. If my right hon. Friend made a gesture to the American Administration suggesting that he would be prepared to give a temporary derogation to TWA to provide a New York-Chicago service into Stansted, there is doubt about whether the American Administration would reciprocate. However, there is other evidence that suggests that the Administration might be willing to respond.

I realise that the negotiation of air services is a complex business and that my right hon. Friend has to be careful not to damage the wider British interest. Nevertheless, if he has doubts about the firmness of intention of TWA or the American Administration, he should test those doubts. He should say to the Americans, "We are interested in a service into Stansted. If you say that you are interested in doing it, we will give you the opportunity." Although I wish to protect the overall civil aviation interests of this country, I do not believe that making that concession would be disastrous to Britain. In fact, the concession would be valuable at this stage in Stansted's development.

Mr. Michael Colvin (Romsey and Waterside): I have been waiting to intervene on my hon. Friend, but I have been keen not to anticipate his remarks. He has just eloquently made the point that I wished to make. I am sure that he will agree that a temporary derogation to an American airline such as TWA would not prejudge the Government's bargaining position in any way. My hon. Friend stressed the importance of the hub and spoke

principle and mentioned the point about long haul feeding into short haul and regional distribution airlines and vice versa. If more long haul traffic came to Stansted from the United States, that would greatly increase the viability of Stansted and begin to build up the hub that we all want to see.

Mr. Haselhurst: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for underlining my point. My hon. Friend the Minister will recognise that interest in this matter goes wider than purely local concern and includes those of us who follow civil aviation matters. We want to see whether it is possible to give Stansted the advantage of a transatlantic service, after which it would be seen how far it can develop further as a hub and spoke airport.

This is a tale of two airports. The picture that I have just painted shows what has happened and the present position in which Stansted finds itself. It is quite a contrast between the picture that was projected when forecasts were made in 1979. All the forecasts, which were tested by inquiry between 1979 and 1985, led us to suppose that there would be a large-scale demand that could be met only by provision at Stansted. On the basis of those forecasts and the arguments relating to them, the inspector who took the Stansted and London Heathrow fifth terminal inquiry, Mr. Graham Eyre, as he then was, agreed to the recommendation that planning permission should be granted at Stansted for a terminal capacity of 15 million passengers per annum.

In light of the arguments that I and others were responsible for putting forward, the then Secretary of State for Transport, Nicholas Ridley, agreed that there should be some limiting mechanism. He accepted the arguments about the potential environmental impact of development at Stansted. He conceded that there might be some doubts about the rate at which the airport would develop. Therefore, it was decided that a tripwire should be introduced. To start with, the airport would be allowed, within its legal planning permission, to develop to a capacity of 8 million passengers per annum. That was determined by a limit on the number of air transport movements—ATMs—which was fixed at 78,000 per annum. That was designed to be equivalent to a passenger throughput of 8 million per annum. It requires an affirmative decision by both Houses of Parliament for that level to be exceeded so that the airport can proceed up to a capacity of 15 million passengers per annum.

When Graham Eyre considered whether more land at Stansted should be safeguarded for the possibility of expansion beyond 15 million passengers per annum and for the possibility of a second runway, he came to conclusions which are worth repeating in the present climate. In his summary of the overall conclusions, at point 11, he said:

"There are compelling reasons which are now manifest as to why a second runway at Stansted should not be developed under any circumstances and Government should make an unequivocal declaration of intention that a second main runway will not be built. No planning permission should be granted in the absence of or prior to the making of such a declaration".

In chapter 25, at paragraph 12.5, Sir Graham said:

"I stood at numerous vantage points around and within the area and visualised the utter devastation which the development would wreak on this virtually unspoiled and particularly attractive tract of typical Essex countryside".

At paragraph 12.7 he continued:

"no landscaping scheme could ever be devised which would effectively offset the impact of such a vast development project affecting such an enormous area. I am wholly satisfied that the surrounding countryside is incapable of absorbing the extra development involved".

At paragraph 12.12 he says:

"I can conceive of no circumstances in which the development of such an airport"—

one requiring the construction and operation of a second runway—

"at Stansted could be justified."

There is plenty more where that came from. The volume that I am holding represents only one volume of the eight or nine that comprise Sir Graham Eyre's report. Meticulous detailed analysis led to his conclusions, and it would be extraordinary if the Government were ever tempted to overturn conclusions reached after an exhaustive inquiry and expressed so forcefully. The White Paper published in 1985 gave the unequivocal assurance for which Sir Graham had called, thereby securing his backing for the recommendation that the airport should be developed to accommodate 15 million passengers per annum.

It is almost as if time has stood still, in some respects. Here we are again, with demand forecast to rise appreciably over the next 30 or more years. The Civil Aviation Authority began the debate some years ago by saying that another runway would be required in the south-east. That led some time later to the report published in the past few days by the committee set up to advise on "Runway Capacity to Serve the South East" —the so-called RUCATSE report, which makes some interesting comments.

I shall talk about only two of the points that emerge from the report of the working group. The first, and perhaps the most startling, is that the group recognises that for a number of reasons there is now an increased capacity of passengers per available runway. In the past, our debates have been based on the assumption that a figure of roughly 25 million passengers per annum could be ascribed to a runway. RUCATSE now suggests that that figure could be increased, perhaps even to 40 million per runway at Heathrow, and to 35 million at Gatwick and Stansted. With the 20 million runway capacity at Luton, that would mean that 170 million passengers could be accommodated until the year 2015 without an additional runway being built.

That is both good and bad news. The problem, and the decision whether more concrete has to be laid on our precious land in the south-east, is being pushed into the future, yet the perpetuation of uncertainty can be a terrible cancer for all the people who live near the existing airports. The worry, the grief, the debates and the arguments will continue for many years. On the other hand, the increased runway capacity buys precious time for the Government to take another hard and thorough look at how they will cope with the rising demand foreseen over the next 20 or 30 years.

I hope that, during that time, the Government will consider the estuarial solution—the Marinair proposal—which is covered in the RUCATSE report. That solution, despite all its difficulties, has great environmental advantages and would be greeted with relief not only by many of the people who live near Stansted, in Hertfordshire, Essex and Cambridgeshire, but by those who live near Gatwick and Heathrow. Among such people there is a curious mixture of feelings. Some people are keen

[Mr. Haselhurst]

to have the employment opportunities, and they want the most convenient airport from which to start their business or holiday flights; others, who live day by day beside those airports, suffer inevitable disturbance, both from the air and on the land around them.

I do not believe that environmental considerations will become less important over the next 10 or 20 years. They have been increasingly accepted in the consideration of everything from road schemes upwards. The next major step to deal with airport capacity will have to pass the most stringent environmental tests, so there is a strong case for arguing that the Government should increasingly favour the estuarial solution; at first sight, it is the most attractive way of solving the difficult problem.

The second aspect of the RUCATSE report to which I wish to draw the attention of my hon. Friend the Minister is its forecast that by the year 2000 the actual throughput at Stansted will have reached only 6·5 million, as opposed to the present throughput of approximately 2·5 million. That figure is still below the airport's capacity, and that fact has interesting implications for the timetable for increasing the ATMs limit of 78,000. If the forecast is to have any credibility, there seems to be no need for any unseemly rush to approve the increase from 8 million to 15 million passengers per annum. I shall be interested to hear what the Minister says about that.

However, there is a sub-plot. Consistent with the movement of 2·5 million passengers per annum, the number of ATMs has risen to 37,000. That would suggest that, if the numbers were doubled, the present ceiling for ATMs would be reached when the actual throughput of the airport was no more than about 5 million passengers per annum—well below the 8 million passengers whom it was thought that the 78,000 limit would accommodate. There will, therefore, have to be some movement on the ATMs limit, and that could be considered separately from the question whether extra passenger capacity was also being provided.

I must tell my hon. Friend the Minister that the present situation is somewhat nonsensical. Inevitably, there will continue to be argument in the Stansted area about whether the 1985 decision was right. But an airport with a capacity of up to 15 million passengers per annum is a legal fact. That airport provides regional benefits; there is a catchment area in East Anglia that contains many people —including, sometimes, opponents of the airport—who admit to me that the airport is most convenient for them.

The airport provides also enormous employment opportunities which are not to be dismissed at a time when unemployment has been running high. Even within its present constriction of 8 million passengers a year, there is an opportunity for several thousand more jobs to be created than are currently available. If the figure reaches 15 million passengers a year, we shall be talking about a growth of more than 20,000 jobs. There is no shortage of employment opportunities, even within the present limits on the envisaged expansion of the airport.

Artificial stimulus of the airport is one thing, but blocking demand that is coming from certain airlines is quite another. People would understand that difference and would not condemn the Government if they were prepared to give a chance even to a foreign carrier to use the airport. The Government must try not to allow the flame of suspicion to burn that today's new service will inevitably lead to tomorrow's second runway. That is the real conundrum that we face. The RUCATSE report has given the Government time to consider whether a long-term, more environmentally friendly answer can be found. If the Government ultimately decide that that is so, there will be relief not only for the people living around Stansted but for those living around Gatwick and Heathrow who, I suspect, would sympathise with the arguments that I have put forward today.

There is a healthy future for Stansted and it can be secured in the context of an environmentally friendly answer. I hope that the Government will use the time well and ensure that the breathing space we may now have enables them to produce plans for the future that will get the widest possible welcome.

12.11 pm

The Minister for Transport in London (Mr. Steve Norris): I thank my hon. Friend the Member for Saffron Walden (Mr. Haselhurst) for securing this debate today on the important and topical issue of Stansted and the general issues of competition in air services and, not least, the RUCATSE report which was published last week. It is a timely debate in that respect and I am grateful to him for giving me the opportunity to put a few remarks on the record, this being the first possible occasion following the publication of that report.

I was amused by my hon. Friend's remark about a tale of two airports. As another of the local Members of Parliament for Stansted, although not so heavily involved as my hon. Friend, I, too, am guilty of mild schizophrenia when we talk about airport issues. On the one hand, we have a proper respect for the concerns of our constituents who want a quiet night's sleep and who, understandably, want to continue their rural existence untrammelled. On the other hand—my hon. Friend alluded to this—airports create jobs, and not many parts do not welcome job creation. The challenge to any Government is to get the balance right between environmental concerns and economic considerations. My hon. Friend did the House a service by setting out those issues from his position as the lead Member on Stansted, if I may put it that way.

Stansted is a first-class, indeed a world-class, facility. I am proud of it as a local and regional asset. Many of my constituents have told me what an excellent environment it provides for arrivals and departures. I have visited the airport, although I have never flown from it. It undoubtedly has a stunning building and it is easily the most attractive environment for air travel in the United Kingdom of which I am aware.

Although the airport's use was limited between its initial civil operations in 1946 and its development during the close of the 1980s, the past two or three years have seen the airport increase its throughput substantially. It handled about 2·3 million passengers last year; that is 38 per cent. more than in 1991 and 56 per cent. more cargo. It now offers direct flights to more than 30 destinations and interlining flights to more than 130. It continues to attract a range of new services. I was pleased to read only last week that, for example, Air Littoral is returning to the airport this summer.

As my hon. Friend said, it is true that the airport has had its difficulties, not least the loss of the American Airlines service to Chicago earlier this year. I accept that

the traffic distribution rules change has also been relevant and I am grateful to my hon. Friend for acknowleding that there were overriding good reasons for that change. He agrees that the one-off consequences of that were inevitable and the industry should have been prepared to accept them. The difficulties that Stansted has gone through are evidence that it can be difficult for a new airport ultimately to overcome the existing market preferences and develop its own range of services.

I know that my hon. Friend and others believe that we should do more to encourage new traffic to use the airport. We should not artificially distort the market by directing particular kinds of traffic to use particular airports; rather, our aim should be to facilitate as liberalised a market as possible. The United Kingdom has pursued that goal trenchantly and successfully in the European Community. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State led the way on achieving an agreement in the EC, now expressed as the third liberalisation package, which will enable any operator that can demonstrate its competence to do so to fly between any two points in Europe. That can only be good news for the travelling public and the aviation industry generally.

My hon. Friend spoke about irritation and frustration in his local area about allowing more American flights to use Stansted. The Government are keen to encourage more transatlantic air services to Stansted. We recognise that local businesses and communities want a wider choice of services in the south-east and we are aware of the benefit that that would have on the expansion of Stansted. Under existing bilateral arrangements, there is nothing to prevent any of the seven United States airlines currently serving London from operating some or all of their existing services from Stansted if they wish. Clearly, this is a matter for them to decide.

My hon. Friends the Members for Saffron Walden and for Romsey and Waterside (Mr. Colvin) referred to the desirabilty of a unilateral offer on the TWA route options. TWA has been offered the run from Stansted to New York to Chicago and, as I understand it, one other United States point to another United Kingdom point as a package in exchange for the switch of Virgin Boston flights from Gatwick to Heathrow. Most people would regard that arrangement as being in TWA's favour. TWA chose not to agree to that proposition which remains on the table. There is no sense in which my right hon. Friend will not attempt to negotiate, if it is at all possible, in the interests of any of London's airports, but his overriding concern must be the national interest. I am sure that my colleagues will agree that that is right. In the national interest we seek, ultimately, a properly deregulated and liberalised regime between the United Kingdom and the United States, which would have much wider implications than an individual negotiation over one airline's wish to fly to some airport.

How many cards it is right for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State to keep to his chest in those negotiations will always be an issue. I need not expand on the matter further because commercial negotiations are best kept in confidence. I sense that my hon. Friends will accept the fact that my right hon. Friend has conducted the negotiations so far with immense tact and considerable assiduity and that is the basis on which he should continue to negotiate.

Mr. Colvin: I acknowledge exactly what my hon. Friend said. As time goes by, Stansted will become like Gatwick. Long-haul operators have been reluctant to use Stansted, but once people see the facilities available there—it is the most attractive aiport—it will have consumer appeal. Airlines are trying to give customers precisely what they want. I should prefer to travel through Stansted than through any other terminal.

Does my hon. Friend accept that we must get as good value as possible from existing resources? My hon. Friend the Member for Saffron Walden (Mr. Haselhurst) was right to say that we must not pour concrete over the countryside. However, it seems dotty that helicopters still land at Heathrow using up valuable fixed-wing aircraft slots when separate helicopter landing facilities should be available at Heathrow. It is also crazy that a debate is going on about whether a large part of the Heathrow real estate should be used as a sludge farm or a fifth terminal. Before my hon. Friend winds up, will he say something about the fifth terminal at Heathrow in the light of the RUCATSE report?

Mr. Norris: My hon. Friend tempts me into dangerous areas. On the relationship between a possible terminal 5 and the RUCATSE report, BAA's fifth terminal application, which the Secretary of State has called in, now falls to be considered by public inquiry and will ultimately come before my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for determination. On that basis, I hope that my hon. Friend will forgive me if I do not expatiate at length on terminal 5. Suffice it to say that RUCATSE is considering the need for, and a possible option of, the provision of further runway capacity in the south-east. I agree with my hon. Friend that it seems sensible to use existing capacity before further capacity is provided.

There is an inevitable logic about the fact that people want to go where people already go. Airlines and passengers now favour Heathrow if they have an option. When Heathrow has been full, they have tended to go to Gatwick and, when they could not go to Gatwick, they have gone to Stansted. I shall be accused of appalling over-simplification. Ironically, as my hon. Friend the Member for Romsey and Waterside said, Stansted is the most agreeable environment of the three London airports. However, its attractions will become more evident as traffic grows in the next few years and as more and more people realise how good the rail service is from London to Stansted and how trouble-free travel there can be compared with travel to larger, more crowded airports.

We shall keep under review the issue of air traffic movements and shall keep in close touch with BAA on that issue. Aircraft using the airport have tended to be smaller than forecast, which has had the effect described by my hon. Friend the Member for Saffron Walden. Therefore, more movements may be needed to reach forecast traffic levels. We shall need to review that with BAA at the appropriate time and we shall then be obliged to present our proposals to the House.

One important issue which my hon. Friend would have raised had he had the time is that of noise. We are concerned to ensure that, as Stansted develops, local residents should continue to be protected against excessive aircraft noise, particularly at night. That is why the new system of night restrictions for the three London airports announced on 6 July includes specific quotas for night movements at Stansted for the first time. New noise and

[Mr. Norris]

track-keeping monitoring equipment has been installed at Stansted to ensure adherence to noise mitigation rules; operators who exceed the maximum permissible night-time noise level are subject to financial penalty.

The proposal in our consultation paper for an extensive category of aircraft called QC zero that would not count against the quota concerned many local people, local authorities and environmental groups around Stansted, as elsewhere. That is why we have introduced the QC½ category to provide an additional measure of protection and meet local concerns about the perceived threat of uncontrolled growth. The quotas for Stansted and Gatwick have been increased appropriately.

The size of the increase at Stansted may have surprised many, but there are already a considerable number of night movements at Stansted by aircraft exempt from the present restrictions—many more than my hon. Friend's constituents probably realise. The noise of many of these aircraft does not extend much beyond the airport boundary and wakes few people, but we felt that that factor should be taken into account. I hope that others will not now lie awake worrying about this matter.

So far I have looked at Stansted's immediate future, but what of the longer term? My hon. Friend has mentioned the recent report by RUCATSE. I should like to pay tribute to all the members of the working group for their hard work in producing such a thorough and detailed report. The membership of the group has been very diverse: it has included representatives from air transport and tourist industries, from central and local government and from bodies representing national and local environmental interests, including local residents groups, consumer groups, airlines and airports.

The group was set up in response to advice from the Civil Aviation Authority in 1990 that there would shortly be a need for additional runway capacity. The CAA identified 10 sites at which development looked to be feasible in air traffic control terms. RUCATSE's remit was to examine in more detail the consequences of development at those sites, and also the potential contribution of the regional airports. I must emphasise, however, that RUCATSE is not a decision-making body, nor is it a substitute for any part of the planning process—its role is purely advisory. In brief detail, the principal findings are that the new runway's worth of capacity, if I may put it that way, is now likely not to be needed until 2005 at the earliest—mainly because of the more intensive use of runways at regional and London airports—and more probably by a date some five years on from that. There has been some deferral of the necessity for additional runways.

Of the sites examined in detail, the House knows that Heathrow would afford the greatest benefit to the air transport industry and passengers, but it also gives rise to a greater scale of disbenefits, such as noise impact on people, land use and property development. I do not think that anybody would underestimate the environmental impact on that area, the scale of loss of residential property, and so on.

At Gatwick, there is the prospect of generating high benefits, but again there are substantial environmental problems and, of course, there is the planning agreement between West Sussex county council and BAA, which limits development before 2019. Stansted has lower benefits and has environmental problems that are, in many ways, similar to those at Gatwick, and the 1985 White Paper concurred with the inspector's view that there should not be a second runway there. Luton is a smaller option and would delay the case for expansion by three years. Although it has relatively low benefits, they are high in relation to the size of the project.

My hon. Friend the Member for Saffron Walden mentioned the prospects for Marinair, a concept to which Gerry Matthews has devoted much of his life. I hope that my hon. Friend will accept that, to many, the advantage of the Marinair site is that it does not have a constituency of its own and all the other local authorities can happily recommend it in the knowledge that it avoids their areas. In fact, there are many difficulties with the estuarial concept, as I am sure my hon. Friend is aware.

The RUCATSE report should inform our debates on airport issues over the coming months. It is only right, given the complexity of the report, that we should have time to reflect and that we should be open to all views. We have announced a full period of consultation——

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): Order.

Angola

12.32 pm

Ms Kate Hoey (Vauxhall): I am pleased to have the opportunity today to draw the attention of the House and the country to the continuing tragic situation in Angola. After more than 30 years of war, the Angolan people welcomed the elections of September 1992 as the beginning of a new era of peace. I was privileged, along with the hon. Members for Gravesham (Mr. Arnold), for Liverpool, Garston (Mr. Loyden) and for Spelthorne (Mr. Wilshire), to be one of four official British delegates sent to monitor the elections. All our accounts of the elections and all the international observers said that, under incredibly difficult constraints, the elections were as free and fair as any elections could be.

Unfortunately, the leader of UNITA, Mr. Savimbi, rejected the election results and, since that time, UNITA has been waging a devastating war. The rebel forces now control about 70 per cent. of the country, including the second largest town, Huambo, a city in which two of the members of our delegation based their headquarters during the monitoring of the elections. When I recently saw pictures of what had happened in Huambo, having seen it a year ago when even then we felt that it was devastated from 30 years of war, and to know that many of the people who had helped and supported us have since been killed, it brings home the tragedy of the situation.

I should like to put on record, on behalf of all the delegates, that the help and support from the British embassy in Luanda was superb. It must be one of the most difficult postings in the world for British embassy staff, not just at the senior level but at junior level. All of us were grateful to them for their dedication and duty.

It is estimated that well over 20,000 people have died and 3 million people have been displaced amid fighting heavier than at any time since independence. In an especially horrific incident recently, UNITA forces attacked a train, killing up to 300 civilians, mostly women and children, and wounding many others.

Angola is potentially a rich country, but its economy has been destroyed by the continued fighting over many years. Agriculture has been reduced to low levels of production, and food prices have risen beyond the reach of ordinary people. The war has displaced many rural dwellers and prevented many others from planting because of harassment by military forces. It must be said that there has been military force on occasions from both sides, but it has been especially from UNITA.

The continuing dry conditions in the drought-prone south are also causing food shortages. Landmines, some of them dating back to pre-independence days, are a serious ongoing problem. There is estimated to be 2 million landmines scattered throughout the country, many around key economic installations as well as on paths, roads, river banks and in built-up areas. Even when peace is restored, they will still pose a great threat to life, inhibiting future reconstruction.

In the face of this desperate state of affairs, many Angolans who pinned their hopes for peace on the UN-monitored elections feel betrayed by the international community in which they placed their faith. Angola is a key test of the UN's credibility as an agent of peace in the post cold-war era. The debacle has been a major setback for UN operations since the end of the cold war. As well as threatening to destabilise transitional processes in other parts of the region—for example, in Mozambique and South Africa—there are important implications for the UN's involvement in other peacekeeping operations. The current diplomatic situation is that, in May, the Abidjan peace talks broke down due to UNITA's refusal to accept the terms of its withdrawal from towns it is holding. The new UN special representative, Mr. Beye of Mali, took charge of the UN Angola Verification Mission II in June, saying that "genuine will and concrete action" were necessary from both sides to overcome the current impasse.

On 15 July the UN Security Council renewed the UNAVEM II mandate for another two months. The mandate allows for Mr. Beye to "offer his good offices" in pursuit of an agreement between the two sides. The three observer countries—Portugal, the United States and the Russian federation—issued a strongly worded statement on 8 July calling for the immediate cessation of hostilities. The democratically elected Angolan Government had high hopes that United States' recent and belated recognition might lead to an improvement in the diplomatic situation. George Moose, the US Secretary for Foreign Affairs, visited Angola in June, but was vague on the type and amount of aid that Angola could expect.

Although there is no official evidence at the moment of assistance to UNITA from South Africa, it appears that junior members of the army in South Africa have been supplying UNITA unofficially. It is also believed that UNITA is still receiving assistance from Zaire. Both countries have certainly helped UNITA in the past.

Mr. Jeremy Corbyn (Islington, North): Does my hon. Friend recall that, during Nelson Mandela's most recent visit to London, the question of South African support for UNITA was raised with him? He deplored the way in which South African forces had been used to crush, or attempt to crush, the democratically elected Government in Angola. Does my hon. Friend agree that it is important for the British Government to put all possible pressure on both the commercial sources of funding to UNITA and on South Africa, whose troops, both regular and irregular, and air force are attempting to destroy the results of the Angolan election?

Ms Hoey: I thank my hon. Friend, and I hope that the Minister will respond to that direct point. It is clear that support, even if it is only covert, is in some way coming from South Africa. That help will prolong the situation.

I want to say what I and a number of others think went wrong with the peace process. We all agree that it is easier with the advantage of hindsight, but it is clear that the United Nations made many mistakes between the 1991 peace agreement and the elections in 1992. The United Nations and the world community must learn from those mistakes. The United Nations mission was badly underfunded by the international community. Before the elections, the special representative herself made repeated references to the lack of resources. The one quote that has been used over and over again and needs repeating is when she said that she was expected to "fly a jumbo jet with fuel for DC3."

UNAVEM II seems to be an attempt by the international community to deal with Angola on the cheap, but its failure demonstrates the dangers of expecting the United Nations to function with inadequate

[Ms Hoey]

funds. UNAVEM II's mandate from the Security Council was too weak. After the election, the United Nations special representative admitted that, with hindsight, the United Nations should never have accepted the mandate because of its insufficient powers. On the many occasions when the Bicesse accords were broken, the United Nations could do nothing except try to cajole the two sides into an agreement. In practice, the United Nations often turned a blind eye to transgressions. The United Nations' kid-glove treatment of UNITA may have unwittingly encouraged Mr. Savimbi to reject the election results. The failure of the demobilisation and disarming process made it all too easy for UNITA to return to war after it failed to win the election.

In retrospect, the 18 months allowed to prepare for the elections were insufficient, especially in view of the long civil war that preceded the transition. When it is compared with the transition period that is being allowed for South Africa and the resources that went into Namibia, we can see that the United Nations underestimated the amount of resources needed. Some people may disagree, but I think that the United Nations seemed unprepared for a Government victory in the elections and had no contingency plans for such an event. The Angolan tragedy has to be an important lesson to the international community of the dangers of trying to deal with conflicts on the cheap.

Let me consider the humanitarian situation because that is where the real tragedy lies—with the ordinary Angolan men and women, many of whom we spoke to when we were there. The majority were young people who were at the polling stations to represent the two main political parties and were standing side by side, having to sleep and work together on the election process. Most of them were younger than 20. At every station that we visited throughout the country, all of them told us that they wanted peace at the end of the election. They were prepared to work together, they knew what an election meant, and they wanted peace. The tragedy is that they were speaking the truth. Both the young people from UNITA and the young people from the MPLA wanted peace. The tragedy is that leaders of political parties so often do not follow the wishes of party members and of people.

The current humanitarian situation is that thousands of displaced people have fled from the UNITA-held rural areas to those towns still under Government control. In Luanda and other cities the sudden influx has placed an intolerable strain on water and food supplies. City dwellers in coastal towns such as Lobito and Benguela are even worse off than the displaced people living in camps. Although the former are not eligible for fuel and food aid, they have lost their jobs, their farmland and access to relatives in the countryside who might provide them with food. Soup kitchens are being set up to help them. According to the World Food Programme, 2 million people—about one fifth of the population—face food shortages.

In April, UNITA shot down a World Food Programme relief aeroplane taking supplies into Luena, one of the provincial towns under siege from UNITA. In June, following the breakdown of the Abidjan talks, the United Nations negotiated a 30-day plan for safe corridors to take relief into war-torn areas. That quickly foundered after UNITA withdrew permission for flights to land in the towns of Cuito and Menongue. Our most recent information is that the United Nations is trying to resume flights according to the original plan but that its aeroplanes are still being shot at.

The United Nations has appealed for $226 million to fund its relief work in Angola, which has met with a disappointing response from donor countries, with initial pledges amounting to $89 million only. The United Kingdom pledged £2 million and 3,000 tonnes of wheat at the donors' conference. The World Food Programme has urged an increased response, and stated in June that it was in particular need of $2·8 million for emergency operations support. Initial flights into Huambo have confirmed the urgency and enormity of need and the programme is trying to position as much food aid as it can within Angola, ready for delivery when security conditions permit. Neighbouring countries report that they are receiving large influxes of Angolan refugees.

I ask the Minister whether the United Kingdom Government, in the midst of all their other difficulties, could respond more generously to the United Nations appeal for Angola launched in May, and to any direct requests for assistance from the Angolan Government. Could the Government also exert diplomatic pressure to ensure that no covert assistance is reaching UNITA from South Africa, Zaire or any other country? Surely we can do more to stop that help reaching UNITA.

In addition, the United Kingdom, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, has an important role to play in helping to reinstate the peace process, and we want the Government to work closely with other permanent members to ensure that the United Nations continues with its efforts to bring the Angolan Government and UNITA together, always recognising that that Government are the legitimate Government of the country.

Our Government must continue to take the lead in co-ordinating and supporting humanitarian relief efforts in areas where access is possible, and prepare for a strengthened United Nations peacekeeping mission once the peace process restarts. That will mean direct responsibility for supervising all aspects, including disarmament, demobilisation and any further elections. Clearly, that means adequate funding.

The United Kingdom Government must work with other members of the European Council of Ministers and the European Commission to ensure that the European Community responds generously to the United Nations appeal on Angola and any direct requests for assistance. They should signal to any Governments who are currently providing covert assistance to UNITA that that is unacceptable. We have a responsibility.

The western and Soviet power blocs used Angola as a pawn in the cold war and have now lost interest in it, despite 1·7 million refugees and a daily death rate higher than that in Bosnia. We know that the United Nations devoted too little assistance in soldiers and money. It failed to give United Nations special representatives the power to halt the elections until both sides disarmed. The United States failed to put immediate pressure on UNITA. It could have told Savimbi that the time was up. It failed to do that and has only belatedly recognised the Angolan Government. As part of the west, we have a responsibility for what is happening in Angola.

Angola has been at war continually for 32 years. With neither side able to prevail in the civil war, it is shameful that the west is doing almost nothing to stop one of the most ruinous conflicts in the world. Pressures could be brought to bear that would force UNITA to accept within six months the Abidjan settlement that it has so far refused.

We must get all military and economic aid to UNITA blocked. We must continue the diplomatic isolation of UNITA by getting other countries such as Zaire, Morocco and the Ivory Coast, as well as South Africa, to withdraw support. As has been suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for Oldham, West (Mr. Meacher), we should consider cutting UNITA's satellite telephone links and closing its offices abroad, including that in London. Above all, UNITA's funds must be cut by blocking the marketing of illegally mined diamonds from north-east Angola. I await the Minister's response to that.

I will remember my visit to Angola mostly because of the warmth of the people and their determination to live in a democratic society. We told them that we would tell the House of Commons that their elections had been fair and would continue to take an interest in what is happening in their country. I hope that this debate will help to arouse the feeling that something must be done to end the terrible tragedy for which we, as a country of the west, are partly responsible.

12.47 pm

Mr. Jacques Arnold (Gravesham): With permission of the hon. Member for Vauxhall (Ms Hoey), may I say that I had the honour to lead the parliamentary delegation to observe the elections in Angola in October in which the hon. Lady starred dramatically. I well remember tramping through the scorching heat and the dust of the streets of Benguela with the hon. Member for Liverpool, Garston (Mr. Loyden) to see the elections, which we observed in both Benguela and Luanda, the capital. Our hon. Friends went to other cities throughout the country.

We unreservedly endorse the opinion of UNAVEM that the elections were fairly held and represented the then views of the people of Angola. It was especially moving to see young people on both sides of the argument—both UNITA and the MPLA—working with such hope that the election would express a view, bring an end to the war, and be the opening of a new peaceful and prosperous chapter for the great country of Angola.

All of that was thrown away by Jonas Savimbi's decision to repudiate the election. He released the dogs of war in insurrection in a number of cities. In return, the thugs of the MPLA, whom we met during the visit of our delegation, were released to the butchering of the young people whom we saw in the polling stations. Jonas Savimbi has much blood on his hands. He must understand that, whatever support he may have found in the House of Commons during the civil war and before the Bicesse accords, our response to the election is that he has forfeited any support that he may once have enjoyed.

12.50 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Mark Lennox-Boyd): I congratulate the hon. Member for Vauxhall (Ms Hoey) on raising this subject for debate. I am aware that she and my hon. Friend the Member for Gravesham (Mr. Arnold), as well as the hon. Member for Liverpool, Garston (Mr. Loyden), were observers. I do not know about the hon. Member for Islington, North (Mr. Corbyn), who is also present today, but I know that he takes an interest in the subject. Knowing that the hon. Members had all been to the elections, I was interested to hear their contributions.

The Government share the hon. Lady's concern about the tragic conflict. I am dismayed by the resumption of the civil war and the suffering caused by it. The Government firmly support a negotiated solution to the conflict in the framework of the Bicesse accords. We pay tribute to the willingness of the Angolan Government to uphold the accords and to the attempts by the United Nations Secretary-General to bring the Angolan Government and UNITA to the negotiating table.

The accords were signed by the Government of Angola and UNITA in May 1991. They provided, among other things, for the first democratic elections, which took place in September 1992, monitored by the hon. Lady, other hon. Members and the United Nations corps of observers. We know the result: the MPLA won a substantial majority in the legislative elections and President Dos Santos gained 49·5 per cent. in the presidential elections, with Mr. Savimbi gaining only 40 per cent. At that time, the United Nations Secretary-General's special representative was a British lady, Miss Margaret Anstee, who, in concert with Members of Parliament who were present, determined quite clearly that the elections were generally free and fair.

We unreservedly condemn UNITA for rejecting the results of those elections, for resuming the civil war, for breaking off the talks in Abidjan and for refusing to withdraw from areas which it occupies. We have urged UNITA to agree to an immediate ceasefire and return to the negotiating table. To that end, the Government helped to prepare United Nations Security Council resolution 851, which the council adopted under British chairmanship on 15 July. The resolution extends the mandate of the United Nations Angolan verification mission and expresses the council's willingness to consider measures against UNITA under the United Nations charter. If no ceasefire is in place by 15 September, those measures are likely to include a mandatory embargo on the supply to UNITA of arms and related material and military assistance.

The hon. Lady suggested that the United Nations had put inadequate resources into the peace process. We must remember that, when the peace accords were negotiated by UNITA and the MPLA Government in early 1991, one of the areas of agreement between the two Angolan parties was a desire to limit the size of the United Nations mission and to limit the United Nations role to monitoring rather than implementing the elections.

The United Nations mission in Angola has cost the United Nations more than US$148 million so far, and however desirable it may be for more money to be spent —as the hon. Lady suggested—the m already spent can hardly be described as doing it on the cheap. Many people are perplexed and concerned about the proposal to allow UNITA two months in which to comply. The purpose of that is to give the new special representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Beye—who has been in post for only a short time—an opportunity to use his good offices to bring the two sides together. Certainly, I hope that the additional measures will not be necessary, although I recognise that they may be. UNITA must recognise that it is now isolated politically and that it

[Mr. Mark Lennox-Boyd]

cannot continue to defy the wishess of the United Nations and to oppose by arms the democratically elected Government of Angola.

As the hon. Lady said, UNITA has an office in London, and she invited me to comment on that. We have not sought to do anything about it. I am sure that the hon. Lady will accept that in Britain we are proud of our long tradition of freedom of expression. That means that any organisation that does not break our laws can establish an office here. I am sure that she will agree that that is the right approach. I am not aware of any evidence that the UNITA office in London is engaged in criminal activity. In the absence of any such evidence, there is no basis for closing it.

We have had a similar problem with several other countries where activities are pursued through legitimate organisations in London. Those countries often express anger, bitterness and concern about that. I am afraid that the hon. Lady must say to her friends and contacts that if they have any evidence they must present it and we will then look at it in every possible way, and on a confidential basis. We must have evidence upon which to act.

Mr. Corbyn: Could the Minister deal with the point that I raised earlier? What action is his Government taking to put pressure on the South African Government about their military support for UNITA in Angola?

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I shall say something about that before I make my concluding remarks. The South African Government have repeatedly maintained, and we have accepted, that they are not supporting UNITA. Senior members of the Angolan Government have told us that they accept those assurances. It is clear that UNITA concealed significant stockpiles of fuel, arms and ammunition in the run up to last year's elections and is not, as in the past, dependent on the support of other states in the region. I am sure that when discussing any necessary measures in September the Security Council will carefully consider all the available evidence on UNITA's supply routes, with the intention of cutting them.

In the meantime, we have been showing our concern for the humanitarian tragedy in Angola by providing a large measure of assistance. The war has caused hundreds of thousands of non-combatants—the hon. Lady said 3 million—in rural Angola to be driven from their homes and into the cities of the coastal strip. They endure much suffering. We have pledged up to £2 million in response to the United Nations appeal for Angola for the purpose of emergency humanitarian relief. Some £800,000 has already been committed to British non-governmental organisations to airlift and stockpile emergency supplies. We are considering the most appropriate channels for disbursing the rest. We have also pledged 3,000 tonnes of food aid through the World Food Programme. Without a political settlement, there are limits to what aid agencies can do to alleviate such hardships. In that context we call upon UNITA to stop frustrating attempts by the United Nations to deliver humanitarian relief supplies to civilians.

A ceasefire in Angola must be the top priority. We shall do all that we can, with the Security Council and in consultation with others, to bring that about as soon as possible. We therefore strongly support the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General's special representative, Mr. Beye, to whom I have referred, to restart a dialogue between the Government an UNITA. I know that Mr. Beye discussed this with the UNITA leader Dr. Savimbi on 8 July, when the latter expressed his willingness in principle to resume the dialogue that was broken off on 21 May.

The Government of Angola have repeatedly made clear their willingness to negotiate, and I call on UNITA to match with deeds its leader's declaration of intent and to negotiate in good faith and so put an end to the suffering of the Angolan people.

Brewing Industry

12.59 pm

Sir Ivan Lawrence (Burton): The brewing industry, in which I declare an interest, is one of the oldest, proudest and most vital of British industries. We know that barley, the main ingredient, was cultivated in 3000 BC—neolithic times—and in due course a way was found to convert the cereal into a nourishing and refreshing drink which brought cheer to those living a hard life.

Despite the Greek physician Dioscorides writing in the 1st century AD that a British drink

"made from barley and often drunk instead of wine produces headaches and does harm to muscles",

the British people took the drink to heart and to their stomachs, as for centuries it was the only liquid refreshment available to all that was really safe to drink. As Sydney Smith said:

"What two ideas are more inseparable than Beer and Britannia?"

Of course, Burton on Trent is the home and heartland of the brewing industry. A. E. Housman wrote:

"Say for what were hop-yards meant,
Or why was Burton built on Trent?
Oh many a peer of England brews
Livelier liquor than the Muse,
And malt does more than Milton can
To justify God's ways to man."

Burton is still the brewing centre of Britain, with great names like Ind Coope, Bass and Marston's employing 3,000 of my constituents directly. Many thousands more are employed in industries dependent upon brewing—the pubs, the off-licences, the brewing support trades like Briggs, to say nothing of those who provide the services to the brewing workers.

I am privileged to have represented the constituency and the town for nearly 20 years. Despite boundary redistribution and my opposition to Maastricht, I hope to continue that service for many years to come.

Brewing is vital to Britain in a number of ways. Beer is by far the most popular alcoholic drink in Britain today and our beer consumption represents 20 per cent. of the entire European Community total. We spend £13·5 billion per year on it—more than all other alcoholic drinks combined. Beer excise duty and VAT bring the Treasury some £4·3 billion a year—equivalent to nearly 3p on income tax—and total beer revenue is greater than the combined total of all the other EC member states.

The industry employs 30,000 people nationally, widely spread throughout industrial and country towns and villages in the United Kingdom. More than 500,000 people work in pubs and clubs and, together with the suppliers of services, more than 1 million people—almost 5 per cent. of the total national work force—owe their livelihood to brewing.

The British pub is a national institution, with one third of all adults visiting a pub at least once a week and more than 70 per cent. of tourists to Britain preferring British pubs to their own bars at home.

British brewers have doubled British exports in beer over the past five years; yet, despite the essential nature of the industry and its outstanding performance, I am sorry to have to tell the House that the problems facing the industry are enormous, very largely of the Government's making, and therefore in the Government's hands to remedy.

First, unprecedented damage has been done to the industry by Government interference and the iniquitous Beer Orders, which have cost the industry about £500 million. Since 1989, the brewers have had to sell, or put on long lease, almost 11,000 public houses, and they have had to do so at a time when interest rates were high and beer sales were down, so private buyers were discouraged, and during the worst slump in property prices that anyone can remember.

The result has been a triumph for the industrial planners at the Department of Trade and Industry—fewer breweries, pubs and jobs, less choice for the consumer and considerable damage to brewer-tenant relations as licensees experienced distress and uncertainty with the introduction of new leases.

The brewing industry is strong and has learnt to adapt. There is now a period of stability, which the industry does not want to see disrupted. But the Government made a big mistake, and they owe the industry something.

The second major problem is the decline in the beer market. That has fallen by about 15 per cent. since 1979. Britain has been the only major world brewing industry to lose volume during the 1980s.

The third problem, and a contributing factor to the decline in beer production, has been the ridiculous burden of excise duty. Because it is far too high, it has driven down consumption and is seriously distorting competition in the single market, about which the Government are much concerned.

Tax on beer has risen by 52 per cent. since 1979. The industry has had two duty increases in 1993 alone—5 per cent. in the March Budget, followed by a hidden, although I concede accidental, increase of 2·7 per cent. from the change in the duty collection system. That makes nearly 8 per cent. in all. VAT now accounts for nearly as much of the tax burden, at more than £2 billion, as excise duty does.

Government fiscal policy has discriminated heavily against beer. Its duty has increased in real terms by 31 per cent., while duty on wine has been cut by 26 per cent. and duty on spirits has been cut by 24 per cent. The duty on cider is half the duty on beer.

The tax level is now so high that Mike Hubbard, the general manager of Ind Coope Burton brewery, makers of the fabulous Burton ale, tells me, "We have reached the point of diminishing returns and duty increases are punishing both the industry and the Exchequer." Mike Southwell from Bass tells me that Bass in Burton paid £18 million in beer duty in May this year alone—£550 million from Bass in a full year. The director of the Brewers Society, Robin Simpson, sums it all up as "killing the goose that is laying the golden egg".

Greatly exaggerating the problem is the excessively large differential in beer duty between the United Kingdom and other European Community countries, particularly France and Germany. While Germany pays 4p a pint, France 5p and Belgium 8p a pint, we in Britain have to pay no less than 33p a pint. We produce the second cheapest pint in the European Community and have to pay the second highest duty.

We are now witnessing the utterly preposterous sight of British brewers having to ship their beer to Calais so that British travellers can buy it in French supermarkets and cash and carries and bring it back to England by the lorryload. Because the new personal import limitation has been raised to 110 litres, families of four are bringing back

[Sir Ivan Lawrence]

their beer on trailers behind their cars. The hard-pressed customs officers have given up trying to stop that trade, because stopping drugs is more important.

That trade has, according to the Brewers Society, reduced the United Kingdom take-home trade by no less than 8 per cent. during the past year. So much of that traffic is being sold off to cash and carries in the United Kingdom and the financial gains are so considerable that we are in danger of developing an area here for organised crime. There is a massive distortion of competition and a denial of the principles of fair competition enshrined in the concept of the single market, which we in Britain have pioneered. The Government must do something about that quickly.

In his Budget speech in March 1992, my right hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont) said:

"This Government have always sought to reduce distortions in the tax system".—[*Official Report*, 10 March 1992; Vol. 205, c. 757.]

He reduced car tax by half, and abolished it completely six months later. I am sure that my right hon. and learned Friend the present Chancellor will want to do the same. Beer duty must be reduced as speedily as possible to the European Community average rate. When faced with a similar situation with cheap German imports and a wide divergence in excise rates, the Danish Government did precisely that, slashing rates by 46 per cent.

If that is not done, there will continue to be a decline in yield from beer duty as beer consumption, and therefore production and tax payments, decline. That will have destructive implications for value added tax, income tax, corporation tax, business rates, fuel excise duty and amusement machine excise duty, to say nothing of unemployment or other social service benefits. For example, if 30,000 jobs were lost of the 1 million that are now employed in the industry, it would mean a £90 million loss in income tax and national insurance and an additional cost of some £300 million in benefits.

I see that my hon. Friend the Minister is listening intently. While I am on the subject of tax burdens, perhaps he will bring to the Treasury's attention the harmful effect of changing the system of excise duty and the Government's breach of promise on the fiscal neutrality of the changes in the system.

Instead of charging duty on the level of gravity of the wort—the liquid produced prior to fermentation—the duty is now charged on the alcoholic strength of the finished beer as it leaves the brewery. The industry was promised that there would be no additional cost. In fact, it has cost an extra 3 per cent. in excise duty. Although it is said that a delay in payment offsets that, the one to four week delay that is allowed does nothing like enough to counter the additional cost of the change. Please can that burden be remedied forthwith, in the interests of all who work in the brewing industry?

The industry desperately needs some relief from the burdens that the Government have placed upon it. The industry welcomes the Prime Minister's deregulation initiative. If it leads to less restriction in the licensing law, in its hours and Sunday opening restrictions; if it leads to the lifting of restrictions on amusement machine prizes in pubs; if it leads to the lifting of restrictions on planning procedures or the restrictions of over-zealous environmental health and trading standards officers; if it leads to the lifting of some of the restrictions that have been imposed or are likely to be imposed by EC directives on such matters as waste disposal; and if the Government prevent the increased cost of removing the head of beer, some useful and helpful steps will have been taken to ease the burden on our splendid and successful brewing industry.

I am sure that my hon. Friend the Minister has seen my early-day motion which sets out the cost involved in removing the head of beer. It would massively increase the cost to the breweries, as they would have to re-equip their public houses with new glasses.

Above all, we ask for relief from unfair taxation. That is all I ask on behalf of the people of Britain, who enjoy the jobs in the brewing industry, who enjoy our beer and our pubs, and who enjoy our traditional way of life. Long may it continue.

1.14 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Corporate Affairs (Mr. Neil Hamilton): My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Burton (Sir I. Lawrence) is never more seductive than when speaking, as he has just announced he was, on behalf of the people of Britain. I am delighted that he has used the opportunity today to prevent our departure from this place for the summer recess until we have discussed an industry of great importance to British people, and to me.

As one who grew up in a pub—my grandfather kept a pub for 20 years, and my formative years were spent in that beneficent environment—I have much sympathy with what my hon. and learned Friend has said. Before I gave up thinking for myself and joined the Government, I had been known to express some of the concerns that he has repeated today, so I am grateful to him for the opportunity to speak about the brewing industry.

I am responding on behalf of the Government as a whole, but, as my hon. and learned Friend is well aware, responsibility for sponsoring the brewing industry lies with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. My Department's specific responsibility for the brewing industry includes the Beer Orders and deregulation—both of which my hon. and learned Friend mentioned—consumer affairs, and other competition policy issues.

The policies of other Departments also have a significant impact on the brewing industry, mainly the Home Office and Customs and Excise, both of which were referred to obliquely in my hon. and learned Friend's speech. The extent to which the brewing industry impinges on the policies of so many Ministers and Departments is but one demonstration of its significance to the economy.

As my hon. and learned Friend noted, the British brewing industry is the second largest in Europe and the sixth largest in the world. It has a long tradition of producing beers of outstanding quality and variety, as I can personally attest. Few countries can match us in the range of beers produced—from great cask-conditioned ales to fine lagers, keg beers, stouts, strong ales and barley wines. We also have in this country a great diversity of brewers, from some of the world's finest large brewers to regional brewers of distinction, and to the increasing number of small and micro-brewers, bringing to the consumer a variety of unique quality beers.

One has only to think of the range of beers on offer at CAMRA's annual Great British beer festival to realise the choice available to the British beer drinker—among whom I can no doubt include my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department, whose presence here today I am pleased to be able to advertise to the world. This year's festival will offer the visitor over 300 fine ales to choose from.

The British brewing industry is one of the world leaders in developing innovative processes. A fine example of that is the recent technical development of an "in can" dispensing system that provides the consumer with a beer with the taste and appearance characteristics previously found only in draught beer served from the cask. The new products have been widely welcomed by consumers as providing a beer for drinking at home that is very similar in appearance and taste to their draught pint in the pub.

Of course, as my hon. and learned Friend pointed out, the industry is a major employer, with over 40,000 people directly engaged in production and a further 325,000 employed in public houses. In addition, the industry generates a large number of jobs in off-licence retailing, hotels, restaurants and clubs. The industry is also a major purchaser of agricultural raw materials, thereby generating a significant number of jobs in the agricultural sector with its demand for cereals and hops, and in the malting industry, which annually supplies about 650,000 tonnes of malt to the breweries. The brewing industry also creates jobs in other industrial sectors through capital expenditure on beer production and packaging plant, on distribution plant and on retail outlets. In 1991 overall capital expenditure totalled nearly £1·5 billion.

The brewing industry is also important to our balance of trade. It continues to forge ahead in exporting its products in increasing quantities to appreciative drinkers around the world. In 1992 exports rose by 21 per cent. to reach a value of £116 million. That continued the pattern over recent years that has led to an increase in the value of exports from £53 million in 1988—an increase of 119 per cent.

Our partners in Europe continue to increase their imports of British beer, and exports to the other member states constitute approximately 50 per cent. of total exports. American and Canadian beer drinkers have also been consuming increasing quantities of British beers, with about one third of our exports going to those markets.

It is encouraging to see that it is not only the large brewers who have expanded their exports; smaller brewers such as Bateman's of Lincolnshire have also successfully penetrated the export market.

I referred to the number of different Government Departments with an interest in the brewing industry. It is worth making the point that, just as the Government have a variety of interests in the industry, so there is a wide range of interests within the brewing industry itself. It is not accurate to speak of "the brewing industry" as a monolithic structure. It is not; nor should it be. Views about the structure of the industry or the appropriate means of taxation can vary significantly within the industry. This diversity is a strength of the industry, but it can make it difficult for the Government to take action that satisfies everyone, which is what we normally try to do.

My hon. and learned Friend referred, inevitably, to the Beer Orders, which I inherited on assuming my current responsibilities. The period since the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report "The Supply of Beer" in 1989 and the subsequent introduction of the Beer Orders has been one of considerable change within the brewing industry.

Much of the change—for example, the introduction of long-term leases for tenants—reflects the long-term trends in the industry. Mergers between brewers and sales of public houses were already taking place before the MMC report, but I have no doubt that the report accelerated the process of change. Similarly, changes to the size and mix of the national brewers' pub retail estates were also taking place before the 1989 report, as was the move to increased numbers of managed outlets.

It is apparent that, even without the introduction of the Beer Orders, the period since 1989 would have been one of considerable change for the United Kingdom brewing industry. It is not easy to separate the effects of the orders from other developments in the market. I have no difficulty in agreeing with the broad thrust of my hon. and learned Friend's remarks. They have, indeed, been a potent catalyst for change. To some it has been welcome; to others it has not.

The Government noted the conclusion of the Select Committee on Agriculture that the Beer Orders have not achieved their desired objective. The Select Committee concluded, however that it would be possible to assess the full impact of the changes introduced by the Beer Orders only in the long term. My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade made it clear in January that the Government share that view. Consequently, we think that it is too early to draw firm conclusions about the impact of the Beer Orders.

After a period of unprecedented change and turmoil we now need a period of stability in which brewers can get on with their raison d'etre of running their businesses, and tenants and lessees can get on with running their pubs, within the regulatory framework created by the Beer Orders. That is why, earlier this year, my right hon. Friend took his decision that the Director General of Fair Trading should not carry out a full-scale review of the effects of the Beer Orders later this year. I am happy to say that the Select Committee supported the decision and agreed with the Government that it would not be appropriate to intervene at this stage in the regulatory framework governing the brewing industry.

Mr. Robert N. Wareing (Liverpool, West Derby): I know that the Minister is taking note of what various Members are saying about the brewing industry. What time scale does he envisage before the Government are prepared to review the Beer Orders?

Mr. Hamilton: The Director General of Fair Trading is obliged by the terms of his appointment and the legislation which governs his responsibilities to keep markets constantly under review. Therefore, there is no question of us simply folding our hands, closing our eyes and ignoring developments in this or any other industry. It would be foolish of me to say now that we shall be able to guarantee that date X, Y or Z will be the best time to embark on a review. We shall monitor the position generally all the time.

When we feel, on the evidence available to us, that the time is right to assess the success or otherwise of the Beer Orders, we shall have a review. However, given that they became fully effective only last November, I cannot say

[Mr. Hamilton]

when that time will be. If there is evidence of abuse or any other adverse reaction which is caused by the Beer Orders, or which is noticeable even though it has no connection with the Beer Orders, the Department of Trade and Industry is bound to take that into account. But it would be a mistake for us to set a date on which a review will be undertaken as it would inevitably cause greater instability, which is the opposite of what we wish to achieve.

Other opportunities to consider the state of the market will arise, particularly in connection with the review of the block extension under European Community legislation that will be upon us shortly. In deciding whether to compound the previous reviews with the one that is to take place, we considered the fact that to overlay the reviews would place the industry in a constant state of flux and uncertainty. The more that we can do to reduce that, the better.

My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Burton referred to the deregulation initiative, which is the jewel in my crown as Under-Secretary of State for Corporate Affairs. I congratulate my hon. and learned Friend on his support, not least in matters concerning the brewing industry. Following the Prime Minister's announcement of a new drive on deregulation last year, all Departments have identified priorities for deregulatory action, which formed the basis of a discussion that we had at No. 10 in February.

We have set up seven task forces of business men to advise us on the business which they would like to arise from the deregulation initiative. Thanks to representatives of the brewing industry and others on the retail side, we can take account of all viewpoints on how to cut red tape to reduce business costs and hence make business more profitable, and reduce restrictions on wealth creation and the job creation that goes with it. We have agreed that, in future, all proposals for new regulations must be accompanied by a compliance cost assessment. So we are making progress.

Last week, the Prime Minister chaired a progress meeting on deregulation at which we discussed specific deregulation measures to reduce the burden on businesses. We agreed that an important measure that will deregulate further should be introduced as soon as parliamentary time permits. I have in mind some of the issues to which my hon. and learned Friend alluded as candidates for early action to reduce unnecessary restrictions on brewers and those who sell their excellent product, which we are here to celebrate today. I have noted my hon. and learned Friend's comments about some of the regulations with which the brewing industry is required to comply. I have no doubt that representatives of the brewing industry involved in the task forces have been making similar points.

My hon. and learned Friend mentioned several issues for which I am not directly responsible. Most of them are the responsibility of my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Unfortunately, I cannot announce the details of the Budget today.

The Minister of State, Home Office (Mr. David Maclean): Oh, why not?

Mr. Hamilton: My hon. Friend is anxious for me to do so, but I fear that it would not benefit the Government as a whole.

My hon. and learned Friend mentioned the distorting effects of cross-border shopping to buy brewers' products. The Brewers Society estimated that in the last six months of 1992 duty paid on imports of beer accounted for some 8 per cent. of the United Kingdom take-home beer market. Following the creation of the single market, the Brewers Society commissioned an independent survey that showed that in the early months of 1993 personal imports of duty-paid beer increased to some 9 per cent. of the take-home market.

However, later figures suggest that the level of such imports has declined. The survey results now show that cross-border shopping accounted for about 7·8 per cent. of the take-home domestic beer market in the first five months of this year. The take-home trade is about 21 per cent. of the total United Kingdom beer market, so the apparent increase between late 1992 and early 1993 was equivalent to a very small part of the total United Kingdom beer market—an increase of about 0·3 per cent.

Beer duty rates, especially as they vary significantly around the Community, can have a significant impact in local markets. One cannot consider them in isolation from other indirect taxes and from other sources of revenue. However, I accept that there is a potentially distorting effect, as referred to by my hon. and learned Friend. The beer duty rates in most member states are lower than those in the United Kingdom. In Germany, Spain, Luxembourg and France, the rate is the equivalent——

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): Order.

Drug Abuse (London)

1.30 pm

Ms Diane Abbott (Hackney, North and Stoke Newington): I am grateful to have the opportunity to talk about the drugs problem in London because there is no doubt that London is the drugs capital of the United Kingdom. The vast majority of the British drugs trade takes place in and is routed through London. There is also no doubt that the Government, who make such great claims to being a Government who are committed to law and order, have failed to meet the challenge that the drugs trade poses for our citizens in 1993. The Government cannot claim that they are serious about fighting crime until they adopt a serious and co-ordinated strategy for fighting the drugs trade. The Government have not adopted a more serious strategy towards the drugs trade, perhaps because Ministers, in the communities in which they live, do not see the effects of the drugs trade as we do in London's inner-city areas.

I stress that the detrimental effects of the evil trade in drugs are manifold. First, there are the lives ruined by drug abuse, whether those of the drug addicts themselves or those of the young men growing up in communities such as Stoke Newington, where one in two young black males are unemployed. Tragically, they see almost as role models slightly older males who deal in drugs, and who make easy and quick money. That evil role model is wreaking havoc on the younger males and totally distorts the aspirations of some of the young men in our communities. One effect of the drugs trade is the lives that are being ruined, whether those of the drug addicts or those of the teenagers being drawn into the drugs trade.

The second evil effect of drugs is the crime committed by drug addicts, whether it is violent crime or robbery. In addition, many prostitutes practise their trade to obtain money for drugs. A large proportion of the rising tide of violent crime and a large proportion of some of the more mindless crime in our capital city, about which we hear and read every day, are caused by people who are on drugs or who are seeking the money to obtain drugs.

Thirdly, a new but frightening effect of the drugs trade is the increasing use of guns and the increasing incidence of shooting by drug dealers in pursuance of their trade. Those shootings have not been getting the publicity that they deserve. We are going down a frightening road. We know that in New York, Washington and the other big cities of America, the combination of the drugs trade and firearms has meant fear and terror for millions of ordinary people.

The drugs trade has many effects on the problems faced by and the quality of life of those of us who live in London. The Government have failed entirely to meet the challenge. I will raise in the debate issues that are not directly of concern to the Home Office, but I hope that the Minister will pass them on to his colleagues at the Department of Health.

One of the worst things that has happened in relation to drugs recently has been the effect of the Government's policies on drug and alcohol projects. As a direct result of the changes in community care that were brought in by the Government, many drug projects which are working with addicts face closure. The situation is worsened by the fact that, originally, the Government promised that they would ring-fence the money that was available for drug and alcohol projects. The Government went back on that promise, with the result that, as many of us forecast, drug and alcohol projects have found that they are the sector of community care which is most likely to suffer and face closure.

The problems include the fact that far fewer drug addicts are finding their way to drug treatment centres because, under the community care system, there is much more bureaucracy than ever before. Instead of a drug addict checking himself into a project to get help, he must be assessed by a local authority. There must also be an agreement by the local authority to fund the project and often the money is conditional for a few months. The result is that far fewer drug addicts are finding their way to drug projects where they could find help.

The charity Turning Point has been monitoring 18 drug and alcohol projects since community care came into action. They have found that the numbers of people going into projects have dropped by 42 per cent., or nearly half, as a direct consequence of the bureaucracy that is involved and the unwillingness of local authorities to make funding available under the community care arrangements. As I speak, projects in London that are doing valuable work with drug addicts are on the brink of closure because they cannot get funding in the way in which they were accustomed to before the community care arrangements.

The financial arrangements are another aspect of the community care arrangements that are hurting the treatment and support that we are able to give drug addicts. All the local authorities in the country have transitional funding available to make the change from the old arrangements to the community care arrangements. Unfortunately, local authorities in London—where the bulk of the drug addicts are—have lost out under the arrangements. For example, Islington needs at least £250,000 transitional funding but it received only £104,000. Lambeth needs £323,000 but it received only £170,000. Who is benefiting under the transitional arrangements? The answer is the Tory shire counties. It seems tragic that, in the name of political gerrymandering, the inner cities, with the tremendous pressure they are under because of the traffic in drugs and the problems of drug abuse, have lost out on the money that they need to fund those valuable projects.

I hope that the Minister will pass on to his colleagues in the Department of Health my belief that the Government must examine again the arrangements for community care. At a time when we face a rising side of drug addiction in London, drug projects—far from expanding and developing—are having to close. That is a tragedy for those unfortunates addicted to drugs and for the community.

Of course, not all drug addicts are treated in the sort of projects that I mentioned. There will always be drug addicts whose condition is such that they need to be put into in-patient detoxification units. I wish to draw the attention of Ministers to the poor record of North East Thames health authority in providing in-patient detoxification units. That health authority, which covers Hackney and other parts of north-east London, which have some of the most serious drugs problems in the country, has no in-patient detoxification unit and has to send drug addicts out of the area to other units.

We were promised a 20-bed, in-patient detoxification unit at Homerton hospital, but the health authority is reneging on that promise, for no reason that any of the

[Ms Diane Abbott]

doctors or health workers involved can understand. I cannot say strongly enough that it is disgraceful that a health authority covering an area with such serious problems as Hackney and the rest of east London is not making basic provision available to treat drug addicts. That in-patient drug detoxification unit was agreed to be essential, especially by people working in the drug dependency unit at Homerton hospital. They are alarmed that the health authority is backtracking on its promise to build the unit as part of developments at the hospital.

I want to take the opportunity to make a plea to Ministers, and through Ministers to the relevant people in North East Thames health authority, to reconsider and meet their responsibilities to the community and to people suffering from drug addiction in the Hackney area.

The drug problem in Hackney is not only a question of treating drug addicts and of the health aspects of addiction; it is also about law enforcement and the role of the police. Londoners find it extraordinary that, at a time when the drug problem in London has never been more acute, the Metropolitan police does not have a London-wide strategy for fighting drugs. Activity is going on in different parts of the Metropolitan police area and much of it is very worth while. Drug dealers are being picked up every day and no one doubts the commitment of ordinary policemen on the beat; but a London-wide strategy on fighting drugs is long overdue. Without it many of us must suspect that, at best, the effort does not have the co-ordination that it should have and, at worst, the police seem happy to contain the drugs trade in certain parts of London, to the detriment of those communities.

It is important for Ministers to understand that the people of Hackney do not want the drugs trade contained in certain areas or tolerated in certain communities. They want the drugs trade swept off the streets of London—every street in London, not just the streets in Hampstead and Belgravia but the streets in Stoke Newington, Dalston and Clapton. The residents of communities such as Hackney, Dalston, Clapton and Stoke Newington are people too. Why should they have to live and bring up their families in areas where one can see people trading drugs on the street?

The Metropolitan police has for years pursued a policy whereby it was happy to contain prostitution in certain areas rather than seek to eradicate it. There is a suspicion that the Metropolitan police has sought to contain the drugs trade in some areas rather than eliminate it altogether.

There are several things that we want the police to do in my part of London. People in my community of Hackney and Stoke Newington strongly feel that there should be more specific operations to deal with problem estates and streets. Every so often, we hear of a highly publicised raid or of the police picking up a larger number of dealers on the street, and then everything goes quiet. People in areas such as Hackney—and, I dare say, in similar areas of London—want a sustained operation to make our streets and estates drug free.

How would the Minister like to be a pensioner or a young woman with a small child living on an estate where he knew that specific flats were being used as retail drug outlets and drug dealers were walking around the estate day and night? Many Londoners face that situation and the police say that they do not have the manpower, that they are keeping it under surveillance or that they are focusing on the suppliers rather than on the local drug dealers. People in London are not content with containment strategies or strategies that focus on suppliers rather than on drug dealers on the street; we want streets that are free of drug dealers.

Where I live in Stoke Newington, I should not have to see people standing on street corners dealing in drugs when I push my baby in his buggy from my home to the local shopping centre at Dalston junction on a warm sunny evening. That is not acceptable in any community. It is important to stress that all communities in London, whatever their income level or however they are regarded, have a right to be drug free—free of the menace of drugs and free of people openly trading in drugs on the streets. In Stoke Newington, we want to see greater involvement at local level. We have tried to trace drug suppliers, rather than leaving it all to the drug squad.

When we examine the drug problem in London, we are struck by the absence of reliable drugs prevalence data. The number of arrests—the figure is often bandied about—does not accurately show the scale of the problem. If Ministers are serious about fighting a war on drugs, the first weapon in any war is intelligence. We want the Home Office to put more effort and thought into what relevant drugs prevalence data could be collected so that we would have relevant statistics that give a real idea of the incidence of drugs and the changing patterns of drug use. Locally, when police officers arrest drug addicts, we want them to give addicts more information about the services that are available.

When we discuss the drugs trade in London, the questions that arise continually are: first, do Ministers understand the seriousness of the problem; secondly, are they prepared to do what is necessary; and, thirdly, do they understand the need for co-ordination between law enforcement, health authorities and the funding of drug and alcohol projects? A London-wide multi-agency strategy is necessary.

It is important to remember that behind the drug dealers on the street are the suppliers and behind them are the wholesalers—the money men who make the drugs trade work internationally. This is an important point for Treasury Ministers rather than Home Office Ministers: we cannot have an effective war against drugs if we do not make war on the people who are laundering the profits from the drugs trade.

I want the Government—as an individual Government and in their work on the Basle committee on bank regulation—to look at bank secrecy laws and the extent to which those laws, both here and overseas, help the money launderers. It is all very well to target drug dealers on the streets, but they are the end of the chain, and there is more to be done about bank secrecy laws and money laundering.

When the Bank of Credit and Commerce International closed, there was much talk about how it had laundered drugs money. I have no reason to doubt that, but no one should believe that BCCI was the only bank to launder drug money. The Government must take action.

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Janet Fookes): Order. I am sorry to interrupt, but if the Minister is to have any chance to reply, the hon. Lady must close her speech soon as time is running out.

Ms Abbott: I am grateful to you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

In closing, I shall refer to the recent case of the two female drug couriers who were pardoned in Thailand. I, and many of my constituents, would not go so far as to say that the Government were wrong to seek a pardon for those girls, but millions of people would be concerned if the girls were seen to benefit from their crime by selling their story because those young women are admitted dealers in heroin. The girls were young and gullible, but many thousands of drug couriers in British prisons are also young and gullible. It is a shame that some of the sympathy of the tabloid press for the two young women in Thailand is not spared for some of the thousands of drug couriers in British prisons who are also young and gullible.

The drugs trade is a terrible menace to the quality of life in London. It generates an enormous amount of crime —whether to obtain drugs or to further the drugs trade through the increased use of guns. I do not believe that the Government are co-ordinating sufficiently the work of the different agencies in fighting drugs. The people of Hackney and London want the Government to wage war on drugs. They want not mere rhetoric about law and order but recognition of the scale of the problem in London and a genuine multi-agency effort—a true war on drugs.

1.52 pm

The Minister of State, Home Office (Mr. David Maclean): I congratulate the hon. Member for Hackney, North and Stoke Newington (Ms Abbott) on raising this important issue. The Government recognise and share her concerns about the devastating effects that drug misuse can have on people's lives. We are determined to do everything possible to thwart the dealers and traffickers whose one aim is to make a profit—gained at vast human cost.

Drug misuse is difficult to measure. We collect information about the notification of addicts to the Home Office, the seizure of drugs by customs and the police, and the number of people dealt with for drug offences. However, none of the elements is perfect as an indicator of the overall picture. Even when taken together, they give only a general impression of the problem. This year, to improve our assessment of drug misuse, we shall carry out an extensive household survey and analyse the findings of the latest British crime survey. However, even without that further information, we all know that drug misuse is a serious and growing criminal, social and health problem. It is complex and constantly changing.

The Government's strategy is to reduce the demand for drugs and the supply of drugs. Therefore, we support the most vigorous enforcement action against trafficking, the provision of treatment for misusers and preventive education, especially for young people. Our strategy consists of five elements: first, improving international co-operation in order to reduce supplies from abroad; secondly, increasing the effectiveness of police and customs enforcement; thirdly, maintaining effective deterrents and tight domestic controls; fourthly, developing prevention publicity and education; and, fifthly, improving treatment and rehabilitation. That strategy is so important that it is co-ordinated by a ministerial sub-committee chaired by the Lord President.

The Home Office is responsible for co-ordinating the measures which give effect to the Government's strategy. I have particular responsibility for drug misuse policy and work closely with colleagues responsible for health and education, and those from the Foreign Office and the Scottish and Welsh Offices.

Ms Abbott: Is the sub-committee studying the effect of community care on drug and alcohol projects?

Mr. Maclean: The sub-committee will want to look at all subjects that impact on drug misuse in the community. It will want to hear representations that people make through their Members of Parliament, and therefore to Ministers, on what are the real problem areas. If the sub-committee determines that that is a problem area, we can look forward to action on it.

Although it is difficult to quantify the resources allocated to the Government's strategy, they have been calculated to be about £500 million a year. The success of our strategy depends on the commitment not just of Government; it also demands much of local authorities. That was why we set up the drugs prevention initiative in 1989, to respond quickly and effectively to local concerns and to stimulate, encourage and support ideas or work to prevent the spread of drugs misuse.

Twenty teams have been set up in high-risk areas. Six of those teams are in London—in Brent, Hackney, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham and Southwark. Each team has £75,000 per annum available to provide grants to prevention projects in its area. There are currently more than 200 such projects in London. Since 1989, more than £11 million has been spent on the initiative. Almost £650,000 has been spent on prevention work in schools. The success of the initiative has been confirmed by evaluation and research and we intend to identify good practice and ensure that it is replicated.

I shall talk for a moment about the work and achievements of one of the teams which I have mentioned, and of which the hon. Lady will be particularly aware. Since being set up in 1991, the Hackney team has supported more than 60 projects in the borough and provided more than £150,000 in grants. The team works closely with the local council, health authority, police and community organisations. It has helped to collate one of the United Kingdom's largest collection of drug information and training materials in local libraries. A drugs education adviser was appointed with team support to help schools to develop programmes and policies for tackling drug misuse. The team supported Project Charlie, a rare example of a drugs prevention programme for younger children in three local junior schools. It supported tenant-led plans to reduce drugs misuse on the Baggerston estate and several other areas of the borough. It is currently working with the Dalston city partnership to develop a drugs and crime prevention strategy for the city challenge area.

That multi-agency approach is one which has been wholeheartedly embraced by the police officers involved in fighting the menace of drug misuse. They recognise the importance of working with the local community to tackle the problem at its roots—by reducing the demand for drugs. The importance of the role which the police play in educating people—especially the young—about the dangers of drugs cannot be overestimated. But they also know how important it is to bring to justice those who supply the drugs. That is why the work of the Hackney drugs prevention team is backed up by the hard-hitting

[Mr. Maclean]

measures taken by the police to combat drug dealing in Stoke Newington. Operation Tean, which has been running for nine months, is only one of many police initiatives in the area. More than 60 dealers have been identified by surveillance operations and a large number of them are now in custody.

In Operation Welwyn, the very successful operation to clean up the King's Cross area, surveillance and the work of undercover officers has resulted in almost 100 dealers and users being arrested. But that is only half the story. The local authorities in Camden and Islington have made a commitment to build on the successes of that police operation by making environmental improvements—better street lighting, better traffic flow and cleaner streets.

It is the responsibility of the Government to support and enhance the efforts on drug dealing by making international efforts, by providing clear and effective laws and by making the necessary resources available. We have a good story to tell. The Criminal Justice Bill, which is currently awaiting Royal Assent any hour now, toughens up even further the law on confiscating drug traffickers' assets. All over the world, law enforcement officers—those at the sharp end of the fight against drugs—will tell people that the ability to get at the profits of those who take part in this evil trade is one of the most effective weapons in their armoury. We shall ensure that the provisions in the new Act are brought into force speedily.

We have also taken action to ensure that our laws controlling the trade in precursor and essential chemicals —the substances necessary to turn the raw material into the finished product—are tough enough. We are the first country to implement the relevant European legislation, thanks largely to a splendid degree of co-operation on the part of the British chemicals industry.

The Government are determined to tackle the problems of drug misuse with all the powers at our disposal. We shall not cease to seek out those who control the evil trade of drug trafficking. We shall not be deflected from finding ways of inflicting the maximum punishment on them and their associates and we shall never accept the inevitability of drug misuse.

M1 (Widening)

2 pm

Mr. John Carlisle (Luton, North): I am extremely grateful to you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for allowing me a few minutes of the House's time on this extremely important subject—probably the most important subject that my constituents will have to tackle over the next few years as the widening of the motorway proceeds.

Let me say at the start how grateful I am to my hon. Friend the Minister, in a relatively new post, for replying to the debate, and indeed to his predecessors, my hon. Friend the Member for Lincoln (Mr. Carlisle) who is fortunate enough to carry the same surname as myself, hence our close co-operation, and before him Mr. Christopher Chope, whom my hon. Friend and I remember with much affection, and who laid the ground work for the widening of this important road.

The M1 is at the spine of England. It was built in 1959 and now carries about 140,000 vehicles per day through my constituency. I fully support the proposed widening of the road as I believe do the majority of right hon. and hon. Members on both sides of the House, many of whom, enjoying the pleasure of my constituency but cursing the amount of traffic, realise that the road needs widening and some improvement has to be made to one of Britain's major highways.

Coming into the debate this afternoon, some of my colleagues were wondering why we were proposing to widen the road only from three lanes to four. Given the current debate on the M25, which could be as many as seven lanes either side, perhaps we should build more lanes now to ensure that the M1 remains the spine of England.

Some 25 per cent. of the traffic that passes through my constituency between junctions 10 and 13 is heavy lorries. I am grateful to the British Road Federation, which has provided me with statistics and expressed anxiety that the improvements are completed as quickly as possible. There has been a considerable increase in traffic, and the motorway is important to the industry and to the economic well-being not only of my constituency but of the entire country. For that reason, we certainly welcome the proposed improvements.

There is some concern, voiced mainly by Bedfordshire county council and those who live near the motorway, about whether this will be the end of the roadworks. Perhaps my hon. Friend will confirm that the new four-lane motorway will take traffic until the year 2006, when we may have to consider a further increase in size. Whether my hon. Friend and I are still here is another matter, although I am sure that you will be, Madam Deputy Speaker.

However, one has to ask whether, after going through the hassle of the next two or three years—we appreciate that it will be a difficult time—future generations may curse us for putting in only four lanes. Perhaps we should have made it even bigger, but that is another subject on which I shall not detain the House.

I shall concentrate my remarks on the stretch of motorway between junctions 10 and 11, which goes through a heavily populated area and affects many houses. According to the Department's figures, some 1,600 houses and households could be affected by the widening of the motorway—those in the immediate vicinity by the loss of their homes and by blight on their homes, and those

further away by increased noise and nuisance. My hon. Friend the Member for Luton, South (Mr. Bright) has also been involved in the deliberations, and we are anxious to represent the best interests of our constituents during the next few years, which we both know will be a difficult time.

Three factors bother my constituents—noise, nuisance and the pollution caused by the increased traffic. This magnificent new motorway, the first of its kind in Britain, was built in 1959, and some of the early pictures of it show the occasional lorry on the horizon. Those who live near the motorway have been described locally as the forgotten people because at that time, although those who lost homes were compensated, it was never envisaged that it would carry the amount of traffic that it does today.

My constituents have been extremely tolerant of the noise and nuisance that they have had to suffer. Some of them have their back gardens, nay their bedroom windows, close to the road, and the traffic it carries has increased dramatically during the past few years. Noise levels, about which my hon. Friend may know more than I do, have at times risen above the recommended level of 70 decibels. The great fear is that, despite the Government's admirable efforts to reduce noise and pollution, traffic increases will lead to increased noise levels.

We shall soon be facing not only the long-term nuisance of the traffic but the short-term nuisance of contractors' vehicles and machinery. My constituents are concerned that their sleep may be shattered by the noise that goes on. They share my anxiety that the work should be undertkaen as quickly as possible, but many of them, some of them night shift workers in local factories, are worried that they may find it difficult to sleep during the contracting work.

For that reason, I make no apology for emphasising that we are particularly concerned about the noise level. The noise barriers that will be erected must be the most up to date, a subject on which much research has been undertaken. If nothing else comes out of the debate, those barriers, and other noise relieving measures, must be in place before the contracting work begins. Residents will suffer from contractors' noise and the inevitable hammering and excessive noise which, at a conservative estimate, will continue for between 18 months and two years.

The Department of Transport has hinted that it may be possible for noise barriers to be erected before the contractors' work takes place, particularly in residential areas, and if that is done, my constituents will be grateful. They view with some horror the prospect of vehicles in and around the area and the noise and nuisance that they will create. If barriers could be installed at the start of the work, it will be of enormous benefit to my constituents, and will, I hope, bring them some peace and quiet.

I hope that the final decision about the barriers is made as late as possible. I hope also that the barriers will be the most up to date and aesthetically acceptable. Most people have been impressed by the barriers that have been proposed so far and the layout that the Department has put before the public. Having said that, we are anxious to ensure that the barriers are the most modern and sound absorbent available.

The road surface is very important when considering noise. My hon. Friend will know that, with 140,000 vehicles—who knows what the figure will be when there are four lanes—going by people's houses every day, the noise level is considerable. I am pleased to see my hon. Friend the Minister nodding in agreement. I hope that he will have some comfort for my constituents.

I know that compensation is not strictly within my hon. Friend's responsibility, but I know that he cares about it. The district valuer has already made decisions about the value of properties under the Land Compensation Acts of 1961 and 1973. I appreciate that it would not be fitting for my hon. Friend or myself to become too involved in individual cases. Obviously, we hope that the district valuer will be fair—I am sure that he will be—in compensating my constituents. It is a strange enigma that we are still looking at values on the basis of a market that has fallen considerably.

It is difficult to explain to constituents whose homes were worth a considerable sum some time ago that not only has the value of their home fallen out of bed—to use the popular phrase—but that they will not receive the compensation that they expected to receive when the rumours were going around two years ago about the widening of the road. A public relations exercise must take place.

The Department at Coventry has been extremely helpful and sympathetic. It has tried, where possible, to ensure that those who have to be compensated are compensated fairly. My hon. Friend will know that those most affected are the 16 or so who will have to lose their homes. In fact, the number may have increased since my hon. Friend and I corresponded about a certain cul de sac.

As my hon. Friend knows, the compensation for those who lose their homes is the current value of the property plus 10 per cent. In France, 40 per cent. is given in compensation rather than 10 per cent. My hon. Friend knows of my strong and tough line on public expenditure, but, if the road is to be delayed because people are not offered adequate compensation, some additional help might have to be considered, although probably not as much as the French propose. I would hate to see the road delayed because of a penny-pinching exercise by the Department, through the district valuer, in not giving people the compensation they need to find alternative homes.

It does not happen to many of us, and let us hope that not too many people are involved in this, but the heartache of having to lose one's home, particularly for the older generation, is considerable. Some people who have come to me have lived in that area for some time, and suddenly find that their homes are to be bulldozed away. They are the most distressed, and we must look after them.

To lighten the load on my hon. Friend, I can tell him the story of an older lady who came to me during the inquiry on the proposals at Dunstable. She remonstrated with me about the proposal, which meant that her house would have to be knocked down. I assured her that we would do everything possible to compensate her. She was not satisfied with that and kept remonstrating with me and with officials from the Department.

I eventually persuaded her to look around the exhibition and then come back and have another chat with me. She was still very upset about losing her home, but her rather elderly husband came to me quietly and said, "Mr. Carlisle, I shouldn't take too much notice of what my old lady was saying to you; we've been trying to sell this house for 30 years, so we're actually delighted to get out of it." So there is another side, and there may be those—although they are very few—who will not be sorry to leave the area.

[Mr. John Carlisle]

Blight, which is the second aspect of the basis for compensation, is one of the most difficult factors to evaluate and compensate for. My hon. Friend the Minister knows that there will be many blighted properties in the area, not only because of the noise but because of the future value of the properties after the road has been extended. Compensation will be given for loss of gardens and for the fact that the road is closer to homes, but, as my hon. Friend will realise, property values are bound to drop, yet there seems no mechanism by which compensation can be given for that.

People whose homes are relatively distant and who will be affected mainly by noise will be able to get compensation only when the road has been built and noise levels have been assessed. Then help may be given towards double glazing or some other form of sound insulation. I must tell my hon. Friend that that is a difficult story to sell to constituents who know that, assuming that the public inquiry goes through fairly swiftly—I urge my hon. Friend to ensure that it does—the road is scheduled for 1995, or whenever my hon. Friend has in mind, so they will have to wait until that time for compensation for any increase in noise. That seems a long time to wait.

In the few moments left to me, I shall touch briefly on how the rural area in my constituency between junctions 11 and 13 will be affected. We are worried about my hon. Friend's hints that the Thame-Stevenage bypass—an important road—will be delayed for some time. My villagers in Toddington and Chalton are somewhat disappointed by hints from the Department that that road is still some way off. However, it has been scheduled, and public consultation is taking place, so I hope that on that basis my hon. Friend will consider planning some form of junction, albeit south of junction. 12.

It would seem prudent for the Department to consider at this stage where a junction, either on to the motorway or over it, might be sited. The Thame-Stevenage bypass is badly needed by my constituents, especially those who live in the north of the town and in some of the surrounding villages, and I urge my hon. Friend to ensure that provision is made for bridges, and that we know as soon as possible where they will be.

Apparently junction 12 will be enormous—I hope that you, Madam Deputy Speaker, will forgive me for going into so much technical detail, but I know that my hon. Friend will understand what I mean. The junction could be of advantage to some of my constituents in business terms, but there is much local opposition to its size. Hints have been dropped that it could be made a little smaller, and my hon. Friend should consider that idea sympathetically.

The villagers of Toddington and Chalton are anxious not to be too greatly affected by the works. They hope that the problem of traffic passing through will be alleviated as much as possible, and that consideration will be given to a Toddington bypass—my hon. Friend will already have taken that idea on board. The people of Flitwick and Westoning, too, see the development as an opportunity to obtain a bypass in their area. Those attendant matters are most important to my constituents, but I do not wish to enlarge on them at this stage.

The noise, the compensation and the basis for it, and the blight on the landscape, are the main concerns. I fully support the road, in the interests of the national economy, as do most responsible citizens in my constituency, but if my hon. Friend can find a way of alleviating the problems that I have outlined, it would be of enormous benefit to my constituents and to people in the surrounding area.

2.19 pm

The Minister for Roads and Traffic (Mr. Robert Key): I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Luton, North (Mr. Carlisle) on gaining this important debate. It is important for his constituents and it gives me the opportunity to lay out some of the thinking in the Department of Transport about the sensitive issues which can impinge on the lives of many of our constituents for many years. I am delighted at my hon. Friend's enlightened attitude in accepting that doing nothing is not an option in the circumstances. I am grateful to him for welcoming the road improvements.

As my hon. Friend pointed out, Bedfordshire county council has an interest in this. Indeed, I have discussed the matter with my hon. Friends the Members for Luton, South (Mr. Bright) and for Bedfordshire, South-West (Mr. Madel). My hon. Friend the Member for Bedfordshire, South-West brought a delegation to see me about other matters in his constituency. Inevitably, we cannot ignore the knock-on effect of such schemes on traffic and communities. Incidentally, Madam Deputy Speaker, I am sure that you will be here in the year 2006, as will my hon. Friend. I fully intend to be here then. Whether I shall still be talking about the M1 through Luton is entirely open to speculation.

I accept that, between junctions 10 and 11, we have a heavily populated area and that many households will be affected. I shall come to noise in a moment. First, I should like to reassure my hon. Friend that one of the most important roles of the Department of Transport is to communicate with those who may be affected to make sure that they know what we are seeking to achieve and how we plan to achieve it. We shall pay great attention to communications and public relations during this programme.

I am grateful to my hon. Friend for the compliment he paid to my officials in Coventry. He gives me the opportunity to echo it. All Department of Transport staff, whether in Marsham street or in our regional offices, do their level best to ensure that the schemes that we put in place are not only acceptable, but beneficial. After all, each one of them is on the end of some other road building programme or has transport needs of its own.

My hon. Friend is right that a large number of houses will be affected by noise. However, we have estimated that more than 800 properties in my hon. Friend's constituency can expect to experience a reduction in noise levels after the opening of the widened M1 because we are using the most modern techniques in noise abatement. That, too, must be borne in mind. That estimation includes road surface as well as engine noise. I have given careful consideration to that. There is also the question of noise barriers and earth mounds through Luton. There will be some seven miles of them on the M1. We cannot always put them up in advance, but we shall endeavour to do so wherever we can.

Double glazing for protection against traffic and construction noise is available in accordance with our

standard rules on where it is required. It can be installed in advance, which may be of some comfort to my hon. Friend's constituents.

Mr. John Carlisle: I know that my hon. Friend is rushed but may I urge him seriously to consider installing double glazing in advance? It would be of enormous benefit and comfort to my constituents.

Mr. Key: It certainly can take place; I am grateful to my hon. Friend for intervening. Clearly, it is a matter of great importance. If he will give me time to look into that, I shall see what further I can do to communicate with those who may be affected the method by which they can apply for that help. I know that some people find that a problem.

Under the proposals that we published last autumn, some 65 properties could lose at least some land. The owners were contacted individually and an experienced official was available at the exhibition in Luton to advise people on their rights to compensation. Many local residents expressed the wish to move in advance of the works, and are being assisted by the Department where our criteria are met.

Some 70 applications for the purchase of properties between junctions 10 and 15 have been received, and 38 have been approved. Incidentally, three quarters of the applications were from the Luton area.

My hon. Friend mentioned the area's long-term needs. Dual four-lane standards may not be able to cope with continuing traffic growth in the long term, so we are considering further studies to identify long-term needs and how they can be met. My Department is often accused of short-termism. That is most unfair, because we spend an enormous amount of time, make great efforts and apply professional skill to trying to think, as far as we reasonably and legitimately can, into the future.

The 1989 White Paper, "Roads for Prosperity", announced our expanded road programmes, the main element of which was the widening of some 600 miles of motorway and improving more than a third of the motorway network. The widening of the M1, with 10 proposed schemes over 145 miles between the M25 and Sheffield, is a significant part of the total.

The objectives of the national roads programme are to assist economic growth, improve the environment, enhance road safety and obtain maximum value from the existing network. Motorway widening is intended to help meet all those objectives. It emphasises the existing capacity needs of routes and tries to minimise the impact on the environment. Wherever practicable, we seek to improve the conditions of those who live near existing motorways.

For example, the Department of Transport is the biggest planter of trees in this country. We plant some 500,000 trees and shrubs a year, which is more than the Forestry Commission plants. All our new schemes will bring substantial economic, safety and environmental benefits to road users.

Much of the M1 was opened to traffic in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It is now heavily congested, and carries as many as 150,000 vehicles per day in places. Up to a quarter of this traffic is heavy goods vehicles—a higher proportion than the national average. At peak times, extensive queues develop in the Luton area, particularly on uphill sections and at junctions. Congestion regularly occurs.

As my hon. Friend acknowledges, we need to widen the M1.

Mr. John Carlisle: I did not mention the basis of the public inquiry. I know that my hon. Friend will be subjected to a public inquiry. Will he ensure that it is carried out as speedily as possible, because those of my constituents who are waiting to see what compensation will be available and what the future will hold will be held back if the inquiry is unnecessarily delayed?

Mr. Key: Yes, I can give that assurance. Furthermore, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I are seeking to speed up the delivery of such schemes without infringing on people's democratic rights to put their case and make objections. We recognise the need to speed up the process because the average time to build or improve a road is far too long.

Coincidentally, I am today announcing the publication of volume 11 of the design manual for roads and bridges on environmental assessment. Environmental considerations must play a full part in the design of new roads. We are committed to ensuring that environmental impact is given full weight alongside other costs and benefits of road schemes.

That updated version of the manual sets out the general principles that should guide environmental assessement and will mean formal assessment requirements at key stages in the development of trunk road schemes—before programme entry, at public consultation and at the point of publication of the environment statement. It applies to all future studies and all schemes that subsequently enter the roads programme. For schemes currently being prepared, the revised guidance will be prepared on a scheme by scheme basis.

My hon. Friend will be pleased to hear that part III of the manual, which deals with disruption due to construction, covers many of the points that he has raised. The effects on people and the natural environment that can occur between the start of pre-construction work and the end of a contract maintenance period, for example, are covered. That section of the manual describes the appropriate level of assessment at key stages that covered, for example, the localised increase in noise, vibration, dust and dirt and the loss of amenity due to the presence of construction traffic.

My hon. Friend has made representations before about roads in the area. He visited my predecessor only in May of this year. I know that the concerns of the residents of Toddington and Chalton, for example, have been listened to with great care by my Department, but we must progress in that partnership, as a partnership it is, if we are to improve our roads, the quality of life and the prosperity of the country. We must proceed with care but some determination, and a great sense of realism about the needs. As I said earlier, doing nothing is not an option.

District Auditor

2.32 pm

Mr. Ken Livingstone (Brent, East): Everybody would agree that there is no place for corruption in public life and no one in the House would be expected to support it. However, there are increasing problems with the role that we have reserved for the district auditor—and with the fraud squad—which is clearly exemplified by recent events in the two boroughs of Westminster and Brent. Four years have passed since the district auditor began to investigate allegations that Lady Porter, while she was leader of Westminster council, abused her position to try to achieve political change in several key marginal wards in the run-up to the 1990 election.

As I recall, when the district auditor investigated events at Lambeth and Liverpool councils, the issues concerned were resolved in the best part of a year. The councillors who had acted contrary to Government policy and had incurred extra charges because of it were found guilty, were debarred and were out of office in a year of the events for which the investigations took place. That has not been the case with Lady Porter and those around her. We have seen a systematic attempt to delay the district auditor's investigation as leading members of the Conservative-controlled Westminster council have refused to meet the district auditor when requested to do so and meetings have been put off to such an extent that the district auditor had to invoke his powers to command their presence.

I do not know how far that inquiry has gone. The last furnished bit of evidence about Lady Porter that came to my attention was an article in *The Guardian* on 3 March 1992:

"A Whitehall source told the Guardian the district auditor's inquiry is finely balanced between surcharging her up to £4 million with a disqualification from public office for five years, and severely reprimanding her for misconduct."

Another year or more has gone by since then and yet it is still not possible for the district auditor to publish his findings. The reason for that has now become clear. Many of the documents that the district auditor wished to examine to see whether Lady Porter and her close cohorts had been breaking the law were shredded by the chief executive of Westminster council, who was appointed by Lady Porter and is her close confidante.

It is completely unacceptable that a senior public official of a major local authority should shred documents that the district auditor needs to investigate the possible corruption of local government and public funds in excess of £4 million. I wonder what would have been said if Ted Knight and Derek Hatton had refused to meet the district auditor and the chief executives of Lambeth and Liverpool had been shedding documents.

As well as speeding the district auditor on his way in Westminster, we should now look for a full public accounting of activities of the former chief executive Bill Phillips, although I have already raised the matter in an early-day motion. Fortunately, in other departments of Westminster council, it has been possible to find duplicates of many of the documents that were shredded. I hope that we shall soon see a clear resolution of the problem. Clearly the district auditor's powers have not been sufficient to enable him to proceed with the investigation in a reasonable time and to allay public concern and fears.

The second—much more murky—question concerns what has been going on in Brent. Everyone will be aware of the hilarity of some of the antics of the council since the Conservatives took control—for example, the calls for female circumcision in Britain, which completely wrecked a meeting designed primarily to discuss education cuts.

We must also look in some detail at what has been happening to the council's finances. Following the 1990 election, Brent council was a huge council. It developed a Conservative administration when a succession of Labour councillors were persuaded to cross the floor. One of those interesting characters was Councillor Harshad Barot, who had previously been convicted of fraud following a successful attempt to get from the council a housing improvement grant to which he was not entitled. He managed to keep that quiet and was elected to the council. When the truth emerged following his election to the council, he was suspended by the Labour group, and the council set up an investigation.

While the investigation was under way, further problems arose with Councillor Harshad Barot. The Brent Asian Professionals Association, of which Mr. Barot was the director, suddenly discoverd that thousands of pounds and computer equipment had disappeared. Once again, an investigation was launched. Lo and behold, Councillor Barot decided to resign from the Labour group and to sit as an independent.

By then, some Labour people had been persuaded to defect, and what was then the Conservative majority on the council voted to discontinue the investigation. Surprise, surprise—Councillor Barot has voted with the Conservatives on every occasion since. Moreover, he actually voted with the Conservatives, at a council meeting, to stop the investigation into his case. That runs contrary to all local government law. When it was suggested that the matter should be referred to the district auditor as a case in which a councillor had voted on a matter in which he had a direct financial interest, the council, under the Conservative leadership, voted to accept Councillor Barot's explanation, which was that he had turned his hearing aid off by mistake and did not know what he was voting for. That beggars belief, although one admires the man's imagination.

Councillor Barot still serves on the council. The thousands of pounds lost by the Asian Professionals Association have never been found and its computer equipment has never turned up. No satisfactory explanation for any of this has ever seen the light of day.

Another little gem is the case of Councillor Judith Harper, who resigned from the Labour group in protest at what happened when she became homeless. She was offered a flat on the local Stonebridge estate—which she represented as a councillor—but decided that it was not adequate for her purposes. She went to the Labour group and said that it should take up her case and ensure that she received a better offer. When the Labour group refused, saying that there was no reason why she should be offered anything better than anyone else, Councillor Harper promptly resigned. The leader of the council, Councillor Bob Blackman, suddenly decided that there might have been a grave injustice in the case and said that he would investigate it personally. Lo and behold, Judith Harper voted with the Conservative administration thereafter. Then—wonder of wonders—it was decided that another

offer should, indeed, be made, and a nice home in a leafy road in Barnet was found for her through a housing association.

There the matter would have lain—and that was bad enough—had it not subsequently been discovered that Judith Harper already owned a house in Brent. She had gained further accommodation completely illegally. When the matter was raised by the Labour opposition, Councillor Harper suddenly announced her resignation from the council—the day before she was due to be interviewed by auditors from the housing department. Far from saying that here was an outrage and that he would send the papers to the fraud office or the district auditor, the council leader, Councillor Blackman, said that Councillor Harper had been hounded out of public life by a wicked Labour campaign. One wonders what he would have said about Asil Nadir or the other sundry crooks who now seem to litter the political scene.

Those two were, in a sense, the small fry. The two big fish were Pauline Nyaga and Councillor Nkechi Amalu-Johnson. They managed to defect from the Labour group after one year, while it was suspending both of them and investigating various unsavoury aspects of their political views, such as their support for Idi Amin and their weird proposals to sack all Asian staff and replace them with Africans. By sheer miraculous chance, Councillor Bob Blackman, the leader of the council, suddenly decided that those two people were fit to be the chair of housing and the chair of environment. With those appointments came a personal assistant, an additional attendance allowance and the provision of a council flat for Councillor Nyaga to conduct her advice surgeries from. It is an amazing thought that if that should become a national practice, about 60,000 council flats would stand empty while councillors conducted a surgery in them once a week.

Councillor Amalu-Johnson's chairmanship of the housing committee did not last very long following the arrest of her son. It was discovered that he had been rehoused by a community group dealing with the needs of African women after he had been evicted from his Brent council flat. It seems rather embarrassing that the son of the chair of Brent's housing committee owed £6,000 in arrears, but that did not cause Councillor Blackman to bat an eyelid.

Equally depressing for Councillor Blackman was the discovery that Councillor Amalu-Johnson owed the council more than £6,000 in the form of a car loan that she had been given when an employee of the social services department. The council took its normal proceedings and started action to recover the car loan after several years. Lo and behold, on the day that the case came to court, who should turn up to defend her but the deputy leader of the council, Conservative councillor John Warren, who said that he was just there as a friend. It is interesting that friendship should stretch to helping a colleague, but we must remember that Councillors Amalu-Johnson and Nyaga were still voting to keep the Conservative group in power.

It is a difficult question. One must depend on what people say. I know that deals have been in the news this week, but where immediate financial rewards flow they become rather dubious. The biggest problem resulted from Councillor Blackman's promise to those two defectors that, if they changed sides and started to support the Tories, they would be given a £1 million community centre in Chapter road. That was an interesting project; so interesting that Councillor Blackman authorised Brent council's public relations department to issue a press release about the wonders of the organisation that was going to take it over.

The local community association—a group that was also bidding for the property—conducted an investigation and, amazingly enough, virtually all the people on the list of directors of the proposed African community centre turned out either not to exist or to be uncontactable. Let me run through the names to give hon. Members the flavour.

A Mr. Yeshie Abele listed his address as 1A Westview close, NW10, which turned out to be a false address. No telephone numbers were listed on the public relations handout from Brent council and none of the names could be found in the telephone book—quite remarkable. Mr. David Mkwawa, the chair of the group, was another characer who was not living at Westview close. He was eventually traced to Tottenham, where he refused to give his telephone number. Jonathan Cook, who was listed as the secretary, had given his address as Technic house, which is completely untraceable. Clive Townsend, who was listed as the treasurer, was said to live at 53 Wyndham avenue, W13, which also turned out to be a false address, and he was not on the electoral roll. His claim to be chairman or marketing director of Power Silver United Kingdom Ltd. and two other companies proved hard to confirm when none of those could be found in any list of companies or telephone book. The public relations officer, Thomas Heard, who was listed as living at 28A Burgess avenue, had a problem; that property turned out to be empty.

The other names on the list are equally entertaining. A man who listed himself as "Ambassador" Isaac Jacob Sagay at an address in Maida Vale could not be traced and the Foreign Office protocol department has no record of that name on any diplomatic list. Mrs. Barbara Beyder of 23A Canterbury road, Morden, Surrey is not in the telephone book and cannot be traced. Dida Halake of 41 Ansleigh place, W11 is not in the telephone book. The public relations department of Brent council claimed that he was a founder of the Ladbroke grove Methodist supplementary school, yet the Methodist school and colleges department and the Methodist central office have no record of that school or that person.

It is a remarkable list of non-existent people who are taking charge of a £1 million community centre as a reward for swapping their party allegiance. This is a fit and proper matter for the district auditor to investigate—or at least the fraud squad. However, it gets difficult: who said what to whom at meetings?

Fortunately, there were some people with integrity in the Conservative group in Brent and there was a major effort, in the run-up to the annual general meeting of the council this year, to replace the Conservative leader and deputy leader of the council, Councillors Blackman and Warren. That would have been successful—they would have been defeated by one vote. We all know the importance of one vote in the Chamber. However, as Conservative councillors arrived at the annual general meeting, Councillor Blackman announced that he had admitted two new members—the aforementioned Harshad Barot, who is the benefactor of doubt on a grand

[Mr. Ken Livingstone]

scale, and another Labour councillor who had defected, Mr. M. Patel. I have nothing to suggest anything unsavoury about why he should have defected.

The Conservative members of the group turned up and found that there were two new members whom they had not voted to admit and who had not yet become members of the Conservative party because their applications had not been processed. Lo and behold—Councillor Blackman and Councillor Warren survived by one vote the challenge to their leadership.

I am not saying for one moment that all Conservative councillors are corrupt. But this is corruption on a grand scale—the dangling of a £1 million community centre before a couple of people, one of whom is now facing 16 charges of fraud. Nkechi Amalu-Johnson is facing 16 charges of fraud after her brief conduct as chair of the housing committee. Councillor Blackman defended her throughout that period and Councillor Warren, the deputy leader, turned up to defend her in court against his council's action to try to reclaim the money.

The examples of Westminster and Brent are not typical of the Conservative party, any more than they are typical of the Labour party or the Liberal Democrats. However, it seems that the powers of the district auditor are wholly inadequate to deal with the people who have managed to resist and drag out an investigation for four years in Westminster. The chief executive of Westminster is prepared to shred documents that the district auditor needs.

Certainly, when we get into the nightmarish jungle of the politics of Brent, with such bribery and vote-buying taking place continually at meetings, and with completely fictitious lists of people circulated on the orders of the council leader, Councillor Blackman, as the beneficiaries of the £1 million community centre, which was to be a reward for the defection of Nkechi Amalu-Johnson and P. Nyaga, there is nothing to say except that it is corruption. It is the use of public votes to buy office and hold office. It involves a complete double standard that is totally unacceptable. The district auditor should be investigating the personal financial details of all the people involved to see what moneys have changed hands and where Hashad Barot's missing grant has gone.

I am not simply attacking Conservative councillors. When I was the leader of the Greater London council, I received information that one of my members had tried to use his influence to get preferential treatment in gaining a commercial letting. The day that I discovered that, the papers went to the fraud squad and I urged the fraud squad to deal as harshly as possible with that individual. When I heard rumours that four members of the last Labour-controlled council for Brent had intervened in planning applications to benefit themselves, I went to the fraud squad and asked for an investigation. My position is absolutely clear. I have opposed corruption by Labour members on councils with which I have been involved and I expect the Conservative party to do the same with its crooks.

2.49 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. Tony Baldry): The speech of the hon. Member for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone) was a good, end-of-term political knockabout which I am sure will read well in the next issue of *Tribune*.

We are determined that local government will perform to the highest possible standards of public life and public accountability, irrespective of party complexion or political control. We expect local authorities and local councillors to act within the law and to seek to uphold the best traditions of public life in this country. One of the means to enable us to achieve that objective is the district auditor.

The district auditor has a number of duties in addition to those associated with a normal audit. The auditor of a local authority has a statutory duty to consider whether spending is legal and proper, and whether economy, efficiency and effectiveness—value for money—have been achieved through the use of public funds. While the auditor does not question policy, he considers the effects of policy and examines how policy decisions are reached. He considers whether decisions were reached with appropriate authority, and on sufficient and reliable financial data. If he concludes that the policy has resulted in financial loss, the auditor can apply to the court to have those responsible surcharged.

The auditor's powers are substantial. He can identify recommendations in a management letter which is presented at the conclusion of the audit. The local authority must consider that letter at a full council meeting and must respond publicly. The auditor must have the right of access at all reasonable times to all such documents relating to the organisation whose accounts are required to be audited. Any person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with any of the auditor's requirements shall be liable to a fine and an additional fine for each day on which the offence continues.

The auditor has powers to make any report on any matter that comes to his notice in the course of the audit. Such reports must be considered by the local authority involved. If the auditor believes that an item on the account is unlawful, he can appeal to the courts for such a declaration, and if an item of account is declared unlawful the person authorising that expenditure may be required to repay it. If it appears to the auditor that a loss is due to wilful misconduct, he can set about recovering the amount from the person or people responsible. A member of any local authority who authorises an unlawful sum in excess of £2,000 shall be disqualified from being a member of a local authority for five years.

It is evidence of the auditor's impartiality and the effectiveness of the system that, in recent years, the district auditor has published reports on local authorities of different political complexions. Public interest reports are made for a number of different reasons, so the issue of a report cannot necessarily be interpreted as a criticism of the authority involved.

Let us consider the past three years and the London boroughs involved. In 1990-91, reports by the district auditor were published in relation to the following boroughs: Hackney, which was then Labour controlled; Lambeth, which was then Labour controlled; Camden, which was then Labour controlled; the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, where there was no overall

control; Ealing, which was under Conservative control; and the London borough of Tower Hamlets, which was controlled by the Social Democrats. Therefore, any suggestion by the hon. Member for Brent, East that the district auditor is partial in the way in which he applies his powers is totally unfounded and discreditable.

Last year—1992-93—the district auditor published reports on the London borough of Haringey and the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, which were both Labour controlled. But he also published reports on other local other authorities around the country, including at least two which were controlled by the Liberal Democrats, one which was controlled by the ratepayers association and the residents association, and one which was controlled by independents.

We are determined that the district auditor will perform his duties. He has considerable powers. We are determined that there will be the highest possible standards of public life. I have every confidence that the district auditor will investigate fully any allegations of malpractice in any local authority. Were he to conclude that any of the allegations were true, it would be for him to take consequential action.

The hon. Member for Brent, East was quiet on whether he had referred any of the complaints about Brent to the district auditor. On the question of Westminster, all he did was to read out some tittle tattle from press cuttings. I very much hope that if he thought there was any evidence relating to any local authority, he would refer it to the district auditor.

It is strange that, of all Labour Members, it is the hon. Gentleman who is seeking to uphold the standards of local government. After all, it was under his stewardship that the GLC's precept rose by 118 per cent. while inflation rose by just 14 per cent. Indeed, local government has not caused as much disappointment as the GLC. Even Labour Members were forced to acknowledge that it had been rightly described as the slowest bureaucracy this side of the Kremlin and the sooner it was abolished, the better.

Of course, the Labour party in London valued the GLC because it was prepared to finance lunatic left-wing activity. That source of funds for bizarre extremist groups has dried up and no longer is the hon. Gentleman able to lavish money on such bodies as the Marx Memorial library and Babies Against the Bomb—*[Interruption.]* It is very sweet of the hon. Member for Leicester, East (Mr. Vaz) to turn up as the political minder of the hon. Member for Brent, East. Indeed, if the hon. Gentleman were making speeches on my patch of local government I, too, would turn up as his political minder.

When the hon. Member for Brent, East was leader of the GLC, he actively boasted that it had more billboards than any other advertiser in London and that it had the best sites. He said that the Labour party could never have access to such funds as the GLC had. Therefore, I do not think that the House is prepared to take lectures from the hon. Gentleman about how local authorities should perform. Indeed, local authorities in London spent about £20 million——

Mr. Livingstone: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Baldry: No, I will not. The hon. Gentleman wallpapered about 15 minutes' worth of *Hansard* with allegations, using parliamentary privilege to do so. When he had the stewardship of the GLC in 1984-85, it spent £20 million on Labour propaganda—*[Interruption.]* If hon. Members cannot read the Order Paper, let me tell them that the debate is about the role of the district auditor. It is about standards in public life. It is a timely reminder that, when the Labour party had control of the GLC, its standards were despicable. It was the hon. Member for Brent, East who declared:

"Fighting alongside the miners we can create the conditions for a general strike to defeat the Tory Government."

Of course, during those times in Lambeth there were instances of funeral cars carrying white feathers being sent to those who wanted to set a legal budget—*[Interruption.]* The hon. Member for Leicester, East, who sits on the Front Bench and exhibits such mirth, might like to reflect on something that is a sober fact for the Labour party as it disappears for the summer recess. Last week, there was a by-election in a safe Labour ward in Lambeth and the Labour party lost.

I do not think that the House will take any lectures from the hon. Member for Brent, East about public standards and public life. Of all Labour Members, he is the most disreputable when it comes to local government. I suggest, not that he spends the recess lying down in a dark room, but that he takes a happy walk in the countryside and has a good holiday. Perhaps he should take one of the DOE Ordnance Survey maps and go for a long walk along one of the routes formed by the Countryside Commission that was established and funded by the DOE. Then, hopefully, when he returns to the House in the autumn he will be in a position to make a more sensible and balanced contribution to the debate.

I wish you, Madam Speaker, and every hon. Member a very happy recess and hope that we can all find a newt.

Mr. Max Madden (Bradford, West): On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: I can take no points of order as it is now 3 o'clock. Our debates are now concluded, but as a message from the Lords is expected, I am required to suspend the sitting until the Royal Assent to Bills passed by both Houses can be signified. I understand that this may be a matter of several hours. I shall arrange for the bells to be rung five minutes before I intend to resume the Chair.

3 pm

Sitting suspended.

7.15 pm

On resuming—

Royal Assent

Madam Speaker: I have to notify the House, in accordance with the Royal Assent Act 1967, that the Queen has signified her Royal Assent to the following Acts and a Measure:

Appropriation Act 1993.
Finance Act 1993.
Education Act 1993.
Criminal Justice Act 1993.
Agriculture Act 1993.

[Madam Speaker]

Highland Regional Council (Wester Bridge) Order Confirmation Act 1993.
Pwllheli Harbour (Amendment) Act 1993.
Allied Irish Banks Act 1993.
Leeds Supertram Act 1993.
Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) (Amendment) Measure 1993.

I wish all those here and those who are not present a happy and relaxed holiday.

It being seventeen minutes past Seven o'clock, MADAM SPEAKER *adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Resolutions [16 and 26 July], till Monday 18 October.*

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 19 July 1993

HEALTH

Clinical Medical Officers

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the number of consultant community paediatricians, clinical medical officers and senior clinical medical officers in each of the last five years.

Dr. Mawhinney: The available information is shown in the table.

Community health service medical staff—England 30 September each year

	Consultant community paediatrician	*Senior clinical medical officer (all specialties)*	*Clinical medical officer (all specialties)*
1987	n/a	1,133	1,713
1988	n/a	1,188	1,669
1989	n/a	1,181	1,653
1990	n/a	1,151	1,620
1991	n/a	1,158	1,509

Notes:

1. n/a means not available.
2. Most clinical medical officers work in paediatrics, and provide child health surveillance. The decline in their numbers reflects the growing number of general practitioners taking on this work. We estimate that over 60 per cent. of children under five are now receiving these services from their GP.

Sugar-free Drugs

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of drugs used by children are available in a sugar-free form.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available in the form requested.

In respect of oral liquid medicines, records held by the United Kingdom Licensing Authority show that 1,797 products are currently licensed for human use but not all of these would be indicated for use in children. Within these 1,797 licensed products, 218 are sugar free.

Neonatal Units

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many trusts or directly managed units had neonatal units in 1991-92.

Mr. Sackville: In 1991-92, 27 trusts and 172 directly managed units provided cots intended for neonatal intensive care.

Source: SD2A; KHO3 return.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many neonatal intensive care beds there are; what is the average time a baby spends in such cots; and how many babies used such cots in 1991-92.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 21 June at columns *27-28*. Information about the number of babies using these cots and their length of stay is not available centrally.

Dentists

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health by how much funding for national health service dentists has increased in real terms in the past three years.

Dr. Mawhinney: The latest information is shown in the table:

NHS Dental Services: Gross Expenditure[1] England

Year	*Gross expenditure (cash £ million)*	*Gross expenditure (real terms £ million[2])*	*Percentage increase (real terms) Year on year[3]*	*Percentage increase (real terms) 1988-89 to 1991-92[3]*
1989-90	1,118·4	1,288·4	[3] – 5·4	—
1990-91	1,229·6	1,311·5	1·8	—
1991-92	1,521·0	1,521·0	16·0	[3] 11·7

Sources: Information for the general dental services (GDS) is from the relevant year's appropriation account. Information for the hospital dental service (HDS) and community dental service (CDS) are from the annual health authority accounts up to 1990-91 and from health authority annual financial returns for 1991-92.

Notes:

[1] Total expenditure on national health service dental services combines gross expenditure on the GDS, HDS and CDS, respectively. Gross expenditure includes income from patient charges, net of refunds.

[2] Gross domestic product deflator used to calculate real terms at 1991-92 prices.

[3] Compared with real terms figure of £1,361·5 million for 1988-89.

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what period of notice dental practitioners are required to give patients before they are removed from their national health service register; and in what form the notice is required to be.

Dr. Mawhinney: Dentists are required by their terms of service to give a patient three months notice in writing of their intention to terminate a continuing care or capitation arrangement. Exceptionally, a dentist may make a written application to the family health service authority for permission to terminate an arrangement sooner.

Insulin Treatment

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if the insulin pen and the needles it uses are available on prescription.

Dr. Mawhinney: Insulin pen injection systems and the needles they use are not available on prescription. Their inclusion in the general practitioner prescribable list must, like all new additions to the list, be subject to the availability of resources.

Community Pharmacists

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans she has to require community pharmacists to provide additional services without receiving additional payment;

(2) to what extent she intends to fund the new professional allowance for community pharmacists from the new existing global sum.

Dr. Mawhinney: The 1993-94 pay settlement will be as a first step towards specifically recognising the professional services many pharmacists provide. The detailed elements of the pharmacists' remuneration structure, of which the proposed professional allowance would be one, are all funded from within the global sum.

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what basis her proposed threshold of 2,000 NHS prescriptions per month for payment of the professional allowance to community pharmacists was calculated.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether it is her policy that community pharmacies make a demonstrable contribution to the national health service only if they dispense more than 2,000 prescriptions per month.

Dr. Mawhinney: A threshold of 2,000 national health service prescriptions per month was one part of one element of the original pay offer for the transitional year of 1993-94 which was designed as an interim step towards a longer-term structure. We are reviewing the terms of that offer in the light of discussions with the pharmaceutical services negotiating committee.

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether her proposal of a 2000 NHS prescription per month threshold for payment of the new professional allowance to community pharmacists has been formally withdrawn;

(2) what assessment she has made of the rate of progress of the negotiations with the pharmaceutical services negotiating committee on remuneration for community pharmacists; and what steps she is taking to put further proposals to the committee.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) why the proposed meeting between her officials and the pharmaceutical services negotiating committee on 13 July did not take place;

(2) when she expects her Department to put a new set of proposals concerning the remuneration of community pharmacists to the pharmaceutical services negotiating committee.

Dr. Mawhinney: The rate of progress of the negotiations with the pharmaceutical services negotiating committee on pharmacists' remuneration for 1993-94 has been much slower than we would have wished. The pay offer made on 12 March remains on the table, but the Government are considering the points made in discussions with the committee since then and hope to be in a position to table a revised offer shortly. We were not ready to do so by 13 July and so that meeting provisionally rescheduled for that day was postponed.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the proposed increase of 1·5 per cent. for 1993-94 in the global sum for payment of community pharmacists is intended to cover the increased drug costs and other expenses incurred by community pharmacists on behalf of the NHS as well as provide for an increase in their reumuneration; and if he will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: The proposed increase is intended to cover both the labour and overheads elements of pharmacists' remuneration. The reimbursement of the cost of the drugs they dispense is dealt with separately.

Managers' Salaries

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 23 June, *Official Report*, column *182*, if she will provide comparable information on the average annual cost of employing *(a)* a district general manager group 1, *(b)* a district general manager group 2, *(c)* a district general manager group 3, *(d)* a unit general manager group 1, *(e)* a unit general manager group 2, *(f)* a unit general manager group 3 and *(g)* a unit general manager group 4.

Dr. Mawhinney: This information is not available centrally.

GP Partnership Staff

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioner partnerships employ a psychologist and counsellor.

Dr. Mawhinney: As at 1 October 1992, general practitioners in England employed 169 counsellors—whole-time equivalent. Details are not available centrally on the number of psychologists, as a separate category, who may be similarly employed.

Great Yarmouth and Waveney Health District

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received on the proposal to split the Great Yarmouth and Waveney health district; and if she will make a statement;

(2) if she will make it her policy to consider putting the Waveney part of the Great Yarmouth and Waveney health district into a new authority comprising Great Yarmouth and Norwich rather than the plans proposed by the East Anglian regional health authority; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: East Anglian regional health authority has commenced public consultation on its proposals to merge parts of Great Yarmouth and Waveney health authority with neighbouring health authorities and we have received two representations on these proposals. They were from my hon. Friend the Member for Waveney himself and from the chairman of the Great Yarmouth and Waveney General Practitioners Forum. When this period of formal consultation is completed it will be for East Anglian regional health authority to consider the response, including any alternatives that may have been put forward. The goal of purchasing health authorities is to improve health and health services, and to improve and extend standards of clinical care, and to prevent illness. To achieve this local health authorities need to work for and with local people. This is what we expect the East Anglian regional health authority to bear in mind before making recommendations to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State.

Generic Drugs

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what incentives her Department employs to encourage general practitioners to prescribe generic drugs; and how much has been spent in each of the last three years on such incentives.

Dr. Mawhinney: We have a range of initiatives to encourage general medical practitioners to prescribe more

effectively including, where appropriate, generic prescribing. These include, from 1991-92, incentive schemes which cost £100,000 in their first year of operation.

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of drugs prescribed per annum are generic.

Dr. Mawhinney: In 1992, the latest year for which figures are available, 43 per cent. of drugs were prescribed generically.

Child Migrant Scheme

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 14 July, *Official Report*, column *533*, what records are retained relating to the child migrant scheme.

Mr. Bowis: The Department holds some 105 files relating to policy on the child migrant schemes, dating from 1910 to 1959. Fifty of these have been opened to the public under the normal provisions of the public records legislation. The remainder are closed. So far as we are currently aware, the Department does not hold case files on individuals who emigrated under the child migrant schemes, but we are making further inquiries about this.

NHS Reforms

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 23 November, *Official Report*, columns *496-98*, if she will update the table provided on the cost of implementing the NHS reforms.

Dr. Mawhinney: The reforms are firmly in place, and much of the spending referred to is now absorbed in purchasers' baselines and providers' prices. It is for them to decide how they allocate these resources.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Immigration

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many representations he has received from hon. Members during *(a)* the first quarter of 1992 and *(b)* the first quarter of 1993 to delay the removal of passengers refused entry at British ports of entry and, for both periods, how many representations resulted in (i) the delay of the passenger's removal for up to a week, (ii) the delay of the passenger's removal for more than a week and (iii) reversal of the immigration officer's decision.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested is not available centrally.

Citizenship Applications

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for British citizenship under section 4(5) of the British Nationality Act 1981 have been *(a)* made, *(b)* granted and *(c)* refused in each quarter since January 1992; and how many of those granted have been on the grounds of service in the armed forces.

Mr. Charles Wardle: One application was received in June 1992, one in November 1992 and one in January 1993. Of these, one has been granted, one has been refused and one has not yet been decided. The application which was granted was made on the grounds of service in the armed forces.

Immigration Rules

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the average time taken by his Department to investigate cases referred from overseas posts in order to assess whether the maintenance and accommodation requirements of the immigration rules have been met.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested is not available. Staff are instructed to give priority to cases referred by overseas posts for decision or for inquiries to be made.

Race Relations

Mr. Peter Shore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what have been the sums paid to the London borough of Tower Hamlets under section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966 in each year since 1990; and what is the estimated payment for the years 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The amount of section 11 grant provision payable direct to Tower Hamlets in respect of each financial year from 1990 is set out in the table:

Financial year	£
1989-90	297,795
1990-91	4,732,150
1991-92	6,486,671
1992-93	8,202,381

The figures for the year 1989-90 relate to grant in service areas other than education. It is not possible to isolate precise figures for the grant payable to the inner London education authority during this period in respect of education provision within Tower Hamlets. The grant figure for 1990-91 includes education provision transferred from ILEA.

The figure for the year 1993-94 is a prediction based on best estimates as supplied by Tower Hamlets. It is not possible to give details of figures for the years 1994-95 and 1995-96 at this stage.

Genetic Engineering

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of Home Office inspectors have an expert knowledge in the genetic engineering of animals; and what account has been taken of the extent of unpredictability of this technology in deciding how to evaluate the likely suffering endured by animals during scientific procedures involving genetic engineering.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Three inspectors—14 per cent. of the inspectorate—have genetic engineering as a specialist area, but all inspectors are well briefed on the techniques used and the likely consequences of transgenic technology.

Inspectors are aware of the potential for unpredictable problems associated with the manipulation of genetic material and all applications for such work are carefully

considered and monitored to ensure that the earliest appropriate end points are set and observed for any work authorised. The independent Animal Procedures Committee considered the issues raised by work in transgenics in detail during 1990 and considered the existing controls of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 adequate.

Crime Prevention

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in stimulating private sector interest in crime prevention initiatives; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The cornerstone of the Government's approach to crime prevention is partnership and we will continue to encourage participation by the private sector. Current indications of the private sector's interest include the following.

The private sector provided support, estimated at the equivalent of more than £13 million, to Car Crime Prevention Year and continues to contribute to the campaign in a number of ways; Crime Concern, the independent crime prevention organisation, has been successful in encouraging the involvement of the private sector, raising £1·9 million in general sponsorship from this source in 1992-93; the membership of National Board for Crime Prevention which holds its first meeting on 26 July includes three senior executives from the private sector; local business and industry is represented on the steering committees of each of the 20 safer cities projects. The private sector has contributed sponsorship and is involved in other ways in local crime prevention schemes promoted by safer cities projects; the Dixon Group plc has seconded to the Home Office one of its directors for a period of two years to carry out an assignment on business crime.

Entry Clearance

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in how many cases entry clearance was refused to applicants from *(a)* Pakistan, *(b)* India, *(c)* Bangladesh and *(d)* the Indian subcontinent as a whole on grounds of the primary purpose rule in the last three years; and how many of these applicants were (i) men and (ii) women.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information is given in the table.

Spouses and fiance(e)s in the Indian sub-continent initially refused entry clearance and those subsequently granted on appeal[1] on partly and wholly primary purpose grounds, 1990-92.

	Initial refusals on primary purpose grounds						*Of whom: Granted on appeal*					
	solely			*partly*			*solely*			*partly*		
	1990	*1991*	*1992*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*
Bangladesh												
Husbands and fiances	210	90	120	60	40	80	10	20	70	+	—	20
Wives and fiancees	10	+	10	10	+	10	10	—	—	+	—	+
Pakistan												
Husbands and fiances	770	860	800	1,160	730	610	270	260	180	250	320	220
Wives and fiancees	30	50	40	30	40	40	+	+	10	+	+	10
India												
Husbands and fiances	460	480	450	40	40	40	120	100	130	—	—	—
Wives and fiancees	170	200	250	20	30	60	10	40	60	—	—	+
Total Indian sub-continent												
Husbands and fiances	1,440	1,430	1,360	1,250	810	720	400	380	390	260	320	240
Wives and fiancees	200	250	310	60	70	100	30	40	70	10	+	10

[1] Initial refusals and numbers granted on appeal do not necessarily refer to the same individuals as an appeal may not be decided in the same year.
All figures rounded to nearest ten.
+ equals less than 5.
These figures include some revisions.

Vigilantes

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are being taken in Wales to discourage action by vigilantes; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The Government do not condone the formation of vigilante groups. Vigilante action may lead to an offence and has to be treated by the police in the same way as any other offending behaviour. In Wales, and in other areas, the police have used the media and public meetings to advise members of the public about the danger of taking the law into their own hands.

National Lottery

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to amend the present legislation relating to lotteries so as to increase the maximum prize money before the first draw in the new national lottery takes place.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: We intend to bring those provisions of the National Lottery Etc. Bill which amend the law relating to existing societies' and local authority lotteries —including the provisions of clause 51 which increase the prize limit for such lotteries—into force as soon as practicable. A period of time will, however, be needed to make consequential changes to the Lotteries Regulations and to enable societies to register with the Gaming Board under the new schedule 1A to the Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976. We aim to keep the delay in bringing these provisions into operation to a minimum.

Falkland Islands

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason tracker dogs are not being used by the investigative team as an aid to their recent inquiry in the Falklands into alleged infringements of the Geneva convention.

Mr. Charles Wardle: This is a matter for the commissioner.

Court Escort Duties

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the cost of the contract with Group 4 covering court escort duties in Humberside and east midlands over five years; and if he will set out the cost of this service for the previous five years.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the Prison Service who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Philippa Drew to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me in the temporary absence of Mr. Lewis, the Director General, to reply to your recent Question asking about the cost of the contract with Group 4 covering court escort and custody duties in Humberside and East Midlands over five years; and the cost of this service for the previous five years.

I am not sure that I can add substantively to Mr. Dunbar's letter of 4 May to you in response to a Question from you covering similar ground [Official Report 5 May, columns 75-76, copy attached].

The information in that letter was collected as a result of special survey work to separately identify time spent on court escort and custody duties by police and prison officers in the area, which was then costed. Information on the cost of the court escort and custody service is not routinely collected by either the police or the Prison Service, and would have varied over the previous 5 years with the size of the task. This in turn would have varied with the number of persons brought in custody before the courts for first appearance; the prison population and prison catchment areas; and changes in numbers and locations of court rooms and police stations. Similarly, the costs under the contract will vary over the coming 5 years as the size of the task varies. I am confident, however, that the figures given in Mr. Dunbar's letter represent a genuine comparison between the costs of the current service and the pre-existing one.

Strangeways Prison

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to announce the successful tenderer for Strangeways prison; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to a question from my right hon. Friend the Member for Mitcham and Morden (Dame A. Rumbold) on 15 July, at columns *583-84*.

Sheehy Report

Mr. Eastham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the temporary drop in police manpower caused by the elimination of middle management posts and the creation of additional constable posts proposed by the Sheehy report;

(2) what account he will take in future decisions on the starting salaries for constables of the stage at which constables are required to patrol on their own;

(3) what assessment he has made of the proposal in the Sheehy report for existing employees to be obliged to enter into a fixed-term contract upon accepting promotion and to be obliged to move from the current 30-year pension scheme to a scheme based on 40 years' service; and what estimate he has made of the extent to which officers will refuse promotion as a result;

(4) what assessment he has made of the effect of the proposals within the Sheehy report in regard to overtime payment on the response of officers to incidents taking place at the end of the working day;

(5) what advantages he expects to arise from the change recommended in the Sheehy report from a 30-year pension to a 40-year pension; and what effect he expects this to have on the average age of police in service;

(6) what plans he has to allow appeals against decisions of chief constables on the desirable age profile of a police force.

Mr. Trotter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy in implementing any of the recommendations made by the Sheehy report to ensure that there is no reduction in the total police manpower.

Mr. Charles Wardle: In considering the implications of all the recommendations made in the report of the inquiry into police responsibilities and rewards, my right hon. and learned Friend will take into account the comments received during the consultation period.

Mr. Eastham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effect on morale in police forces in the United Kingdom of the publication of the Sheehy report.

Mr. Charles Wardle: My right hon. and learned Friend is aware that many police officers hold views on the recommendations of the inquiry into police responsibilities and rewards. There will be full consultation with the police and other interests before my right hon. and learned Friend, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland and my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland reach conclusions on the inquiry's report.

Mr. Khabra: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* wives and *(b)* children refused entry in the Indian subcontinent in 1991 and 1992 appealed against the refusal; how many of these appeals were (i) allowed, (ii) dismissed, (iii) withdrawn and (iv) are pending; and if he will give this information for each post.

Mr. John M. Taylor: I have been asked to reply.

The immigration appellate authorities record appeals by wives and children against refusal of entry clearance together in a category that also includes appeals by other dependent relatives and returning residents. The information requested is as follows for appeals in that category:

Appeals from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh[1]

	1991	*1992*
Received	1,843	891
Allowed	355	390
Dismissed	1,059	1,554

	1991	1992
Withdrawn	529	577
Pending[2]	n/a	n/a

[1] It is not possible to show the information according to individual posts.
[2] Pending figures cannot be provided without disproportionate cost.

Parole Board

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is now his policy on replacing part-time members of the Parole Board with full-time paid officials; when this policy was announced; and what consultations he undertook in respect of changes in his policy.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: I am currently considering proposals to appoint a small number of full-time members of the Parole Board, in addition to existing part-time members. Any such appointments will be made as members of the Parole Board and will not be officials of the civil service. We announced the possibility of such appointments to members of the Parole Board at their annual general meeting on 9 March. The chairman of the board was consulted on the subject both prior to the announcement and since that date, and I hope to meet him shortly in order to discuss the matter further.

Child Migration Scheme

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what passports were provided for children sent to Australia, Canada or Rhodesia under the orphans migration scheme from 1963; and what provisions now exist for people sent out under that scheme to establish their claim to British passports and British citizenship.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I have been asked to reply.

It will take some time to establish what documentation was provided under the orphans migration scheme and I will write to the hon. Member about that in due course.

However, anyone who can establish a claim to British citizenship will be issued with a passport in the normal way under the provisions of the British Nationality Act 1981.

PRIME MINISTER

Gulf War

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Prime Minister when he expects to be able to provide a substantive reply to the letter from the hon. Member for North Cornwall dated 18 January about the cases of the three Gulf war widows, Mrs. Lyn Hicks, Mrs. Liz Weeks and Mrs. Anne Lennox.

The Prime Minister: A reply will be sent shortly.

Vietnamese Prime Minister (Visit)

Mr. Alton: To ask the Prime Minister what specific human rights issues he raised with the Prime Minister of Vietnam during his recent visit.

The Prime Minister: At my request, the Minister for Overseas Development expressed our concern about Vietnam's human rights record with the Vietnamese Prime Minister during his visit to the United Kingdom of 3 to 6 July. We also handed over a short list of specific human rights cases.

Child Migrants

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to his answer of 14 July, *Official Report*, columns *506-7*, if he will make available to the Child Migrant Trust personal record files relating to British child migrants for use in confidence in counselling migrants and tracing relatives in the United Kingdom.

The Prime Minister: I have asked my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health to write to the hon. Member.

Overseas Debt

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Prime Minister how many countries which qualify for relief under the Trinidad terms owe money to the United Kingdom; what is their total debt to the United Kingdom; what proportion of that debt could be *(a)* wiped-out or *(b)* rescheduled; and what is the total value of debt which could be (i) wiped out and (ii) rescheduled.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 12 July 1993]:* Fourteen of the 17 countries that have qualified for Trinidad terms from the Paris club have debt outstanding to the Export Credits Guarantee Department, totalling £774 million.

Countries receiving Trinidad agreements get debt reduction or debt service reduction equivalent to half the value of eligible debt due over the periods of the agreements. Some £174 million of these countries' debt to ECGD has been rescheduled under these arrangements, and the equivalent value of the reduction in those countries' debt to ECGD is therefore around half that figure.

Of the 17 countries given Trinidad terms, only Nicaragua has debt outstanding to the ODA, amounting to some £0·6 million. Seven of these countries—Tanzania, Bolivia, Uganda, Honduras, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Mozambique—have already received retrospective terms adjustment—RTA—writing off their ODA debt. RTA has also recently been announced for Zambia and Guyana. These agreements, which are awaiting signature, will write off debt of £55·9 million and £53·4 million respectively.

There are further severely-indebted low-income countries which may qualify for Trinidad terms in future, for example once they have agreed reform programmes with the IMF. The Paris club will also consider giving countries which have Trinidad agreements the equivalent of up to 50 per cent. reduction of the remaining stock of debt, provided they establish track records of debt servicing and economic reform over the periods of the agreements. Under present rules this could produce further debt reduction up to 50 per cent. of the total debt to ECGD then outstanding. But the United Kingdon is pressing the Paris club to go futher, in line with my original Trinidad proposals, and give immediate stock of debt reduction of up to 80 per cent. for the neediest eligible countries on a case by case basis. In response to United Kingdom pressure, the recent Tokyo summit asked the

Paris club to continue reviewing the question of debt relief for these countries, and especially to consider earlier reductions in their stock of debt.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Electricity Interconnector

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the recent trend in the amount of electricity imported and exported via the channel interconnector, and on the prospects for the remainder of 1993.

Mr. Eggar: Net imports across the interconnector in the three months from February to April 1993 were 4·29 TWh. The future pattern of trade will depend on the operation of commercial contracts, including a contract for the export from the United Kingdom of increasing quantities of electricity at periods of peak demand in France during the winter.

Nuclear Reprocessing

Mr. Cohen: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what certificates are required for spent nuclear fuels before they may be reprocessed at Sellafield; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: Certificates are not required for spent nuclear fuels before they may be reprocessed in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assessment has been made of Japanese technical capacity to process spent nuclear fuel and nuclear waste.

Mr. Eggar: This is a matter for the Government of Japan and the appropriate commercial undertakings in that country, subject to compliance with Japan's relevant international agreements and regulatory requirements respectively.

Nuclear Material (Safeguards)

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what progress has been made by Euratom since July 1985 in establishing a common interpretation of safeguards on nuclear material transferred for non-nuclear uses.

Mr. Eggar: Pursuant to article 22 of regulation 3227/76, on receipt of a request from the user, the Commission may grant derogations and exemptions from reporting. This would include nuclear material which was used exclusively for non-nuclear purposes.

Supervisory Bodies

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer of 25 June, *Official Report*, column *291*, on reviewing the operation of the recognised supervisory bodies, what plans he has to invite the public to comment on the operations of the bodies and to public hearings on such matters.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The arrangements for the review have not yet been finalised.

Company Receivers

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will propose legislation under which he will have powers to examine the fees paid to company receivers.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: I have no plans to do so.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Ainger: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he will announce the new non-fossil fuel obligation orders for renewable energy sources.

Mr. Eggar: I hope to make an announcement soon about a further renewables order under the non-fossil fuel obligation.

Sizewell C

Mr. David Porter: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what discussions his Department has had with Nuclear Electric about plans for Sizewell C power station in Suffolk; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: I regularly meet the chairman and chief executive of Nuclear Electric to discuss a range of issues affecting the company, including the company's wish to build a twin pressurised water reactor station at Sizewell C.

Mr. David Porter: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assessment his Department has made of the economic and energy contributions to the national and local economies of building Sizewell C power station in Suffolk.

Mr. Eggar: No decisions about the construction of new nuclear stations beyond Sizewell B will be made before the Government review the future prospects for nuclear power. A further announcement about the review will be made in due course.

Mr. David Porter: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what representations he has received about *(a)* the nuclear energy review in general and *(b)* Sizewell C power station in Suffolk, in particular.

Mr. Eggar: I have received representations from the nuclear industry, local authorities, MPs, members of the public and other interested parties about the nuclear review, and about Nuclear Electric's proposals at Sizewell C.

Nuclear Industry

Mr. David Porter: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the future of the nuclear industry; and when he expects to make further announcements on planning of individual power stations.

Mr. Eggar: An announcement about the review of the future prospects for nuclear power will be made in due course. No decisions about the construction of new nuclear stations beyond Sizewell B will be taken before the review has concluded.

Company Directors

Mr. David Porter: To ask the President of the Board of Trade which statutes govern the responsibilities of administrative receivers called in to British companies, with particular reference to the realisation of the value of assets; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The statutes which govern the responsibilities of administrative receivers are the Insolvency Act 1986, the Company Directors Disqualification Act and secondary legislation made thereunder. Certain duties including those in relation to the realisation of assets are governed by common law.

Technology Transfer

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what funding followed the transfer of responsibility for technology transfer from the DTI to the Office of Science and Technology.

Mr. McLoughlin: There has been no movement of responsibility for technology transfer from DTI to the Office of Science and Technology—OST—and therefore no transfer of funding.

The recent White Paper on science, engineering and technology—Cm 2250—sets out mission statements for both the OST and DTI. Part of OST's role is to stimulate transfer of technology between the science and engineering base and industry, for example through the LINK programme. DTI continues to have a wider responsibility for technology transfer between industry and all other providers of science and technology whether based in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Regional Aid

Mr. Milburn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what plans he has to change the monitoring arrangements for firms that receive regional financial selective assistance.

Mr. Sainsbury: None.

Deregulation

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the membership, and where appropriate the relevant companies, of each of the working parties established under his deregulation initiative.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: A complete list of deregulation task force members is available in the Library of the House.

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the principles guiding the work of his Department's deregulation unit with specific reference to *(a)* the interests of consumers and *(b)* of employees.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Harrogate (Mr. Banks) on 7 July, *Official Report*, column *151*.

Assisted Areas

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the Industry Minister's meeting held on 8 July with the European Commissioner, Karel van Miert, on the subject of the draft United Kingdom assisted areas map.

Mr. Sainsbury: I met Vice-President van Miert on 8 July to discuss the Government's proposals for a new assisted areas map. The discussions were helpful and I hope that the Commission's clearance will be given in time for me to announce the results in the House before the summer recess.

Price Marking Order 1991

Mr. Patrick Thompson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he will bring forward proposals to amend the Price Marking Order 1991.

Mr. McLoughlin: My D epartment is going out to public consultation today on a draft amendment order, guidance note and compliance cost assessment on possible amendments to the Price Marking Order 1991.

We wish to deal with the concerns which traders have raised. The aims of the amendment order would be to simplify existing provisions while reflecting more closely the EC directives which the order implements. Our proposals would allow complete flexibility on how prices may be shown subject only to meeting the basic obligation of the directives. They would also deal with some more detailed points such as indicating postage and packing charges and the time allowed to adjust individual price indications to take account of changes in the rate of VAT.

Some detailed provisions now considered to be outside the scope of the directives would be removed from the order. The treatment of goods in shop windows would be clarified, as would the position on price indications for perfumes and cosmetics.

These proposals are in line with our present policy of reviewing regulations and reducing the burden on business wherever practicable. But they also aim to have due regard to our obligations under the relevant EC directives and to the interests of the consumer, and by clarifying the position to assist enforcement.

We shall welcome views from all those who have an interest in them, but we would expect to proceed further only if in the light of consultation it is clear that amending legislation would produce worthwhile gain.

Comments are sought by 29 October 1993.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT

Regional Development Funds

Mr. Keith Hill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of the British contribution to the regional development banks is used for projects that *(a)* directly benefit the poorest people in developing countries and *(b)* helps meet the goals established at the world summit for children.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: United Kingdom contributions are used to support the overall operations of regional development banks. It is not possible to estimate what proportion can be attributed to projects of this kind.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Lockerbie Bomb

Mr. Gapes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what classes of information concerning the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie have not yet been released *(a)* to the relatives of the victims and *(b)* into the public domain.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Information of the following nature has not been released to the relatives of victims or otherwise into the public domain:

(1) information the protection of which is necessary to ensure effective security at present and in the future in the United Kingdom;

(2) information the disclosure of which would impair the effective investigation, detection and prosecution of crime in general;

(3) information which is relevant to questions of criminal responsibility which may arise in criminal proceedings and the disclosure of which might prejudice criminal proceedings.

Thailand (Heroin Cases)

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the strength of evidence that heroin was planted on Karen Smith and Patricia Cahill; and if he has had an exchange of correspondence with the Prime Minister of Thailand on the cases.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We have seen no convincing evidence that the heroin was planted on the girls. Unsupported allegations of planted evidence, corruption and miscarriage of justice are irresponsible in themselves and damaging to the prospects for the girls' release.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister wrote in February 1993 to his Thai counterpart to support the girls' royal pardon petitions. In his reply, the Thai Prime Minister acknowledged our support for the petition and gave assurances that the Thai Government are doing their best for the girls' well-being.

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action Her Majesty's Government are taking on the European Parliament's resolution of October 1991 calling for a re-examination of the case of Karen Smith.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We do not support the resolution. We have no reason to believe that either Karen Smith or Patricia Cahill had an unfair trial or were unjustly convicted. Both girls have been well treated in prison. Their sentences are long but by no means harsh compared with those given to others convicted of similar offences in Thailand. We want to help Karen Smith and Patricia Cahill take advantage of every opportunity that Thai law allows them to try to bring about their early release and to this end we shall continue to do all we can for them.

Cyprus

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contact he has had with the United Nations Secretary-General regarding the failure of the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr. Rauf Denktash, to agree a limited package of confidence-building measures; and if he will make a statement on the Cyprus problem.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Tooting (Mr. Cox) on 16 July, at column *727*.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many reports he has received from United Nations personnel of alleged rapes of Muslim women by Croatian forces since the beginning of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: None.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from Lord Owen regarding the selective lifting of sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; what is the Government policy on this issue; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We are in regular contact with Lord Owen about a variety of issues on the former Yugoslavia, including the question of sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. As Heads of Government made clear at the Tokyo economic summit on 7 to 9 July, sanctions will continue to be upheld against Serbia and Montenegro until conditions in the relevant Security Council resolutions are met.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received of Muslim forces using noxious gas against Croat forces in the villages of Prosje and Busovaca in central Bosnia; if he will raise this activity at the next meeting of the United Nations Security Council; and what representations he plans to make to the Government of President Izetbegovic.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have seen media reports alleging that Muslim forces used improvised grenades containing non-lethal riot control gas against Croats in central Bosnia. We deplore the use of such weapons which we believe are held by all three parties. Regular reports about fighting on the ground are submitted by UNPROFOR to the United Nations. We are not proposing to raise specific incidents of this kind in the Security Council, but we shall consider raising them in future discussions with Bosnian Government officials.

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many of the monitors agreed by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe are now in place in Kosovo; which nations have contributed; and when the remainder are expected to be in place.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: By 30 June 1993, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe's long-term missions in Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina consisted of 20 monitors from Norway, Canada, Finland, Sweden, France, Greece, United States of America, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Turkey, Japan and the United Kingdom. At that time, there were 10 monitors in Kosovo, one of whom was British. Belgrade having refused to renew the memorandum of understanding covering the missions, their future is in doubt and, as monitors have departed on leave or completion of assignment, they have not been replaced. There are now only 11 monitors in all three areas.

The United Kingdom had provided two monitors and we had hoped to appoint a further three. The chairman in office of the CSCE remains in contact with Belgrade. We hope that agreement will be reached on renewal of the mandate and that the mission numbers will be built up once more.

Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reservations were expressed by the Japanese Government in regard to indefinite extension of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty during discussions held with Foreign Minister Kabun held at the G7 summit in Tokyo.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Like other members of the G7, the Japanese Government agreed to the political declaration of the summit which stated:

"We reiterate the objectives of universal adherence to the NPT as well as the Treaty's indefinite extension in 1995 and nuclear arms reduction."

Bilateral Treaty Obligations

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of whether the common foreign and security implication of all bilateral treaty obligations entered into by EC member states with non-EC countries are fully consistent with Britain's national interests; and if he will conduct a systematic review of the bilateral treaty obligations of each EC member state with non-EC countries in order to ascertain whether Britain's interests are liable to be affected by the common foreign and security policy in the light of the effect of the declaration on voting in the field of the common foreign and security policy.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Under the common foreign and security policy, member states will reach agreed common positions by unanimity. The declaration on voting in the field of common foreign and security policy attached to the treaty on European union does not undermine this requirement for unanimity. Declarations are not part of the treaty, but evidence of a political commitment undertaken by the parties to the treaty. There is no need to conduct a review of the bilateral treaty obligations of individual member states with non-EC countries. Each member state will be responsible for ensuring that it can live up to commitments it makes under the common foreign and security policy, and where there is no agreement on common positions, member states will continue to be free to pursue national policies. The unanimity requirement means that the United Kingdom can ensure that all decisions taken under the common foreign and security policy are consistent with our national interests.

Tibet

Mr. Livingstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action is proposed to be taken by the Council of Ministers on the resolution on Tibet which was passed recently by the European Parliament, with particular reference to regulations allowing journalists and international human rights agencies access to Tibet.

Mr. Goodlad: We are deeply concerned about the situation in Tibet, including the human rights issues mentioned in the European Parliament resolution, and are in close contact with our European Community partners about further measures to follow up the EC statement of 1 June. We support the principle of free access by journalists and humanitarian agencies.

Entry Clearance Applications (DNA Tests)

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the average time for the results of DNA tests taken for the purpose of establishing relationships in cases of entry clearance applications to become available to entry clearance officers in Islamabad.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The average time for the results of DNA tests to become available to entry clearance officers in Islamabad is three months.

Iran

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 8 July, *Official Report*, column *240*, how many women who are United Kingdom citizens are employed in any capacity in the British diplomatic service in Iran; and what representations he has made to the Government of Iran on the subject of their obligations towards the Islamic dress code.

Mr. Goodlad: Three female diplomatic service staff and four female locally employed staff who are United Kingdom citizens are currently employed in the British embassy in Tehran.

We have made no representation to the Iranian Government about the obligation on female British diplomats to conform to Islamic dress code. All women in Iran have to observe the Islamic dress code when in public, including the female diplomats at all embassies.

Mr. Ghazanfer Ali

Mr. Madden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his letter of 24 June to the hon. Member for Bradford, West concerning the case of Mr. Ghazanfer Ali, what information he has obtained about the outcome of the latest court proceedings in Pakistan held on 27 and 29 June; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The cases have been further adjourned to 31 July and 19 August respectively.

South Africa

Mr. Robert Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is Her Majesty's Government's policy towards United Nations, Commonwealth and European Community military sanctions and non-co-operation with South Africa; and what restrictions are imposed under the sanctions on the landing of South African air force aircraft on British soil.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The Government adhere to the UN arms embargo against South Africa and other related EC and Commonwealth restrictions. Any request for a South African air force aircraft to land on British soil would be considered in the light of the circumstances of the request and the sanctions then in force.

Mr. Anthony Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government have taken to encourage and support the transition to non-racial democracy in South Africa.

Mr. Hurd: The British Government have been following the multi-party negotiations in South Africa closely, and are glad that agreement has been reached to hold fully democratic elections on 27 April 1994.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister and I had useful talks with both Nelson Mandela and Chief Buthelezi during their recent visits to London. We made clear that the British Government strongly support the need for a successful outcome to the constitutional negotiations and will help where we can. We are in regular touch with President de Klerk.

The British Government are already helping in practical ways. We helped to arrange the sending of international observers to South Africa—from the UN, EC and Commonwealth—and led the troika visit of EC Foreign Ministers last autumn, which set the seal on the EC observer mission. We have contributed the services of five senior policemen; two with the EC mission, one with the Commonwealth mission, one to help the Goldstone Commission task force, and another to help with the investigation into the assassination of Mr. Chris Hani. The mandates of the UN, EC and Commonwealth missions to South Africa have all been extended. Their work is greatly appreciated in South Africa and theya are making a significant contribution towards containing the violence. We have also made clear, through the EC, that we would be willing to join in any international effort to provide observers for the elections if this is the wish of all the parties.

We are also heavily involved through our aid programme. Last financial year we spent over £11 million in bilateral aid, plus a similar amount as our share of the EC positive measures programme. We expect our aid to increase during the transition. Our aid provides for the training of more than 1,100 black South Africans in the United Kingdom and South Africa, including tailor-made courses in public administration for future senior black civil servants. It also supports many projects in education, health, and the promotion of small businesses in the townships, and in rural development. Last month we opened a new regional aid office in Pretoria to run our aid projects in South Africa.

Only South Africans themselves can build a new, united non-racial, democratic South Africa, but we are doing what we can to help.

Slovak Republic

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representation Her Majesty's Government have in in the Slovak Republic; what is that state's present representation in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Her Majesty's Government are represented in the Slovak Republic through an embassy, headed by a chargé d'affaires, Mr. Michael Bates. Her Majesty's ambassador to the Slovak Republic is Mr. David Brighty, who is concurrently ambassador to the Czech Republic and resides in Prague. He visits the Slovak Republic regularly. It is our intention to appoint a resident ambassador to Bratislava once the embassy is properly established.

Following the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Federation, on 31 December 1992, separate Czech and Slovak embassies were established in London. On 1 January 1993, the former Czechoslovak ambassador was accredited to the Court of St. James as Slovak ambassador. Mr. Vilikovsky is supported by six diplomatic and three administrative and technical staff.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Torture

Mr. Boateng: To ask the Attorney-General (1) what procedures exist for an individual to present a petition or application for permission to prosecute under sections 134 and 135 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 to him for his consideration;

(2) what procedures exist for obtaining his consent to prosecutions under sections 134 and 135 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 concerning the prosecution of those accused of torture present in the United Kingdom;

(3) how many times he has consented to prosecutions being brought under sections 134 and 135 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 since its enactment;

(4) on what criteria he bases his decision to grant or withhold consent to prosecutions under sections 134 and 135 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988.

The Attorney-General: The criteria applicable to applications for my consent to proposed prosecutions under sections 134 and 135 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 are the same as for any other criminal offence. First, there must be sufficient admissible and reliable evidence to afford a realistic prospect of conviction; secondly, the circumstances must be such that it would be in the public interest for there to be a prosecution.

The prospective prosecutor must submit to my office evidence in proper form to satisfy the evidential test described above together with sufficient background information to satisfy me that a prosecution would be in the public interest. This procedure applies to prosecuting authorities—likely to be the Crown Prosecution Service—as well as to individuals.

No proceedings have been authorised under section 134 and 135 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 since its enactment.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

National Audit Office Reports

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission if he will make arrangements for hon. Members to be notified in advance of publication dates of National Audit Office reports.

Sir Peter Hordern: National Audit Office reports are listed in the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Commons when they are laid before Parliament prior to publication. They are also recorded on the daily papers list produced by the Vote Office which lists all parliamentary papers published on a particular day. This list is displayed in the Members' Lobby.

The National Audit Office also give notification of its intention to publish reports in a monthly press notice. This is supported by press notices on each individual report which are released under embargo 36 hours in advance of publication. All these press notices are available at the press notice desk of the House of Commons Library.

An advance press notice listing forthcoming reports in August will be published within the next two or three weeks.

"The Best of Northern Ireland"

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if he has considered an application for an exhibition relating to "The Best of Northern Ireland" to be displayed in the Upper Waiting Hall.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: I understand that, under procedures agreed by the Administration Committee, arrangements have been made for the exhibition to be held in the Upper Waiting Hall from 6 to 10 December.

Daylight Saving

Dame Angela Rumbold: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee what consideration he has given to an application for an exhibition relating to daylight saving to be displayed in the Upper Waiting Hall.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: I understand that, under procedures agreed by the Administration Committee, arrangements have been made for the exhibition to be held in the Upper Waiting Hall from 19 to 23 July.

Schizophrenia

Mr. Wells: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if he has considered an application for an exhibition relating to "Schizophrenia—The Facts" to be displayed in the Upper Waiting Hall.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: I understand that, under procedures agreed by the Administration Committee, arrangements have been made for the exhibition to be held in the Upper Waiting Hall from 29 November to 3 December.

Disabled Staff

Mr. Barnes: To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, representing the House of Commons Commission, what is the total number of staff employed by the Commission throughout the Palace of Westminster and its associated buildings; how many of these are registered disabled; and how many are registered disabled due to hearing difficulties.

Mr. Beith: The Commission employs 1,232 staff, of whom 16 are registered disabled. Of these, four have hearing difficulties.

Secretarial Allowances

Mr. Cryer: To ask the Lord President of the Council how many hon. Members have their secretarial allowance paid into private limited companies.

Mr. Newton: Approximately two thirds of all Members have, this year, authorised payments from their office costs allowances direct to companies or other organisations, including constituency associations. It is not always possible to identify the precise status of these companies or organisations.

EC Legislation

Mr. Page: To ask the Lord President of the Council what plans the Government have to give greater prominence to costs to business in the information provided to Parliament on Community legislation.

Mr. Newton: The Government prepare compliance cost assessments—CCAs—in order to assess the impact of legislative proposals on business costs. From 19 July, CCAs will accompany all explanatory memoranda—EMs—relating to EC proposals with significant cost implications for business. This will aid parliamentary scrutiny by affording an early opportunity to take account of such implications in considering particular proposals. It will also put CCAs in the public domain on a consistent basis and will thus help other interested parties make their own assessment. It is not intended, however, that the new arrangements should hold up the submission of EMs; if a full CCA cannot be prepared to the time scale for EMs, the EM will carry the best possible initial assessment and the CCA will follow as quickly as possible.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

Television Companies

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what discussions he is undertaking with other European Community member states about mergers and takeovers of television companies, including issues of competition and regulation; what proposals have been made concerning these issues; and what position is taken on these proposals by Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. Brooke: Officials of my Department are playing an active part in the work of a Council of Europe committee of experts on media concentrations and pluralism, on which a number of other EC member states, as well as the European Commission, are represented. The committee has yet to produce firm proposals.

We have also drawn the Commission's attention to what appear to be discriminatory provisions in the legislation of a number of EC member states concerning ownership of broadcasters. The European Court has recently found against Belgium on this issue; and the Commission has opened proceedings against Portugal.

Arts Bodies, Merseyside

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will list the names, addresses, occupations, current employers and addresses of any chairmen and any appointees which are within his power to make for any boards, trusts or other form of arts or heritage body on Merseyside and to grant with any payment, expenses or other form or remuneration which they receive.

Mr. Brooke: While I do not appoint the chairman of North West Arts, which is the regional arts board covering the Merseyside area, my consent is required before such an

appointment can be made. This post is unpaid and is currently vacant. There is no equivalent regional body responsible for heritage matters.

National Lottery

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what is now the proposed starting date of the national lottery.

Mr. Sproat: We hope that the National Lottery Etc. Bill will receive Royal Assent later in the year; and the licence will be awarded after that. It is not possible to predict the date of the first draw, but we hope that the lottery will be up and running by around the turn of the year 1994-95.

Mr. Gorst: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what representations he has received about the possible impact of the national lottery on small stake recreational wagering industry gaming machines; and if he will make it his policy to consult industry organisations of any sectors of the gaming industry adversely affected by the national lottery in order to find ways of alleviating adverse effects on their enterprises.

Mr. Sproat *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend and I have received a number of representations from the gaming machine industry about the impact of the national lottery on their businesses and officials from my Department have met representatives from the industry.

We do not believe that this or other sectors of the gaming industry will be adversely affected by the introduction of the lottery. My right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary is always ready to consider, on their merits, proposals for changes to the regulatory regime under which the industry operates.

Royal Armouries Project, Leeds

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will make a statement on the progress towards obtaining private sector funding for the royal armouries project at Leeds.

Mr. Sproat: I am pleased to say that the royal armouries has identified a potential lead investor, who is in active discussion with the armouries and other interested investors. This lead investor has nominated a chairman and chief executive designate for the proposed operating company. They are currently verifying the business plan and developing a package on which commitments can be made. This is good news for the project and for Leeds.

Art Exports

Mr. Faulds: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will list the items for which the issuing of export licences was withheld on the recommendation of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art during the half year ended 5 July, specifying in each case the valuation and whether an item was exported or retained, with particulars in the latter event of the acquiring institution; if he will list any items for which licences have been withheld but the final disposal of which is not yet decided, specifying in each case *(a)* the valuation and *(b)* the relevant time limit; and if a press notice will be issued by his Department covering the information given in his reply, including that relating to the outcome in individual cases.

Mr. Sproat: The information is as follows:

Description of Item	*Valuation £*	*Outcome*
A painting 'St. Peter Penitent' by Jusepe de Ribera	850,000	Export licence granted
A drawing 'St. John the Baptist pointing to the Saviour', by Annibale Carracci/ Gianangelo Canini.	150,000	Export licence granted
A painting, 'David with the head of Goliath', by Guido Reni	2,000,000	Export licence granted
The ledgers and account books of Messrs Fribourg and Treyer 1764-1816.	4,080	Purchased by Westminster City Archives
A George III library table 1778 designed by Thomas Chippendale.	315,000	Decision deferred until after 26 July 1993
A pair of candelabra by Matthew Boulton.	80,820	Decision deferred until after 4 August 1993
A painting, 'Van Tromp, going about to please his masters, ships at sea, getting a good wetting', by J.M.W. Turner.	11,000,000	Decision deferred until after 26 July 1993
A painting, 'the Fortress of Kōnigstein' by Bernardo Bellotto.	6,290,781	Export licence granted

Details of the items on which decisions were deferred were given in press releases issued at the time of the reviewing committee's recommendations were accepted.

Welsh Writers

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage on how many occasions grants have been made by the Welsh Arts Council under its *(a)* bursaries to writers scheme and *(b)* writers in residence scheme during the last five years to applicants who were neither resident in Wales nor had any previous connection with Wales.

Mr. Brooke *[holding answer 14 July 1993]:* The information requested is as follows: *(a)* none, *(b)* three, of a total of 36 grants.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Media Sector

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the financial size of the media sector of the British economy.

Mr. Nelson: There is no generally accepted definition of the coverage of the media sector. However, information on the newspaper printing and publishing industry is given in "Business Monitor PA475—Printing and Publishing". Information on film and recording studios, cinemas, radio and television is included in the "Business Monitor SDA29 —Service Trades", but is not separately identifiable. These annual publications are available from the House Library.

Full Employment

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the policy of Her Majesty's Government towards the establishment of full employment.

Mr. Nelson: The Government's aim is to achieve high levels of employment consistent with low inflation, through broadly based growth and labour markets which are competitive and flexible.

Drug-related Offences

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have been detained for drug-related offences in Harwich by HM Customs and Excise in the past three years.

Sir John Cope: Over the period June 1990 to date, 688 people have been detained by Customs at Harwich for drug-related offences.

Tax Allowances and Reliefs

Mr. Forman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much extra revenue would be raised in a full year if tax relief were confined to the 20 per cent. rate for *(a)* occupational pension schemes and *(b)* contributions to personal pensions.

Mr. Dorrell: The estimated full year yields at 1993-94 income levels are as follows:

	Restriction to 20 per cent. £ million
Relief for:	
Employee's contributions to occupational pension schemes	700
Personal pensions contributions[1]	300

[1] Includes retirement annuity premia and free standing additional voluntary contributions.

No account has been taken of possible behavioural changes resulting from such restrictions.

Income Tax

Mr. Stephen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money was raised by income tax levied at 40 per cent.; and how many income tax payers were chargeable at 40 per cent. in the last financial year for which figures are available.

Mr. Dorrell: At 1993-94 levels of income, it is estimated that individuals' tax liability at the 40 per cent. rate will be £12·8 billion and that 1·6 million taxpayers will be liable at this rate.

Pharmaceutical Companies

Ms. Primarolo: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has of the total tax take from pharmaceutical companies.

Mr. Dorrell: I regret that the information is not available. Classification of companies by industry for corporation tax is by the summary trade classification within which pharmaceutical companies are included with all other chemical companies.

Tax Returns

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many copies of Inland Revenue forms *(a)* 11K (1993) and *(b)* 12FR (1993) he has had printed.

Mr. Dorrell: The Inland Revenue printed 99,000 copies of form 12FR (1993) and 98,685 copies of form 11K (1993).

Pensions

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the yield in 1993-94 and 1994-95 from capping all qualifying incomes for pensions at £75,000, including those employees who joined schemes prior to 1989.

Mr. Dorrell: This information is not available.

Betting Duty

Mr. John Greenway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of whether the conditions attached to the decision to extend the reduction of pool betting duty announced in March 1992 by the right hon. and learned Member for Putney (Mr. Mellor) have been met; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Cope: In the 1990 Budget, pool betting duty was reduced from 42·5 to 40 per cent. for five years to help finance the implementation of the Taylor report, and in particular the achievement of all-seating at football grounds. The former Chancellor, my right hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont) has since made it clear that the Government will be prepared to extend the reduction to the year 2000 provided that the football leagues and football clubs produce satisfactory financial plans for their own contribution to further necessary ground improvements. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for National Heritage will shortly be presenting a costed case to the Treasury, based on information supplied by the Football Trust and the clubs themselves, in support of an extension of the reduction.

Additionality

Sir David Steel: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make a statement on Her Majesty's Government's policy towards additionality of EC funds with respect to the Government's own regional and structural funding.

Sir John Cope: At the Foreign Affairs Council on 2 July, member states agreed new additionality regulations to ensure that Community funds were genuinely additional to domestic public spending. The United Kingdom will be implementing them fully.

EC Membership

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will prepare a table for the last financial year showing the debit and credit accounts of United Kingdom membership of the EC.

Sir John Cope: Details of the United Kingdom's EC transfers on a balance of payments basis, for the period up to and including the first quarter of 1993, were published on 22 June in the Central Statistical Office's balance of payments press notice CSO(93)90.

Concessionary Coal (VAT)

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Derbyshire, North-East of 12 July, *Official Report*, column *371*, whether the VAT on concessionary coal will be paid by British Coal or by the recipients of coal allowances.

Sir John Cope: VAT on concessionary coal will be paid by British Coal.

Value Added Tax

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the estimated average household cost of adding VAT to fuel bills in each region.

Sir John Cope: The latest estimates of average weekly household spending on domestic fuel and power in each region are published in table 25 of the 1991 family expenditure survey. The average cost of VAT on domestic fuel bills will depend on future levels of fuel prices and on the effect of the introduction of VAT on household consumption patterns.

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will seek the agreement of the European Commission that it will not seek to challenge in the European Court the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that they have full entitlement to retain zero rates for VAT after 31 December 1996; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Cope: There is no need for the Government to seek such an agreement.

At ECOFIN on 24 June 1991, all member states agreed that, under transitional arrangements to last at least until the end of 1996, member states which at 1 January 1991 applied to certain goods and services zero rates for VAT in accordance with the provisions of Community law in force, would have the option of retaining them.

The sixth VAT directive 77/388/EEC, as amended by Council directive 91/680/EEC, provides that the transitional period will continue beyond the end of 1996 if there is not unanimous agreement on the definitive VAT system to operate from that date. The United Kingdom has made it clear that one of the conditions for such an agreement must be our right to retain zero rates.

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the items subject to zero rate for VAT purposes which have resulted in applications to the European Court; and what was the result of such applications.

Sir John Cope: The following zero-rated items resulted in applications to the European Court:

(i) animal feeding stuffs, seeds, live animals yielding food for consumption (all supplies);
(ii) sewerage services and water (supplies to industry);
(iii) news services (all supplies);
(iv) fuel and power (supplies other than to final consumers);
(v) construction of buildings (supplies other than to final consumers);
(vi) protective clothing and footwear (supplies to employers).

The Court ruled that zero-rating is lawful in respect of:

private housing;
animal feeding stuffs, seeds, live animals yielding food for consumption.

However, the Court ruled that the following zero rates did not comply with Community law:

construction of buildings for industrial and commercial use and in the community and civil engineering sector;
fuel and power other than to final consumers;
sewerage services and water supplied to industry;
news services to undertakings which themselves provide services which are not zero-rated;
protective boots and helmets supplied to employers.

The United Kingdom implemented the Court's judgment with effect from 1 April 1989 in the case of construction, news services and protective clothing and from 1 July 1990 for fuel and power and water and sewerage services.

British Telecommunications plc

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the outcome of the Government's sale of substantially all of its residual shareholding in British Telecommunications plc.

Mr. Dorrell: I am pleased to report that the Government's combined offers of BT shares were successfully completed this morning when dealings in interim rights started on the London stock exchange.

As a result of bids received in the international offer, the price of the third instalment for all investors in the combined offers was set at 120p per share.

Accordingly, the price for interim rights purchased in the United Kingdom public offer was 410p per share, comprising 150p paid on successful application, 140p to be paid by 1 March 1994 and 120p to be paid by 11 October 1994.

The price for shares purchased in the international offer was 420p per share, comprising 160p paid on successful application, 140p to be paid by 1 March 1994 and 120p to be paid by 11 October 1994.

The Government offered for sale up to 1,220 million shares in the combined offers.

Some 1·67 million applications were received in the United Kingdom public offer for a total of some 1,057 million shares. This represented some 1·73 times the shares initially expected to be sold in the UK public offer. In response to this demand, the Government increased the total number of shares allocated to the UK public offer to 732 million shares. At this level, the number of shares applied for in the UK public offer represented some 1·44 times the shares available.

Over 95 per cent. of applicants in the UK public offer received an allocation of BT shares. Over 55 per cent. of

applicants had their applications met in full. Some 97 per cent. of applications made through share shops were allocated shares.

More than 785,000 qualifying BT shareholders and more than 23,000 eligible BT employees made applications in the United Kingdom public offer. All such applicants received an allocation of BT shares. 488 million shares were allocated to bidders in the international offer. This number does not include any shares that S. G. Warburg Securities may have over-alloted in connection with the international offer. The extent of any such over-allotment will not be disclosed. As already announced, S. G. Warburg Securities may also effect stabilisation transactions.

For these reasons, details of the percentages of shares allocated to each geographic region in the international offer may not be available until after 18 August 1993. However, the United Kingdom accounted for some 62 per cent. of the shares sold by Her Majesty's Treasury in the international offer. Individual investors bidding in the United Kingdom retail tender bid for some 104 million shares. Of this, some 44 million shares were in respect of PEP applications.

In addition to the shares sold in the combined offers, S. G. Warburg Securities, as global co-ordinator for the sale, holds an option to acquire from Her Majesty's Treasury up to a further 91·5 million shares for the purpose of meeting any over-allotment made by it in connection with the international offer. This option must be exercised by 18 August 1993.

Total gross proceeds from the combined offers amount to some £4·97 billion, of which some £3·53 billion is expected to be received in this financial year.

Total gross proceeds may be further increased by a maximum of £0·38 billion to the extent that, if at all, S. G. Warburg Securities exercises its option to acquire further shares.

Details of the costs of the share sale will be published shortly.

Following the combined offers, and assuming the exercise in full of the option over BT shares granted by Her Majesty's Treasury to S. G. Warburg Securities, Her Majesty's Treasury expects to hold not more than 1·5 per cent. of BT's issued share capital. This would comprise principally shares that may be needed to meet share bonus entitlements under the BT3 United Kingdom public offer and as a result of the Government's sale of BT shares in December 1991.

Public Expenditure

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish a table showing the real level of public expenditure on *(a)* education, *(b)* health, *(c)* personal social services, *(d)* housing and *(e)* social security in each year since 1973-74 until the latest date available; and what proportion such expenditure makes up of the gross domestic product in each case.

Mr. Portillo *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The information can be found in tables 2.3 and 2.4 of the "Statistical Supplement to the 1992 Autumn Statement", Cm 2219. Figures are not available on a consistent basis for years prior to 1978-79.

EDUCATION

Additional Educational Needs Grant

Mr. Shore: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what study his Department has undertaken in relation to additional educational needs grant; and when he plans to publish the findings;

(2) what arrangements he has made for consultation with local education authorities to discuss the impact of proposed changes in additional educational needs grant.

Mr. Robin Squire: We are at present reviewing the additional educational needs allowance as part of a wider-ranging review of standard spending assessments —SSAs—in the light of 1991 census data that have recently become available. We are studying the statistical evidence and underlying rationale for various options. The Government have already made available to the local authority associations preliminary statistical findings from the review and is consulting them on the implications for authorities. Consultations are taking place through the SSA sub-group of the local government finance settlement working group.

Education Standard Spending Assessments

Mr. Peter Shore: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what has been the total education standard spending assessment for the London borough of Tower Hamlets in each year since 1990; and how much of this is represented by additional educational needs grant.

Mr. Robin Squire: The figures set out in column 1 the education component of Tower Hamlets' standard spending assessments and in column 2 the amounts within those figures for the additional educational needs cost allowance.

	(Column 1) Education component of SSA (£ million)	*(Column 2) Additional educational needs allowance (after adjustment for area costs)* (£ million)
1990-91	91·292	43·378
1991-92	112·110	50·363
1992-93	123·695	55·658
1993-94	115·580	51·655

The 1993-94 figures are lower than the 1992-93 figures, for Tower Hamlets as for all local education authorities, because of their loss of responsibility for most further education to the Further Education Funding Council.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list, for January for each year from 1988 to the latest year for which figures are available, the number of pupils aged five to 15 years with statements of special educational need *(a)* in maintained special schools, *(b)* in non-maintained special schools and independent schools under arrangements made by the authority and *(c)* in maintained primary, middle and secondary schools.

Mr. Forth: Information about pupils with statements of special educational needs by age is not available centrally.

Figures showing the total numbers of pupils with statements since 1988 for mainstream and for independent schools and since 1991 for special schools are shown in the table.

Pupils with statements of special educational needs in schools in England 1988-92
Position as at January of each year

Year	Maintained schools		Non-maintained schools	
	primary, middle and secondary schools	special	special	independent[1]
1988	40,931	n/a	n/a	6,144
1989	47,262	n/a	n/a	5,597
1990	54,299	n/a	n/a	5,623
1991	61,992	80,367	5,265	5,621
1992	71,246	79,190	4,942	5,388

[1] Includes pupils in City Technology Colleges.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list, for January for each year from 1988 to the latest year for which figures are available *(a)* the number of full-time pupils aged five to 15 years in (i) maintained primary, middle and secondary schools and (ii) special schools maintained by the local education authority and *(b)* the number of pupils aged five to 15 years belonging to (i) other local education authorities but attending special schools maintained by the local education authority, (ii) the local education authority but attending special schools maintained by other local education authorities and (iii) the local education authorities attending non-maintained special schools and independent schools for the purposes of special educational treatment.

Mr. Forth: The numbers of full-time pupils aged five to 15 years in maintained primary, middle, secondary and special schools in each local education authority in England for the years requested are shown in the table. The information requested at *(b)* can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Full-time pupils aged 5 to 15 in maintained primary, middle, secondary and special schools in England
Position as at January each year
Ages at previous 31 August

	1988		1989		1990		1991		1992	
	Mainstream	Special	Mainstream	Special	Mainstream	Special	Mainstream	Special	Mainstream	Special
Corporation of London	—	—	—	—	—	—	171	0	171	0
Camden	—	—	—	—	—	—	16,209	312	16,613	316
Greenwich	—	—	—	—	—	—	28,127	652	28,495	629
Hackney	—	—	—	—	—	—	19,409	594	19,661	588
Hammersmith	—	—	—	—	—	—	12,199	455	12,232	402
Islington	—	—	—	—	—	—	17,266	289	18,044	300
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	—	—	—	—	7,609	83	7,647	73
Lambeth	—	—	—	—	—	—	20,713	810	21,023	768
Lewisham	—	—	—	—	—	—	25,643	454	25,096	437
Southwark	—	—	—	—	—	—	24,971	433	24,837	437
Tower Hamlets	—	—	—	—	—	—	25,282	429	26,146	454
Wandsworth	—	—	—	—	—	—	20,716	680	20,240	630
Westminster	—	—	—	—	—	—	13,205	146	13,313	145
ILEA	227,073	5,841	226,022	5,623	227,745	5,517	—	—	—	—
Barking	19,539	200	19,345	179	19,309	169	19,463	152	19,742	145
Barnet	32,076	305	32,113	297	32,240	275	32,644	267	33,137	277
Bexley	28,096	266	27,710	224	27,480	217	27,584	229	27,762	232
Brent	26,069	313	25,483	297	25,153	302	25,693	308	26,341	294
Bromley	30,914	379	30,264	358	30,059	336	30,246	320	30,960	303
Croydon	35,702	476	35,037	459	34,841	443	34,293	458	34,494	476
Ealing	29,941	440	29,728	420	29,932	375	30,381	357	30,307	384
Enfield	31,604	379	31,026	366	31,265	339	31,531	335	32,103	346
Haringey	20,436	283	19,927	257	20,225	250	20,855	265	21,475	280
Harrow	22,169	239	22,292	215	22,583	210	22,909	194	23,250	185
Havering	31,631	310	31,013	275	30,570	229	30,326	207	30,132	191
Hillingdon	27,031	340	26,720	300	26,790	323	26,994	316	27,143	336
Hounslow	24,438	470	24,268	413	24,474	422	25,037	372	25,600	362
Kingston upon Thames	14,077	229	13,795	229	13,713	227	13,779	212	14,078	211
Merton	16,976	247	16,594	230	16,250	223	16,501	209	16,975	218
Newham	29,589	459	29,512	375	30,177	397	31,182	369	32,021	286
Redbridge	25,927	358	25,824	356	26,163	367	26,652	343	27,155	340
Richmond upon Thames	14,674	152	14,713	158	14,817	166	15,154	146	15,326	132
Sutton	19,208	271	19,036	259	18,929	259	19,093	275	19,351	278
Waltham Forest	25,463	595	24,965	577	25,014	634	25,442	614	25,805	639
Birmingham	139,215	2,341	137,668	2,307	137,648	2,235	138,723	2,337	140,185	2,438
Coventry	39,817	773	38,873	786	38,538	752	38,661	711	39,091	729
Dudley	39,895	497	39,173	500	38,785	489	38,805	519	39,154	516
Sandwell	40,222	766	39,482	782	39,111	769	39,380	763	39,866	732
Solihull	27,941	262	27,241	237	26,750	222	26,719	215	27,133	236
Walsall	37,722	500	37,026	488	36,588	480	36,833	469	37,174	475
Wolverhampton	34,584	428	33,742	415	32,998	436	32,755	443	32,809	442
Knowsley	22,535	541	22,108	559	21,924	599	21,798	561	21,866	561
Liverpool	62,345	1,478	61,366	1,485	61,484	1,340	62,268	1,363	63,029	1,375
St. Helens	25,836	422	25,222	398	24,610	412	24,261	413	24,207	414
Sefton	37,639	384	37,223	393	37,084	377	37,205	396	37,519	382
Wirral	43,040	656	42,524	643	42,108	634	42,465	625	42,539	637
Bolton	36,481	425	35,935	405	35,676	390	35,795	395	36,176	418
Bury	22,414	238	22,181	238	22,189	245	22,346	248	22,578	267

	1988		1989		1990		1991		1992	
	Mainstream	Special	Mainstream	Special	Mainstream	Special	Mainstream	Special	Mainstream	Special
Manchester	54,549	1,602	53,907	1,479	54,119	1,418	54,825	1,246	55,600	1,509
Oldham	31,809	445	31,662	452	31,967	479	32,572	454	33,195	446
Rochdale	29,348	483	28,985	465	28,631	476	28,816	481	28,822	447
Salford	28,885	607	28,148	580	27,916	543	28,086	423	28,386	386
Stockport	36,575	346	35,576	328	35,014	348	35,053	355	35,122	357
Tameside	29,474	346	29,198	340	29,048	355	29,321	356	29,771	363
Trafford	25,575	353	24,975	341	24,707	326	24,752	330	25,291	330
Wigan	43,773	675	42,896	663	42,211	720	41,972	740	41,880	776
Barnsley	29,565	227	28,931	179	28,498	166	28,418	147	28,420	126
Doncaster	39,841	596	39,509	611	39,338	626	39,513	628	40,123	632
Rotherham	36,285	534	35,502	524	35,202	530	35,175	548	35,252	558
Sheffield	61,140	825	59,056	794	58,139	768	58,032	758	58,552	789
Bradford	68,758	825	68,303	764	68,491	681	68,903	653	69,510	614
Calderdale	26,604	205	26,332	203	26,031	186	26,092	164	26,153	151
Kirklees	52,466	557	51,255	574	50,820	578	50,785	588	50,998	589
Leeds	89,319	1,114	88,029	968	87,110	894	87,070	823	87,838	805
Wakefield	41,173	631	40,559	592	40,172	562	40,481	560	40,892	545
Gateshead	25,355	409	24,761	384	24,487	348	24,334	323	24,363	314
Newcastle upon Tyne	31,416	562	31,164	519	30,952	497	31,219	512	31,435	640
North Tyneside	24,642	349	24,466	322	24,255	327	24,356	342	24,342	362
South Tyneside	20,175	242	19,919	240	19,934	250	20,306	261	20,724	284
Sunderland	42,078	502	41,250	485	40,879	505	41,124	529	41,332	568
Isles of Scilly	260	0	251	0	250	0	261	0	267	0
Avon	111,966	1,909	109,708	1,845	108,689	1,809	108,814	1,811	109,681	1,850
Bedfordshire	72,380	1,003	71,378	1,002	70,825	981	71,040	986	71,945	1,006
Berkshire	93,520	1,249	91,909	1,253	90,986	1,268	91,034	1,350	91,550	1,452
Buckinghamshire	83,347	1,427	82,259	1,386	80,860	1,340	80,865	1,335	81,348	1,390
Cambridgeshire	83,544	998	82,694	937	82,364	877	82,913	824	83,692	822
Cheshire	128,510	1,186	126,655	1,111	125,579	1,075	125,853	1,103	126,235	1,163
Cleveland	82,140	1,409	81,160	1,388	80,935	1,123	81,323	1,167	81,792	1,155
Cornwall	58,913	234	58,770	236	58,216	232	58,274	243	58,336	243
Cumbria	62,764	387	61,927	374	61,362	332	61,197	277	61,205	227
Derbyshire	121,453	1,319	119,594	1,226	118,061	1,193	117,649	1,128	117,849	1,094
Devon	117,300	1,576	116,606	1,521	115,705	1,524	116,042	1,526	117,466	1,554
Dorset	71,726	1,062	70,725	1,043	70,087	976	70,469	970	71,178	981
Durham	78,975	934	77,676	927	77,448	882	77,345	937	77,704	948
East Sussex	68,879	1,241	68,490	1,212	68,049	1,171	68,950	1,191	69,959	1,197
Essex	200,769	2,436	195,914	2,294	193,008	2,281	191,240	2,246	191,394	2,267
Gloucestershire	64,532	1,121	63,639	1,116	62,722	1,122	62,918	1,094	63,572	1,144
Hampshire	187,640	3,368	185,134	3,258	183,287	3,236	184,172	3,193	185,749	3,159
Hereford and Worcester	85,884	1,048	84,354	1,055	83,513	1,073	83,252	1,060	83,610	999
Hertfordshire	126,567	1,827	123,610	1,762	122,012	1,699	121,514	1,672	122,332	1,721
Humberside	119,116	1,229	117,259	1,185	116,628	1,120	116,584	1,040	117,129	1,079
Isle of Wight	14,491	212	14,544	220	14,562	192	14,502	187	14,575	182
Kent	197,013	3,041	192,901	2,996	190,284	2,903	188,776	2,860	189,486	2,848
Lancashire	182,720	2,940	181,159	2,852	180,963	2,847	180,998	2,859	182,029	2,893
Leicestershire	118,477	1,013	116,899	947	116,164	884	116,430	884	117,096	911
Lincolnshire	74,025	1,061	72,648	1,017	71,904	983	71,969	992	72,548	967
Norfolk	91,020	804	89,347	758	87,988	736	87,580	739	87,982	762
North Yorkshire	84,512	925	83,565	901	82,884	917	82,942	911	83,586	853
Northamptonshire	80,070	1,050	78,947	1,033	78,224	990	78,209	956	78,348	968
Northumberland	40,588	511	39,997	479	39,966	471	40,106	487	40,318	452
Nottinghamshire	129,051	2,140	126,938	2,087	125,185	1,917	125,297	1,745	126,490	1,519
Oxfordshire	65,312	718	64,001	727	63,340	700	63,534	643	64,318	672
Shropshire	53,768	586	53,348	563	52,843	509	52,655	467	52,807	441
Somerset	55,405	607	54,573	559	54,004	544	53,909	544	54,640	548
Staffordshire	137,329	1,741	135,439	1,655	133,993	1,646	134,096	1,723	134,782	1,811
Suffolk	79,320	640	77,574	639	76,713	625	76,363	624	76,451	649
Surrey	104,480	1,811	101,633	1,661	99,308	1,581	98,974	1,553	99,106	1,585
Warwickshire	61,323	1,235	59,948	1,194	59,003	1,117	58,793	1,065	58,975	1,069
West Sussex	80,885	1,092	79,548	1,071	78,686	1,084	78,695	1,116	79,531	1,108
Wiltshire	70,572	682	69,515	643	68,797	608	68,877	626	69,497	661
ENGLAND	5,951,670	84,470	5,861,770	81,443	5,816,540	79,211	5,830,912	78,098	5,874,560	78,657

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Common Fisheries Policy

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Hastings and Rye (Mrs. Lait) of 7 July, *Official Report*, column *163*, what is her assessment of the relative weight to be attached in measures to prevent over-exploitation to *(a)* effort limitation and *(b)* technical conservation measures; what is her estimate of the contribution made in other EC states towards achieving the multi-annual guidance programme effort targets by (i) decommissioning schemes, giving the amounts involved and the number of vessels taken out in each case and (ii) days-at-sea limitations.

Mr. Jack: Effort limitation and technical conservation both have a role to play in preventing the over-exploitation of fish stocks, and are to some extent interchangeable. Member states are still considering how they will achieve their 1996 MAGP targets, but even those which rely on decommissioning are required to hold fishing effort within limits.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Hastings and Rye (Mrs. Lait) of 7 July, *Official Report*, column *163*, what calculation she has made of the reduction of *(a)* access rights and *(b)* actual catches of (i) other member states and (ii) third parties which the United Kingdom secured in the 1983 settlement of the common fisheries policy.

Mr. Jack: Prior to the 1983 CFP settlement, other member states held historic rights to fish within six to 12 miles of the United Kingdom territorial sea in respect of 1,999 miles of our 2,667 miles of coastline. No other countries had such rights. The settlement reduced the rights of other member states to 558 miles. It is not possible to calculate the effect on catches by other member states and third countries in the six to 12 mile belt.

Lupin Seed

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what advice she has received from the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes about the uses of lupin seeds, in particular lupinus angustifolius; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Soames: The Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes has received two submissions in respect of the use of lupins in food. Further data were requested from the applicants and in respect of lupinus angustifolius additional studies have been commissioned. Meanwhile, the committee is not in a position to formulate its advice.

Decommissioning Grants

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in what circumstances foreign-owned fishing boats registered as British qualify for decommissioning grants.

Mr. Jack: I refer the hon. Member to the answers given on 12 February, *Official Report*, column *790*, and 29 January, *Official Report*, column *896*.

Set-aside (Renewable Energy)

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food when she will announce the areas set aside specifically dedicated to woodland for renewable energy sources.

Mr. Jack: The cereals management committee on 15 July voted on a draft Commission regulation allowing certain perennial crops to be grown for non-food uses on set-aside land. This regulation would permit short rotation coppice to be grown as an energy crop on set-aside land. We expect the regulation to be adopted formally by the Commission in time to come into force on 1 September.

Milk Quotas

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food whether she accepts the recommendations of the EC Court of Auditors' report on milk quotas in so far as it affects the United Kingdom; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Jack: We are currently examining the EC Court of Auditors' report on milk quotas and the Commission's response. We will be paying particular attention to any comments and recommendations which have a bearing on the way in which the quota system is operated in the United Kingdom.

Coastal Protection

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the total expenditure on coastal protection measures in each year since 1979 in *(a)* cash terms and *(b)* constant 1993 prices.

Mr. Jack: The Ministry offers grant aid to local coast protection authorities in England for capital works to reduce the risk to people and the developed and natural environment from coastal erosion. Grant-aided capital expenditure on coast protection by those authorities for each financial year since 1979 was as follows:

	Actual outturn £ *million*	*Outturn at 1992-93 prices (using GDP deflator)* £ *million*
1979-80	8·2	19·6
1980-81	11·5	23·3
1981-82	13·6	25·1
1982-83	18·0	31·0
1983-84	16·0	26·3
1984-85	15·4	24·1
1985-86	16·7	24·8
1986-87	17·9	25·7
1987-88	14·8	20·2
1988-89	20·9	26·6
1989-90	20·4	24·3
1990-91	29·2	32·2
1991-92	30·8	31·9
[1]1992-93	16·9	16·9

[1] Provisional.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Post Office Robberies

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the post offices which have been robbed in Northern Ireland this year, with the value of cash and other items stolen in each case.

Sir John Wheeler: The requested information is as follows:

Post Office Robberies	*Amount Stolen* £
Shore Road, Belfast	500
Garvaghy Post Office, Banbridge	2,672
Anderstown Road, Belfast	64
Main Street, Ballycarry	1,078

Post Office Robberies	*Amount Stolen* £
Upper Malone Road, Belfast	3,500
Derryboy Post Office, Crossgar	3,000
Tassagh Post Office, Keady	30
Crumlin Road, Belfast	1,000
Attempted Robberies	
Main Street, Glenavy	Nil
Mossley Post Office, Newtownabbey	Nil

Schools

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list *(a)* the maintained schools and *(b)* the controlled schools which are not included in the "Making Belfast Work" area.

Mr. Ancram: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 9 June 1993, *Official Report*, columns *269-70*, for details of the maintained and controlled schools within the area of the Belfast education and library board which are excluded from the "Making Belfast Work" initiative.

There are more than 1,000 other schools outside the Belfast education and library board area which are not included in the initiative.

Loyalist Parades

Mr. John D. Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Government of the Republic of Ireland last raised with him the matter of the routeing of orange institution and other loyalist parades.

Sir Patrick Mayhew *[holding answer 8 July 1993]:* The subject of such parades was last raised by the Government of the Republic of Ireland at the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference on 8 July 1993. Beyond the contents of the resulting communiqués the proceedings of the conferences are confidential. The right hon. Member may wish to note, however, that Her Majesty's Government have no jurisdiction in relation to the routeing of parades. Only a senior police officer, where he believes that the circumstances of a procession are such that it may result in serious disorder, damage, disruption or lead to intimidation, may give directions imposing conditions on it, including conditions as to the route.

Student Unions

Mr. John D. Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what public funds are allocated to students' unions in Northern Ireland; and what information he maintains on the numbers and functions of persons employed by students' unions, using such funds.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* Public funds are not allocated direct by the Government to students' unions in Northern Ireland. The amounts allocated to the students' unions by the universities and colleges of education in Northern Ireland are set out in the reply of my hon. Friend the Member for Richmond and Barnes (Mr. Hanley) on 2 November 1992, *Official Report*, column *50*. Details of the numbers and functions of persons employed by the students' unions using these funds are a matter for the unions and institutions concerned.

Mr. John D. Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the oral statement by the Secretary of State for Education, of 1 July, *Official Report*, columns 1118-9, on students' unions, to what extent he considers campaigns by students' unions in Northern Ireland against *(a)* the national anthem and *(b)* the annual Remembrance day ceremony to amount to political activity.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* It is not unusual for students to express strong opinions on matters which may be of a political nature and the Government judges individual campaigns accordingly.

Mr. John D. Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on political activity by students' unions in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* I fully support the principle of the package of students' unions reforms to be made in England, Scotland and Wales. However, in view of the differences in practice and approach in Northern Ireland, I propose to consult interested bodies before deciding on the way forward.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Charters

29. **Mr. Tony Banks:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what representations he has received in 1993 in respect of possible future charters.

Mr. David Davis: We have received a number of representations from hon. Members for charters to cover: constituents, people with disabilities, pensioners, banks and small business. I also refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 28 June 1993, *Official Report*, column *654*, that new charters in prospect include the further and higher education charters; and that the Benefits Agency customer charter and parents charter will be updated and improved.

Freedom Of Information

30. **Mr. Simon Coombs:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what progress he has made with his plans to promote freedom of information.

Mr. Waldegrave: We have now published a White Paper on open government, which explains the Government's approach and sets out new proposals for increasing openness.

Master of Science Teaching

31. **Mr. Dalyell:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what response he has sent to the letter of the chairman of the biological sciences advisory committee of the university of Edinburgh, Professor John Dale, setting out the problems of MSc teaching for a research-oriented university; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Waldegrave: I wrote to Professor Dale today thanking him and his colleagues for letting me have their views. I am pleased that his advisory committee broadly welcomes the thrust of our proposals for postgraduate training. We recognise that universities, other higher

education institutes and funding bodies will need time to develop plans for implementation of the policy set out in paragraph 7.21 of the White Paper.

Citizens Charter

32. **Mr. Barnes:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what discussions he has had with his counterparts in other EC nations on the issue of citizens charters; and what meetings of the Council of Ministers he has attended, and in what capacity.

Mr. Waldegrave: I have met a number of my European counterparts to discuss public service reform. The citizens charter has aroused considerable international interest, but it has not been discussed in meetings of the European Council of Ministers. I shall also shortly be visiting the United States of America to discuss the reform of public services with the Vice-President.

Last year's service for the citizen conference, held as one of the events to mark the United Kingdom's presidency of the EC, attracted delegates from 21 countries. A similar event is being planned for later this year.

Public Appointments (Female Shortlists)

33. **Mr. Nigel Evans:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what plans the public appointments unit has to introduce all-female shortlists for future appointments to public bodies.

Mr. David Davis: None.

Passive Smoking

34. **Mr. Sheerman:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will introduce a charter for non-smokers in respect of protection from the effects of passive smoking in public places.

Mr. David Davis: No. The Government have already published a detailed code of practice on smoking in public places, with the express intention of protecting non-smoking members of the public. It is our aim to have at least 80 per cent. of public places covered by effective non-smoking policies by 1994.

Public Records

35. **Dr. Liam Fox:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what measures his Department is taking to increase the availability of formerly secret public records.

Mr. Waldegrave: The White Paper on open government was published on 15 July. We have provided, in chapter 9, information about measures designed to increase the number of public records which are made available in the Public Record Office.

These include:

- a "harm test", which requires records to be released after 30 years unless to do so would cause actual damage,
- more exacting criteria for withholding records for more than 30 years,
- a reduction in the periods for which such material can be withheld beyond 30 years,
- improved procedures for the management of records, and,
- a commitment by all departments, subject to the availability of resources, to re-review all records currently withheld for more than 30 years.

All Government Departments including the Cabinet Office—Office of Public Service and Science—will put these measures into effect as soon as possible.

Research Councils' Director General

Sir Giles Shaw: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster who is to be the new Director General of Research Councils.

Mr. Waldegrave: The post of Director General of Research Councils will be filled through open competition, and an announcement about the arrangements for this will be made shortly.

Civil Service College

Mrs. Angela Knight: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the performance of the Civil Service College during 1992-93.

Mr. Waldegrave: The college enjoyed its most successful year to date; achieving and in many cases handsomely exceeding the performance targets that it is required to meet as an agency. I have today arranged for copies of the annual report to be placed in the Library of the House.

SCOTLAND

Colorectal Surgery

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the number of colorectal surgery specialists for each hospital and the number of vacancies at each hospital.

Mr. Stewart: Consultants in the specialty of general surgery may practise colorectal surgery, but information on consultants' special interests is not available centrally.

Unemployment

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps he is taking to assist areas with rising unemployment, in particular areas of high concentrations of defence-related industry; what special programmes are available for such areas; and what plans he has to increase such assistance.

Mr. Stewart: The Government are commited to tackling unemployment in all parts of the country by pursuing policies which lead to sustained economic improvement. As the recovery of the economy gathers pace, we shall continue to direct our policies towards creating the conditions in which new businesses can compete and prosper in world markets.

Scottish Enterprise and the local enterprise companies, through their schemes of training and business support and advice, place special emphasis on programmes which take account of the economic and employment consequences of changing military requirements. Scottish Enterprise launched in September 1992 its Scottish defence initiative, providing a strategy geared towards helping companies and local enterprise companies devise a flexible response to the new challenges and opportunities offered by rapidly changing defence markets. Scottish Enterprise has the flexibility to meet relevant needs arising from changes in the defence industry within its very substantial budget, which is £452 million in the current financial year.

Further assistance is, or is expected to be, available from the European Community, under the PERIFRA and KONVER initiatives, in areas affected by the contraction of defence-related industries and military installations.

Hospitals (Capital Building Programme)

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what changes there have been to his commitments on the capital building programme for hospitals for 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Mr. Stewart: Capital allocations to two health boards for their building programmes in 1993-94 have increased slightly; Forth Valley health board by £222,000, the Western Isles health board by £65,000. There have been no changes to trust external financing limits—which include trusts' capital provision—for 1993-94. There have been no changes to provisional allocations for 1994-95, for either boards or trusts.

Drug Stocks

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what guidance he has issued to hospitals as to the use of drugs after their use-by date;

(2) what evidence he has of hospitals using drugs which are past their use-by date; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 2 July 1993]:* The Scottish Office Home and Health Department issued guidelines on safe and secure handling of medicines in October 1988 commending hospital staff to return all out-of-date drugs or medicines to the pharmacy for disposal. I have no evidence that this guidance has not been adhered to.

Health Services, Glasgow

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish Greater Glasgow health board's own submissions on the options for change in its acute and maternity services.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 5 July 1993]:* Any proposals for change in the organisation of acute and maternity services for Glasgow must be approved by the Secretary of State for Scotland. Before any proposals can be presented, the health board is required to carry out a lengthy public consultation exercise.

The Greater Glasgow health board continues consideration of this issue.

Mental Health Act 1983

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many people in Scotland have been detained under section 2 of the Mental Health Act 1983 in each year since 1985.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 5 July 1993]:* Section 2 of the Mental Health Act 1983 does not extend to Scotland.

Health Service Expenditure

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what amount each health board has been notified as its capital expenditure programme in the current year and next year; and what change there has been in each case from the original figures.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 13 July 1993]:* Capital allocations to health boards for their building programmes for 1993-94 and provisional allocations for 1994-95 are as follows:

£ million

Health Board	*1993-94*	*1994-95*
Argyll and Clyde	12·405	6·258
Ayrshire and Arran	0·585	0·010
Borders	3·070	0·205
Fife	5·623	2·219
Forth Valley	6·573	2·783
Dumfries and Galloway	2·801	0·929
Grampian	0·109	0·040
Greater Glasgow	25·996	20·048
Highland	5·201	2·819
Lanarkshire	9·381	9·895
Lothian	24·429	18·580
Orkney	1·296	1·347
Shetland	2·231	2·256
Tayside	10·621	4·050
Western Isles	1·507	0·340
State Hospital	4·080	5·881

The figures provided for 1994-95 are not directly comparable with those for 1993-94. Health boards have been given provisional allocations for 1994-95 which reflect only the consequences in that year of the 1993-94 allocations and make no provision at present for projects starting in 1994-95.

Two boards' allocations have been increased—Forth Valley's by £222,000 and Western Isles' by £65,000—in both cases to deal with problems with existing hospital buildings. There have been no other changes.

East Lothian (Local Authority Areas)

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what representations he has received from residents of East Lothian supporting the division of the district between separate local authority areas.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 13 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend received a range of representations about the future arrangements for the area at present served by East Lothian district council under a single-tier structure of local government.

"Investing For Our Future"

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many of the respondents to the consultation paper, "Investing For Our Future", favoured the options outlined therein by each category from *(a)* to *(g)*; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 14 July 1993]:* Most of the 4,834 correspondents did not specify a preference for any particular option. Of those who did, 182 preferred option *(a)*, 61 preferred option *(b)*, 13 preferred option *(c)*, 64 preferred option *(d)*, 23 preferred option *(e)*, 15 preferred option *(f)* and nine preferred option *(g)*. An analysis of the responses to the consultation paper is contained in the summary of responses which was published by my right hon. Friend on 8 July.

Local Government Reorganisation

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the organisations and individuals who, during the consultation on reorganisation of local government in

Scotland, made representations in favour of *(a)* an all-Ayrshire council, *(b)* retaining Kyle and Carrick as a council and *(c)* combining Cunninghame, Kilmarnock and Loudon and Cumnock and Doon Valley as one council.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* A total of 56 individuals and organisations commented upon the proposed structure of local government in Ayrshire. Of these, 28 supported an all-Ayrshire council which was included as a unit in both the 15 and 24 unit illustrative structures shown in the consultation paper "Shaping the New Councils". Nine responses supported a council based upon the existing area of Kyle and Carrick district council, which was included as a unit in the 51-unit illustrative structure. A unit comprising Cunninghame, Kilmarnock and Loudon and Cumnock and Doon Valley was not included in the consultation paper and no comments were offered on this option. The organisations and individuals who supported the other two options are as follows:

All-Ayrshire Council
J. Mack Wilson
Kilmaurs Community Council
Moscow and Waterside Community Council
Irvine Development Corporation
Hurlford and Crookedholm Community Council
Dalrymple and District Community Council
Colonel Sir Bryce Knox
Grange Howard Community Council
Carrick Cumnock and Doon Valley Constituency Labour Party
John Campbell
Cumnock and Doon Valley District Council
Carrick Cumnock and Doon Valley Conservative Association
Prestwick Community Council
Peter M. Robertson
Cunninghame District Council
Kilmarnock and Loudon Labour Group
Symington Community Council
Enterprise Ayrshire
Grange and Howard Community Council
Coylton Community Council
Cunninghame North Constituency Labour Party
Cunninghame District Labour Party
Kyle and Carrick Labour Party
Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Kilmarnock and Loudon Conservative Unionist Association
Euan D. Llewellyn-Jones
Brodick Primary School Board
George Foulkes MP

Kyle and Carrick
Robert Fullarton
Avril and T. Livingstone
Treetops Tenants and Residents Association
C. I. Young
Kyle and Carrick District Council
Phil Gallie MP
John L. Rennie
Sir Donald Maclean
Janet Fullarton

Teachers

Mrs. Ray Michie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will give details of the progress by regional councils towards having teachers appraised by the target date; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* The National Co-ordinating Committee for the Staff Development of Teachers has the task of monitoring progress on the implementation of staff development and appraisal schemes for teachers in Scotland. Last year, the committee advised me that every education authority expects to meet the implementation timetable of the end of the school session 1995-96.

The co-ordinating committee will shortly seek from authorities an update on progress and I expect to receive its further advice later this year.

Invalidity Benefit

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what information he has concerning the denial of concessionary travel privileges and related concessions to those persons aged 60 years or more who are in receipt of invalidity benefit; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* Local authorities' powers to provide concessionary travel to certain eligible categories of person are discretionary. It is for individual local authorities to determine which of the eligible categories will quantify under their arrangements, the level of concession and any restrictions on use. My Department has no information regarding the denial of concessionary travel and related privileges to persons aged 60 years or more who are in receipt of invalidity benefit.

Shetland and Orkney Islands Councils

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what estimate he has made of the cost to *(a)* Shetland Islands council and *(b)* Orkney Islands council which would arise if his proposal to rename the respective councils as Shetland council and Orkney council is implemented.

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* My Department has made no such estimate. The White Paper "Shaping the Future—The New Councils" makes it clear that I will be prepared to consider representations about the appropriate name of particular authorities and if Orkney Islands council or Shetland Islands council have concerns they wish to express, we shall be pleased to receive these.

GP Fund Holders

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the latest number of general practitioner fund holders in each health board area; and how many he estimates there will be in July 1994.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The latest information from health boards indicates the numbers of general practitioner fund holders as set out in the table.

Health board	*Current number of fund holders*	*Estimated number of fund holders by July 1994*
Argyll and Clyde	5	7
Ayrshire and Arran	3	5
Borders	1	2
Dumfries and Galloway	—	2
Fife	1	5
Forth Valley	2	6
Grampian	25	35
Greater Glasgow	3	10
Highland	1	2
Lanarkshire	8	15
Lothian	7	11

Health board	Current number of fund holders	Estimated number of fund holders by July 1994
Orkney	—	—
Shetland	—	—
Tayside	8	10
Western Isles	—	—
Total	64	110

Arts Council

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland on how many occasions grants have been made available by the Scottish Arts Council under its *(a)* bursaries to writers scheme and *(b)* writers in residence scheme during the last five years to applicants who were neither resident in Scotland nor had any previous connection with Scotland.

Mr. Brooke *[holding answer 14 July 1993]:* I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is as follows: *(a)* none, *(b)* nine, of a total of 69 grants.

WALES

Manufacturing Jobs

9. **Mr. Rowlands:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what estimate his Department has made of the number of male jobs in manufacturing created during *(a)* the last 12 months and *(b)* the last five years (i) in the Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney constituency and (ii) in Mid Glamorgan; and what are the corresponding figures for the number of jobs lost during the same period.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The information is not available in the form requested. However, according to the 1987 and 1991 censuses of employment, in 1987 in the manufacturing sector there were 4,900 males employed in the Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney constituency and 32,700 in Mid Glamorgan. The corresponding figures for 1991 were 4,600 and 31,500.

European Regional Development Fund

10. **Sir David Knox:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the total value of grants which Wales has received from the European regional development fund in the past three years.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The total amount of ERDF allocated to Wales for the 1991-93 calendar years is £205·8 million.

Welsh Development Agency

11. **Mr. Alan W. Williams:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the future funding of the Welsh Development Agency.

Mr. Redwood: Decisions on the agency's resources for future years will be decided in the course of the public expenditure survey in the usual way.

Unemployment

12. **Mr. Roy Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the figure for male unemployment in Newport, Gwent, and Wales at the latest available date.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The unadjusted numbers of male unemployed claimants for the borough of Newport, Gwent and Wales for June 1993 are 5,978, 16,538 and 100,186 respectively.

Tourism

13. **Mr. Brandreth:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans he has to promote tourism in Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: With the full support of my Department, a plan for the development of tourism in Wales, the "Tourism 2000" strategy, is currently being developed by the Wales tourist board. Following extensive consultation with interested parties it is expected that the plan will be published towards the end of the year.

Inward Investment

14. **Mr. John Marshall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement about recent progress in inward investment in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: Great progress continues to be made. Figures recently announced by the Invest in Britain Bureau show that Wales recorded 20 per cent. of foreign inward investment projects for the United Kingdom in 1992-93. Since then, major projects by Aiwa and ASAT have been announced which promise some 1,500 new jobs at Crumlin.

Manufacturing Industries

15. **Mr. Barry Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement concerning his policies to safeguard and develop manufacturing industries in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: Manufacturing industry has been a most significant factor in Wales' success in recent years—output has risen by 30·2 per cent. since 1985 compared to a United Kingdom rise of 13·5 per cent. and, in the first quarter of this year, by 2·7 per cent. compared to the United Kingdom's 2·1 per cent. We must continue to build on this by improving manufacturing industry's productivity and the quality of its goods.

Neath and Port Talbot General Hospital

17. **Mr. Hain:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will now announce his conclusions on his review of the future of Neath and Port Talbot general hospital.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: My right hon. Friend expects to announce a decision on the way ahead for health services in the relevant part of West Glamorgan before the summer recess. His decision will be informed by the outcome of the investment appraisal being undertaken by the Audit Commission.

Forest Enterprise

18. **Mr. Dafis:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what proposals he has for the future of Forest Enterprise in Wales.

Sir Wyn Roberts: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland announced to the House on 30 March that the Government have established a group of officials to review the effectiveness of the current incentives for forestry and options for the ownership and management of Forestry Commission woodlands. The review will be concerned with the position throughout Great Britain. We expect the review group to submit its report to Ministers by the end of the year.

Local Government Boundaries

19. **Mr. Win Griffiths:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received this year on the proposals for the boundary between the Bridgend and Vale of Glamorgan unitary authorities.

Mr. Redwood: Since publication of the local government reorganisation White Paper on 1 March, we have received 164 written representations relating to the proposals for the boundary between the proposed Bridgend and Vale of Glamorgan unitary authorities.

Hill Farmers

20. **Mr. Jonathan Evans:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on current income levels for hill farmers in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: The latest farm business survey shows that the average net farm income of less-favoured area livestock farms was £12,254 in 1991-92. This represents a rise in real terms of 37 per cent. compared with 1990-91. Incomes for 1992-93 are forecast to rise further in real terms.

Single-parent Families

21. **Mr. Hanson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many single-parent families there are currently in Wales.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: It is estimated from the 1991 census that there were 68,000 single-parent families in Wales.

Pharmaceutical Industries

22. **Mr. Kinnock:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans he has to promote the development of the pharmaceutical industries in Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Redwood: A wide range of measures to support the industry and encourage further inward investment in the sector to Wales, is already available through the Welsh Office, the Welsh Development Agency and training and enterprise councils.

Housing

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) how many houses are owned by local authorities in each of the parliamentary constituencies in Wales; and what proportion of the housing stock these figures represent;

(2) how many holiday or second homes there are in each parliamentary constituency in Wales; and what proportion of the housing stock they represent;

(3) how many houses in each parliamentary constituency in Wales are owner-occupied; and what proportion this figure represents of the housing stock.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Results from the 1991 census for parliamentary constituencies, providing details of the tenure of dwellings, will become available towards the end of 1993.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the total budget of Tai Cymru in *(a)* 1990-91, *(b)* 1991-92 and *(c)* 1992-93; and what proportion of this money was spent in north Wales.

Mr. Redwood: The information is as follows:

	Total grants to housing associations	*Proportion spent in Clwyd and Gwynedd*
	£ million	*Per cent.*
1990-91	116·0	16·0
1991-92	132·6	22·0
1992-93	174·0	21·0

Schools (Redundancies)

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many compulsory redundancies in schools have taken place in Wales in 1992 and to date in 1993; and if he will publish figures for each secondary and primary school in Wales and figures for each local education authority area.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The table shows the number of teachers aged 50 and over who retired prematurely for reason of redundancy from maintained schools in Wales and claimed their superannuation benefits. Information on other redundancies—those aged under 50 or those who do not claim their pension—is not held centrally. Data for the financial years 1991-92 and 1992-93 are as follows.

Local Education Authority	*Financial Year* 1991-92	1992-93
Clwyd	1	1
Dyfed	2	1
Gwent	86	42
Gwynedd	2	3
Mid Glamorgan	1	8
Powys	0	2
South Glamorgan	1	0
West Glamorgan	18	8
Wales total	111	65

Source:
Teachers Pension Agency.

Out-patient Cancer Treatment

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures are being taken in Wales to enhance the provision of out-patient cancer treatment; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: In addition to the NHS in Wales's ongoing development programme funded from resources allocated to health authorities, recent centrally funded developments include the provision of replacement linear accelerators at Singleton hospital, Swansea at a cost of some £2 million and at Velindre hospital, Cardiff, at a cost of £1·4 million. In addition, I announced on 22 June the development of a dedicated cancer treatment centre for north Wales at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd, Bodelwyddan to provide a full range of palliative and curative care, including radiotherapy. Many of the estimated 2,000 patients treated annually will be out-patients.

Fishing Licences

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures are being taken to ensure that all freshwater anglers purchase a fishing licence; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Responsibility for rod licensing rests with the National Rivers Authority.

Agriculture (Self-sufficiency)

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the current level of self-sufficiency in Wales in the production of *(a)* butter, *(b)* milk, *(c)* beef and *(d)* sheepmeat.

Mr. Redwood: The latest available estimates, for 1990, of self-sufficiency—production in Wales as a percentage of consumption in Wales—are as follows.

	Consumption	1990 Production	Production as a percentage of consumption per cent.
Butter	[2]7,901	—	—
	[13]163·8	—	—
Milk and Butter	[3]491·5	[3]1,530	311·30
Beef	[2]18,011	[2]66,000	366·46
Sheepmeat	[2]15,674	[2]74,000	472·12

[1] Figures are not available for the volume of butter produced from Welsh milk. Butter consumption estimates have therefore been converted into raw milk equivalent and included with liquid milk consumption.
[2] Tonnes.
[3] Million litres.

Truancy (Clwyd)

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures are being taken in Clwyd to reduce the number of children playing truant from school; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Parents, schools and local education authorities share legal responsibilities in respect of school attendance. Local authorities must ensure that parents are fulfilling their statutory obligations as to their children's education including, where necessary, by action through the courts. Details of the measures by which local authorities achieve this are not, however, held centrally.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures are being taken in Wales to divert traffic away from environmentally sensitive areas; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Full account is taken of environmentally sensitive areas when planning and designing trunk road schemes.

Hospital Stays

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the average length of a hospital stay in Wales in 1979 and in 1992; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Advances in medical technology have made it possible that while the average length of stay of patients for all specialties in hospitals in Wales was 19·1 days in 1979 it was 10·4 days in 1991-92. The average length of stay for acute specialties, excluding geriatric, maternity and psychiatric specialties, was 9·5 days and 6·2 days respectively. Consequently, more patients than ever before are now receiving better care under the national health service in Wales.

Hospital Waste

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures are being taken to ensure the safe disposal of hospital waste; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: All health authorities in Wales were issued with the Secretary of State's guidance "Clinical Waste Incineration Processes under 1 Tonne an Hour" in March 1991.

Guidance and a code of practice were issued in March 1992 detailing responsibilities under the "duty of care" requirements of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which places stringent requirements on all who create, transport and dispose of "controlled waste".

It is for the local authority environmental health officers, as the statutory enforcers, to control and monitor the activities of health authorities and NHS trusts.

Rural Post Offices

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many representations he has received on the subject of rural post offices since 1 May; and if if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Seventeen such representations have been received, including a petition with 1,098 signatures.

Special Needs Education

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list, for January for each year from 1988 to the latest year for which figures are available, the number of pupils aged five to 15 years with statements of special educational needs *(a)* in maintained special schools, *(b)* in non-maintained special schools and independent schools under arrangements made by the authority and *(c)* in maintained primary, middle and secondary schools.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The information requested is given in the table.

Pupils with statements of special educational needs

Year	Maintained special schools[1]	Non-maintained special and independent schools	Maintained primary and secondary schools[2]
[3]1988	3,953	134	7,462
[3]1989	3,737	149	7,454
[3]1990	3,668	150	7,147
[3]1991	3,620	169	8,858
[4]1992	2,628	143	9,916

[1] Data for 1988-1991 include pupils in special units (other than those attached to schools).
[2] Data for 1992 include pupils in grant-maintained schools.
[3] Data are pupils of all ages.
[4] Data are pupils aged 5-16 with ages at 31 August the preceding year.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list, for January for each year from 1988 to the latest year for which figures are available *(a)* the number of full-time pupils aged five to 15 years in (i) maintained primary, middle and secondary schools and (ii) special schools maintained by the LEA and *(b)* the number of pupils aged five to 15 years belonging to (i) other LEAs but attending special schools maintained by the LEA, (ii) the LEA but attending special schools maintained by other LEAs and (iii) the LEA attending non-maintained special schools and independent schools for the purposes of special educational treatment.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The information requested is given in the tables.

(a) the number of full-time pupils aged 5 to 15 years[1]

	Maintained primary and secondary schools[2]					*LEA maintained special schools*				
	1988	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*
Clwyd	54,407	53,737	52,992	52,993	53,043	661	634	629	630	642
Dyfed	45,254	45,727	45,597	45,652	45,754	258	254	232	199	210
Gwent	59,960	59,142	59,008	59,438	60,149	351	336	316	320	307
Gwynedd	31,663	31,047	30,496	29,956	29,782	263	255	215	211	234
Mid Glamorgan	76,143	75,244	75,054	75,214	75,615	646	587	589	565	597
Powys	15,574	15,498	15,467	15,331	15,335	110	109	122	122	125
South Glamorgan	52,131	52,128	52,038	52,730	53,703	655	624	588	575	537
West Glamorgan	48,584	48,505	48,350	48,769	49,002	218	194	181	177	175
Wales	383,715	381,028	379,002	380,083	382,383	3,162	2,993	2,872	2,799	2,827

[1] At January each year, with ages at 31 August the preceding year.
[2] Includes grant-maintained schools.

(b) The number of children aged 5 to 15 belonging to:

	(i) other LEAs but attending special schools maintained by the LEA					*(ii) the LEA but attending special schools maintained by other LEAs*					*(iii) The LEA but attending non-maintained special and independent schools*[1]				
	1988	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*
Clwyd	30	25	38	37	42	33	29	25	24	24	3	2	4	2	8
Dyfed	11	12	13	2	3	15	15	17	16	13	10	16	8	12	21
Gwent	14	16	11	6	4	48	45	38	24	26	36	45	56	69	32
Gwynedd	15	18	15	11	8	15	8	10	8	7	8	8	7	8	6
Mid Glamorgan	32	29	23	16	19	48	42	37	31	19	52	53	58	61	51
Powys	4	7	5	4	3	7	7	2	3	3	14	22	18	20	18
South Glamorgan	81	73	58	48	36	17	17	13	5	3	6	9	7	9	5
West Glamorgan	5	7	11	12	11	12	16	8	11	12	17	15	9	12	2

[1] Data for 1988-91 include children of all ages. Data for 1992 include children aged 5 to 16 years with statements for special educational needs only. Data include children being educated outside of the authority in which they are registered.

ENVIRONMENT

Pollution, Helpston

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what action has been taken to prevent further pollution of groundwater at Helpston, Cambridgeshire, following the identification of the cause and source in August 1992.

Mr. Yeo: The National Rivers Authority took immediate action in 1992 to ask the waste regulatory authority to vary the waste disposal licences for the landfill sites from which the pollution came. Subsequently, in October 1992, the NRA commissioned studies to identify the options available to contain and remedy the pollution. The final report on this is expected shortly, and will help the NRA to decide what further action is necessary and feasible.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment on what grounds the National Rivers Authority has decided not to publish the three existing reports identifying the cause and source of groundwater pollution at Helpston, Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Yeo: Investigations into the groundwater pollution at Helpston are not yet complete. The reports received so far have been judged, by the NRA, to be subject to the confidentiality provisions of the Environmental Information Regulations 1992. Apart from any legal restrictions, the NRA plans to release as much factual information as possible, when it is appropriate.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment which authority will be responsible for funding the clean-up of pesticide pollution at Helpston, Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Yeo: It is for the National Rivers Authority and the courts to consider whether there may be any criminal liability in respect of the contamination. The NRA also has power to take remedial action should that be appropriate, and can seek to recover its costs. It is for anyone adversely affected to consider any claims for civil damages.

Special Waste

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) if he will list by year, for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste arisings and deposits;

(2) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste arising *(a)* within the county and deposited within the county, *(b)* within the county and exported out of the county and *(c)* outside the county and deposited within the county.

Mr. Yeo: The tables below show the amounts of special waste arising within the English counties, the amounts imported to and exported from each county, and the amount deposited in each county since 1987-88. Special wastes may be imported and re-exported as part of the treatment and disposal process. The information available on exports and deposits does not identify the sources of the waste.

Figures relate to financial years ending 31 March, and are in tonnes. In 1987-88 and 1988-89 not all counties provided returns. We have revised the figures for those

years that were published in the "Digest of Environmental Protection Water Statistics No. 15 (1992)" following further validation exercises.

Special waste statistics: England by county 1987-88

County	Arisings	Exports	Imports	Deposited
Avon	17,787	17,991	842	638
Bedfordshire	4,337	1,585	57,643	60,396
Berkshire	4,873	4,231	758	1,400
Buckinghamshire	4,362	2,962	4,492	5,893
Cambridgeshire	15,417	9,954	2,508	7,970
Cheshire	207,179	128,857	132,973	211,295
Cleveland	363,432	57,759	12,540	318,213
Cornwall	567	413	0	155
Cumbria	9,366	1,718	462	8,110
Derbyshire	73,856	33,576	23,982	64,263
Devon	4,180	1,954	3,250	5,476
Dorset	4,376	3,269	319	1,107
Durham	31,600	7,940	58,330	81,990
East Sussex	2,443	2,440	2,230	2,233
Essex	35,284	15,284	118,204	138,204
Gloucestershire	14,062	9,716	385	4,731
GMWDA	78,803	47,968	127,933	158,768
Hampshire	13,687	29,387	10,281	5,419
Hereford and Worcester	12,429	538	0	11,891
Hertfordshire	128,859	106,898	2,840	24,801
Humberside	—	—	—	—
Isle of Wight	67	50	0	18
Kent	—	—	—	—
Lancashire	146,594	57,224	5,043	94,413
Leicestershire	13,146	6,110	3,654	10,690
Lincolnshire	2,065	1,867	111	309
LWRA	60,629	57,249	368	3,748
Merseyside	17,625	27,128	20,176	10,672
Norfolk	12,193	11,024	63	1,232
North Yorkshire	4,461	4,074	260	647
Northamptonshire	4,132	3,376	14,771	15,528
Northumberland	16,411	2,620	5,625	19,416
Nottinghamshire	16,099	13,625	2,125	4,598
Oxfordshire	3,941	2,999	2,813	3,755
Shropshire	6,850	5,658	2,820	4,012
Somerset	7,927	5,610	0	2,317
South Yorkshire	—	—	—	—
Staffordshire	—	—	—	—
Suffolk	25,009	23,153	6,402	8,258
Surrey	2,356	1,743	225	838
Tyne and Wear	80,732	72,469	12,741	21,004
Warwickshire	14,045	7,287	29,205	35,962
West Midlands	244,893	59,498	188,213	373,608
West Sussex	4,953	4,220	335	1,069
West Yorkshire	212,147	43,052	19,691	188,786
Wiltshire	4,553	4,243	621	931
Total	[1]1,927,725	898,717	875,233	1,914,761

— = no return made.
GMWDA = Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority.
LWRA = London Waste Regulation Authority.
[1] Totals relate to reporting districts only.

Special waste statistics: England by county 1988-89

County	Arisings	Exports	Imports	Deposited
Avon	18,049	16,237	5,613	7,425
Bedfordshire	4,164	1,586	30,588	33,166
Berkshire	16,143	5,031	1,399	12,511
Buckinghamshire	4,869	3,955	1,884	2,798
Cambridgeshire	17,668	12,838	5,996	10,827
Cheshire	62,678	27,146	204,163	239,695
Cleveland	245,500	58,800	800	187,500
Cornwall	619	378	0	240
Cumbria	6,088	3,588	319	2,819
Derbyshire	65,390	24,011	25,873	67,252
Devon	5,755	2,847	3,825	6,733
Dorset	7,267	6,774	458	951
Durham	49,680	27,944	92,574	114,310
East Sussex	939	930	7,298	7,307
Essex	23,756	3,698	103,631	123,689

County	Arisings	Exports	Imports	Deposited
Gloucestershire	16,920	11,640	924	6,204
GMWDA	—	—	—	—
Hampshire	21,339	14,767	14,190	20,762
Hereford and Worcester	12,572	12,541	0	30
Hertfordshire	27,165	19,672	2,818	10,311
Humberside	15,675	10,115	273	5,833
Isle of Wight	75	64	0	11
Kent	202,678	19,261	1,557	184,914
Lancashire	33,179	24,071	7,711	16,818
Leicestershire	12,281	6,092	3,961	10,150
Lincolnshire	2,321	2,216	83	189
LWRA	51,636	44,529	440	7,547
Merseyside	26,518	26,519	18,121	18,119
Norfolk	15,528	11,856	53	3,725
North Yorkshire	6,131	5,737	719	1,113
Northamptonshire	3,828	2,451	18,310	19,688
Northumberland	19,485	4,147	5,380	20,718
Nottinghamshire	18,389	17,479	460	1,370
Oxfordshire	4,274	2,368	2,701	4,607
Shropshire	7,150	6,018	2,443	3,575
Somerset	9,979	8,341	0	1,638
South Yorkshire	67,327	43,159	17,579	41,747
Staffordshire	36,647	29,234	61,459	68,872
Suffolk	31,989	30,646	4,807	6,150
Surrey	9,340	8,740	1,461	2,061
Tyne and Wear	62,959	48,095	4,905	19,769
Warwickshire	8,601	7,840	9,947	10,708
West Midlands	246,991	82,858	212,050	376,183
West Sussex	3,819	3,301	90	608
West Yorkshire	158,819	56,105	5,434	108,148
Wiltshire	1,732	1,266	673	1,139
Total	11,668,911	756,891	882,969	1,789,928

— = no return made.
GMWDA = Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority.
LWRA = London Waste Regulation Authority.
[1] Totals relate to reporting districts only.

Special waste statistics: England by county 1989-90

County	Arisings	Exports	Imports	Deposited
Avon	17,102	15,264	2,607	4,445
Bedfordshire	3,485	1,448	78,904	80,941
Berkshire	7,545	6,383	1,636	2,798
Buckinghamshire	7,035	5,964	714	1,785
Cambridgeshire	17,668	12,838	1,496	6,327
Cheshire	92,780	34,888	121,869	179,761
Cleveland	510,781	49,698	8,602	469,685
Cornwall	656	558	0	98
Cumbria	7,277	4,163	200	3,314
Derbyshire	68,996	33,551	16,058	51,503
Devon	3,565	2,040	4,000	5,525
Dorset	3,131	2,694	354	791
Durham	30,676	21,557	35,004	44,123
East Sussex	3,238	3,218	21,363	21,383
Essex	88,277	60,101	127,040	155,216
Gloucestershire	18,498	12,834	992	6,656
GMWDA	138,168	54,876	135,040	218,332
Hampshire	37,583	29,017	27,889	36,455
Hereford and Worcester	17,230	17,229	0	0
Hertfordshire	22,495	12,302	5,660	15,852
Humberside	21,077	11,677	444	9,845
Isle of Wight	1,954	1,946	0	8
Kent	67,866	63,954	22,597	26,508
Lancashire	68,058	34,939	26,564	59,682
Leicestershire	12,273	6,034	4,154	6,238
Lincolnshire	2,973	2,873	80	180
LWRA	107,112	98,846	1,242	9,508
Merseyside	34,046	28,857	29,022	30,310
Norfolk	9,296	8,115	232	1,413
North Yorkshire	7,692	7,058	4,057	4,691
Northamptonshire	4,387	2,998	17,122	18,511
Northumberland	20,312	6,102	9,807	24,017
Nottinghamshire	5,279	4,407	712	1,583
Oxfordshire	4,274	2,368	2,701	4,607
Shropshire	7,676	6,687	2,346	3,335

County	Arisings	Exports	Imports	Deposited
Somerset	6,621	5,331	0	1,290
South Yorkshire	90,954	55,750	17,736	52,941
Staffordshire	29,800	26,400	25,500	28,900
Suffolk	29,088	27,819	5,009	6,278
Surrey	12,427	11,191	3,882	5,119
Tyne and Wear	22,460	14,757	21,373	29,076
Warwickshire	11,676	5,717	15,799	21,758
West Midlands	226,763	82,642	174,203	318,324
West Sussex	5,180	4,137	58	1,102
West Yorkshire	235,749	54,144	11,357	192,962
Wiltshire	5,144	3,580	2,590	4,154
Total	2,146,323	958,952	988,015	2,167,330

GMWDA = Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority.
LWRA = London Waste Regulation Authority.

Special waste statistics: England by county 1990-91

County	Arisings	Exports	Imports	Deposits
Avon	12,828	11,497	2,702	4,033
Bedfordshire	4,745	3,554	103,602	104,794
Berkshire	6,905	6,279	4,260	4,886
Buckinghamshire	6,917	6,441	431	906
Cambridgeshire	13,493	16,290	11,108	8,311
Cheshire	147,664	61,061	172,769	259,372
Cleveland	417,539	72,910	30,949	375,578
Cornwall	311	272	0	39
Cumbria	7,944	4,343	463	4,064
Derbyshire	75,675	39,178	36,082	752,579
Devon	4,145	1,970	3,470	5,645
Dorset	2,881	2,564	307	624
Durham	35,420	26,230	21,570	30,760
East Sussex	12,532	12,508	8,258	8,282
Essex	26,168	6,815	118,296	137,649
Gloucestershire	15,457	10,728	1,874	6,603
GMWDA	136,464	61,932	136,232	210,764
Hampshire	25,780	18,274	17,553	25,059
Hereford and Worcester	12,655	12,568	0	87
Hertfordshire	35,179	28,840	6,573	12,912
Humberside	21,831	12,995	10,369	19,205
Isle of Wight	267	256	0	11
Kent	698,543	696,059	13,387	15,870
Lancashire	146,361	19,640	29,592	156,312
Leicestershire	13,165	9,150	1,935	4,015
Lincolnshire	2,083	1,915	73	240
LWRA	160,211	143,077	1,248	18,382
Merseyside	36,619	35,451	14,974	16,142
Norfolk	10,154	8,897	259	1,516
North Yorkshire	7,008	6,585	7,939	8,363
Northamptonshire	5,189	4,823	15,844	16,210
Northumberland	28,619	11,769	3,488	20,338
Nottinghamshire	15,863	13,513	2,420	4,780
Oxfordshire	4,691	2,742	4,086	6,035
Shropshire	9,286	9,184	2,611	2,714
Somerset	12,557	11,218	0	1,340
South Yorkshire	36,565	26,193	23,034	33,406
Staffordshire	39,667	39,427	11,630	11,870
Suffolk	21,590	21,079	423	933
Surrey	13,098	12,115	4,894	5,877
Tyne and Wear	30,812	14,401	16,171	32,582
Warwickshire	9,957	9,688	30,275	30,544
West Midlands	215,959	75,028	164,188	305,119
West Sussex	8,256	6,505	42	1,792
West Yorkshire	180,495	89,654	14,772	105,613
Wiltshire	3,137	2,284	4,154	5,008
Totals	2,732,683	1,687,900	1,054,305	2,777,164

GMWDA = Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority.
LWRA = London Waste Regulation Authority.

Special waste statistics: England by county 1991-92 *Tonnes*

County	*Arisings*	*Exports*	*Imports*	*Deposits*
Avon	9,865	7,973	10,314	12,206
Bedfordshire	5,319	3,288	896,554	898,585
Berkshire	5,214	4,877	2,109	2,446
Buckinghamshire	6,525	6,250	203	477
Cambridgeshire	16,830	17,088	4,956	4,698
Cheshire	121,387	60,285	149,491	210,593
Cleveland	357,852	45,278	14	312,588
Cornwall	1,216	1,053	12	162
Cumbria	6,167	5,993	62	237
Derbyshire	68,138	33,390	42,129	76,877
Devon	5,525	2,230	3,315	6,610
Dorset	3,951	3,653	247	545
Durham	17,766	10,109	12,308	19,965
East Sussex	1,608	1,559	11,272	11,321
Essex	23,703	5,086	102,374	120,997
Gloucestershire	8,903	5,825	12,155	15,233
GMWDA	61,365	36,904	144,716	206,081
Hampshire	26,787	21,608	28,989	39,603
Hereford and Worcester	13,680	13,126	0	554
Hertfordshire	150,856	142,827	6,155	14,185
Humberside	22,846	14,981	6,948	14,813
Isle of Wight	105	103	0	3
Kent	759,769	757,948	14,129	15,954
Lancashire	136,121	24,468	29,280	140,933
Leicestershire	29,753	23,842	1,717	7,629
Lincolnshire	2,185	1,983	181	383
LWRA	133,807	113,383	2,416	22,840
Merseyside	33,743	30,184	25,292	28,851
Norfolk	7,847	7,038	1,927	2,736
North Yorkshire	7,518	7,079	1,996	2,435
Northamptonshire	6,116	4,844	25,442	26,713
Northumberland	29,568	13,842	1,000	15,725
Nottinghamshire	39,082	39,809	4,177	3,450
Oxfordshire	5,575	3,401	3,398	5,571
Shropshire	12,171	12,171	1,668	1,669
Somerset	6,767	5,480	100	1,287
South Yorkshire	37,432	15,009	27,915	50,338
Staffordshire	40,470	40,040	10,000	10,430
Suffolk	18,116	17,964	422	556
Surrey	20,199	18,987	1,819	3,031
Tyne and Wear	30,299	14,416	11,782	27,654
Warwickshire	8,273	8,088	38,305	38,490
West Midlands	198,601	83,267	155,764	271,098
West Sussex	6,167	5,993	62	178
West Yorkshire	180,000	89,000	17,000	108,000
Wiltshire	6,118	5,267	16,325	17,176
Total	2,691,306	1,786,988	1,826,438	2,771,905

GMWDA = Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority.
LWRA = London Waste Regulation Authority.

Depleted Uranium Shells

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment his Department has made of the environmental effects of the test firing of depleted uranium shells.

Mr. Yeo: Ministry of Defence premises are exempt from the requirements of the Radioactive Substances Act 1960, but controls equally stringent to those exercised over other users of radioactive materials are applied on an administrative basis by Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution. This includes a programme of inspection by HMIP inspectors. As part of this regulatory function, HMIP has received regular reports containing results of the environmental monitoring programme carried out by the MOD. HMIP is currently in the process of assessing the effects of test firing this ammunition on the environment.

Water (Prosecutions)

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what information he has recently received from the chairman of the National Rivers Authority in regard to the effectiveness of prosecutions under the Water Resources Act 1991.

Mr. Yeo: I regularly discuss a variety of topics, including pollution control, with the chairman. Details of the NRA's achievements in its enforcement activity are set out in its annual water pollution incidents report. The most recent information, relating to 1991, was published by the NRA last September.

London (Policy Developments)

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the policy developments relating to London since August 1992.

Mr. Gummer: We have carried through the policy initiatives set out in our general election manifesto. The

Cabinet sub-committee on London—EDL(1)—continues to co-ordinate Government policy on London and to take a strategic view of the impact of all our policies on the capital. We have convened the London Forum to promote London internationally as a centre for business, tourism and culture. This private sector body was launched formally on 29 March and is now developing its promotional plans. The transport working group chaired by the Minister for Transport in London has met on three occasions since August 1992 to discuss the co-ordination of public transport in London.

Together, these initiatives will help to maintain and enhance London's position as a thriving national capital and leading world city. I am currently taking this forward by seeking the views of Londoners and their representative groups on the capital so that we can build on our successes and enhance our reputation.

Housing Association Grant

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representations he has received about the proposed reduction of housing association grant to 55 per cent. by 1995.

Sir George Young: My Department has received more than 300 letters from Members of Parliament, individuals and organisations about our objectives to reduce grant rates to 60 per cent. in 1994-95 and 55 per cent. in 1995-96.

Green Belts

Mr. Bates: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will outline the procedure adopted by his Department in consideration of applications for land to be granted green belt status.

Mr. Curry: Green belts are designated through the development plan process. In drawing up their plans, local planning authorities must have regard to our guidance on the designation of green belts, set out in paragraphs 6 to 11 of planning policy guidance note 2.

Departmental Publications

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the clarity of the language used in his departmental publications.

Mr. Gummer: Clarity of language and accuracy have the highest priority in the production of publications intended for wide use. From time to time, market research is used to test drafts of publications and also to test the effectiveness of the final product.

In 1992, the Department was awarded the Plain English Campaign's crystal mark. This was for the council tenants charter.

Urban Environment Initiative

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to meet the Association of Municipal Engineers to discuss developing an urban environment initiative.

Mr. Yeo: We have set up the Central and Local Environment Forum to enable us to maintain regular contact with local authorities on environmental matters, including the development of their "Local Agenda 21 Initiative", which I welcome. I have no plans to open separate discussions with the Association of Municipal Engineers.

Climate Change

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment at what level his Department was represented at the Institute of Energy conference on how climate change will affect business held in London on 7 July.

Mr. Yeo: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment gave the key note address to the conference. The director general of the Energy Efficiency Office attended the conference for most of the day and participated in the open forum discussion session at the end of the morning.

Noreast Building Management

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will set out *(a)* the proceeds of the sale of Noreast Building Management to John Mowlem and *(b)* the amount of money set aside to cover possible redundancy costs.

Mr. Curry: I refer the hon. Member to my answers given on 8 July *Official Report*, column *419-20*, and 13 July, *Official Report*, column *232*.

Area Cost Adjustments

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representations he has received from the Association of County Councils about the fairer calculation of area cost adjustment; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: We have received a number of representations from the Association of County Councils about the area cost adjustment. Its evidence will be considered carefully as part of our review of standard spending assessments.

Local Government Commission

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the future of the Local Government Commission.

Mr. Baldry: The Local Government Commission will continue to operate under the provisions of section 13 of the Local Government Act 1992. We are keeping its programme under review.

Sparks Bakery Site, Stockton

Mr. Devlin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what conditions were attached to the grant made to Stockton borough council in 1988 to purchase the Sparks Bakery site; and whether any prohibition was placed on the division of the Sparks bakery site in Stockton-on-Tees by his Department when the grant was made to Stockton borough council to purchase it.

Mr. Baldry: Approval for Stockton borough council to use urban programme resources to acquire Sparks bakery site to create a business centre was granted subject to one

condition: that the urban programme grant will be clawed back if the land and/or buildings are eventually used for some other purpose or if a scheme accepted by the Department for urban programme funding has not been started by 3 March 1990.

No restrictions were placed on the division of the site when the grant was made.

PSA Property Management (Scotland)

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what was the price difference between the SERCO bid for PSA Property Management (Scotland) and the next nearest offer; and what undertakings have been sought to ensure the retention of headquarters management and staff in Scotland.

Mr. Curry: Details of bids from unsuccessful bidders are commercially confidential. Serco's objective in acquiring BM Scotland is to expand its business based in Scotland as a separate Scottish company.

Environment Council

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Croydon, North-East (Mr. Congdon) of 8 July, *Official Report* columns *233-35*, what was the position of each member state on the votes on *(a)* volatile organic compound emissions and *(b)* the text of a directive on new exhaust emission standards for light commercial vehicles below 3·5 tonnes maximum weight; and what was the Government's position in the discussions on (i) the wild birds directive and (ii) the packaging and waste directive taken at the European Community's Environment Council held on 8 July; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: No formal votes were taken at the Environment Council held on 28 and 29 June. On wild birds, the Government supported a compromise acceptable to 10 other member states. On packaging, the Council held a policy debate rather than a discussion of detail, during which I emphasised the need for early agreement on the directive on the basis of realistic targets, particularly in the light of the unintended effects measures in one country might have on other member states.

Churchyards

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment for which closed churchyards the liability of maintenance has been taken over by a local authority under section 215 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer Friday 16 July]:* This information is not held centrally.

Scientists' Training

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the safety executive initiative in respect of the training of scientists to assess environmental risks.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: I have been asked to reply.

The Health and Safety Executive is developing an MSc in environmental toxicology with the university of Central Lancashire. The course will utilise the university's expertise in toxicology and allied environmental sciences and HSE's regulatory experience. At present there are 12 students; 10 are HSE staff and the other two are graduates from the Merseyside area.

Defence Research Agency

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what responsibilities the Defence Research Agency has to respond to requests for information under the Environmental Information Regulations 1992.

Mr. Aitken: I have been asked to reply.

This is a matter delegated to the Defence Research Agency under its framework document. I have therefore asked the chief executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Letter from J. A. R. Chisholm to Mr. Llew Smith, dated 19 July 1993.

In today's written answer the Minister of State for Defence Procurement informed you that I would be replying directly to your question regarding the Defence Research Agency's responsibilities under the Environmental Information Regulations 1992.

The DRA is wholly owned by the Secretary of State for Defence and must conform to the requirements of the Environmental Information Regulations 1992 in just the same way as any other public body. What this means in practice is that we would endeavour to respond positively to all requests for environmental information.

EMPLOYMENT

Apprenticeships

Mr. Barry Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what measures he is taking to stimulate growth in the availability of apprenticeships to school leavers in *(a)* the steel industry, *(b)* the aerospace industry and *(c)* the construction industry.

Miss Widdecombe: The Government are keen to promote and encourage the growth of apprenticeships in these industries and others. The Government already support some apprenticeships and similar training arrangements through youth credits and youth training, and keep their policies under regular review.

Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what plans his Department has to assist in retraining and job creation in west Cumbria in the event of THORP being further delayed or cancelled.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The Employment Department, through the employment service (ES) and Cumbria training and enterprise council (TEC) are offering a wide range of employment, enterprise and training programmes to assist unemployed people in West Cumbria including those previously employed at THORP. The TEC is starting redundancy counselling sessions at THORP soon which will include job search counselling, financial advice and general redundancy counselling, ES and TEC programmes are designed to be flexible in order to take account of special local circumstances such as this to help people find the best and quickest route back to employment.

Both the employment service and Cumbria TEC are monitoring the situation at THORP closely and are

working in partnership with BNFL plc and the West Cumbria development agency to address the particular training and job search needs of THORP employees as they arise and to encourage new enterprise activity in the area.

Youth Training

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what information he has received in the past 12 months on the supply of and demand for youth training places in each TEC area; and what has been made public.

Miss Widdecombe: Information on the availability of youth training (YT) places is not collected nationally. Information on the total demand for YT places is also not collected, but the number of young people who are registered with Careers Services in England and who are covered by the YT guarantee, has been collected since August last year. Information on the number of these young people who have been waiting for a YT place for eight or more weeks in March and April has been released in response to previous questions in the House. Updated information is provided in the following table:

Young people waiting for 8 or more weeks for a place on YT: 1993

TEC	March[1]	April[2]	May[3]	June[4]
Avon	88	117	9	6
AZTEC	156	95	65	41
Barnsley and Doncaster	36	35	69	91
Bedfordshire	115	164	71	48
Birmingham	110	131	21	38
Bolton and Bury	41	19	0	0
Bradford	15	18	8	9
Calderdale and Kirklees	18	15	28	30
CAMBSTEC	69	54	55	21
Central England	14	19	15	23
Central London	136	153	71	42
CEWTEC	18	12	9	13
CILNTEC	143	109	108	73
County Durham	62	71	61	70
Coventry and Warwicks	79	86	88	87
Cumbria	33	6	12	33
Devon and Cornwall	66	71	56	27
Dorset	23	15	12	12
Dudley	2	1	2	1
ELTEC	19	29	25	14
Essex	373	329	195	199
Gloucester	28	11	5	1
Greater Nottingham	32	35	18	9
Greater Peterborough	23	17	22	21
Hampshire	207	304	251	63
HAWTEC	19	30	9	7
Heart of England	15	24	20	19
Hertfordshire	107	164	108	107
Humberside	47	36	25	30
Isle of Wight	37	28	37	29
Kent	338	183	134	103
LAWTEC	40	28	23	17
Leeds	37	26	32	32
Leicestershire	27	31	22	19
LETEC	439	380	310	233
Lincolnshire	19	39	19	19
Manchester	106	93	58	61
Merseyside	42	47	55	25
METROTEC	21	6	12	0
Milton Keynes and North Bucks	32	42	35	43
Norfolk/Waveney	4	31	27	49
NORMIDTEC	13	9	14	8
North Derbyshire	42	39	19	9
North London	66	79	59	74
North Nottinghamshire	91	55	37	22
North West London	111	107	82	99
North Yorkshire	79	59	49	42
Northamptonshire	62	39	5	27
Northumberland	47	58	62	66
Oldham	36	48	28	6
QUALITEC	20	16	25	17
Rochdale	18	15	6	8
Rotherham	4	9	3	2
Sandwell	10	20	28	28
South and East Cheshire	0	0	1	0
Sheffield	156	147	277	46
Shropshire	19	24	13	16
SOLOTEC	206	194	76	37
Somerset	97	114	103	125
South Derbyshire	25	29	28	8
South Thames	476	451	339	67
Staffordshire	4	6	7	6
Stockport and High Peak	16	19	12	9
Suffolk	13	13	14	10
Surrey	94	99	28	13
Sussex	68	86	60	59
Teesside	45	56	65	100
Thames Valley Enterprise	185	198	205	228
Tyneside	60	59	56	54
Wakefield	18	18	16	13
Walsall	3	12	6	5
Wearside	0	0	0	0
West London	36	48	29	19
Wiltshire	68	68	47	41
Wolverhampton	2	6	3	5

Sources:

[1] Information from Careers Service Management return (Supplement) 11 March 1993.

[2] Information from Careers Service Management return (Supplement) 8 April 1993.

[3] Information from Careers Service Management return (Supplement) 13 May 1993.

[4] Information from Careers Service Management return (Supplement) 10 June 1993.

Full Employment

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secetary of State for Employment what part he plans to play in the proposed European Commission into Full Employment.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: I assume that the hon. Member is referring to the Commission's communication, "Community-wide Framework for Employment". The Social Affairs Council which I attended on 1 June 1993 welcomed the communication as a valuable contribution to the process of seeking solutions to unemployment, whilst recognising that the primary responsibility for employment policies lies with the member states. The United Kingdom awaits specific proposals from the European Commission.

Asbestos

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many deaths occurred as a result of asbestos-related illness in each year since 1990.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The latest figures for deaths due to asbestosis and mesothelioma published in "Health and Safety Statistics 1990-91", are in the following table:

	Asbestosis	Mesothelioma
1990	163	862
1991	[1]163	[1]1,017

[1] Provisional.

The figures are taken from death certificates. Mesothelioma is thought to have a natural background incidence of about 100 cases per year; the rest are presumed to be asbestos-related.

Since April 1985, under cetain conditions, lung cancer in asbestos workers has been a prescribed disease under the industrial injury scheme. The number of cases diagnosed under this scheme since 1990 for which figures are available are as follows:

	Asbestos-related lung cancer
1990	58
1991	55
1992	[1]54

[1] Provisional.

Lung cancer deaths attributable to asbestos are known to be considerably understated, mainly because many cases may not be recognised as asbestos related by the sufferers or their doctors. Studies suggest that the actual number of lung cancers attributable to asbestos exposure is likely to be more than 1,000 per year.

Ministerial Engagements

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish a table setting out for each Minister in his Department a full list of all meetings and official engagements to be undertaken by each Minister during the week beginning 19 July, broken down by hourly segments of each day.

Miss Widdecombe: No.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Disability

Ms. Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will provide statistics on the basis of the latest analysis of households below average income, for the long-term sick and those on disability benefit to correspond with statistical data for pensioners, recipients of income support and unemployed given in tables A4 and A5 in the latest households below average income report.

Mr. Burt: Estimates are in the tables. The households below average income—HBAI—dataset, the family expenditure survey—FES—does not identify all long-term sick or disabled people, and its identification of receipt of disability benefits is imperfect. The estimates are susceptible to these imperfections as well as sampling errors. The results reported in the tables may, therefore, reflect changes in the categories of long-term sick or disabled people identified in the FES, as well as changes in the incomes of such people.

Where figures are particularly uncertain due to sampling error and where the confidence intervals exceed pre-determined limits, the estimates are bracketed or omitted. Further information about the effects of sampling errors can be found in appendix 5 of HBAI, a copy of which is in the Library.

The figures in the tables are presented in line with tables A4 and A5 in "Households Below Average Income 1979-1990-91".

Changes in real income for long-term sick and those on disability benefits[1]

Real changes in median incomes 1979 to 1990-91

	Long-term sick or receiving disability benefits Per cent.
Income before housing costs	
Bottom quintile	(4)
Second quintile	(14)
Third quintile	(*)[2]
Whole group (Mean)	26
Income after housing costs	
Bottom quintile	(*)[3]
Second quintile	(14)
Third quintile	(*)[4]
Whole group (Mean)	30

[1] People who reported receipt of Invalidity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Attendance Allowance or Mobility Allowance or people not in work who reported long-term sickness or disability.
[2] 95 per cent. confidence interval is +9 to +30.
[3] 95 per cent. confidence interval is −7 to +15.
[4] 95 per cent. confidence interval is +12 to +36.

Lone Parents

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security whether the guidelines for withholding benefit under the Child Support Act 1991 could result in parents of dependent lone parents losing benefit.

Mr. Burt: No. A lone parent who is classed as a child for income support purposes, and whose own parents are paid benefit for her and her child, is not required to authorise action to seek maintenance.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what estimate he has made of the number of lone parents in the city of Newcastle upon Tyne; and how many income support claimants are lone parents.

Mr. Burt: The number of lone parents with dependent children within the metropolitan borough of Newcastle upon Tyne is 9,000[1].

Records are not kept of the number of lone parents on income support in individual locations. However, the total number of lone parents on income support in GreatBritain is 985,000[2]; and the total number of lone parents in Great Britain is 1·24 million[1].

[1] *Source:* 1991 Population Census—Provisional estimates.
[2] *Source:* Income Support Annual Statistical Enquiry 1992.

Social Fund

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the total social fund budget available for 1993-94 to his Department's manager at the Blackfriars, London office.

Mr. Scott: Blackfriars, London office is known as London Southwark and is part of the Benefits Agency

district of Bankside. Details of gross discretionary budget allocations for all districts for the current financial year are in the Library.

Pensions and Divorce (Working Group)

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what representations he has received from the working group on pensions and divorce appointed by the Pensions Management Institute in agreement with the Law Society; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hague: The working group's report was published on 19 May. Departmental officials have recently met Sir Alec Atkinson, chairman of the working group, to discuss matters arising from the report.

We are studying the working group's report with interest. We are awaiting the report of the Pension Law Review Committee, chaired by Professor Goode, which may also make recommendations on these and related issues. The committee is due to report by the end of September this year.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the total amount spent by local authorities in Wales on housing benefit in the last three available financial years.

Mr. Burt: The information is as follows:

	£ million
1990-91	241
1991-92	300
1992-93	350

(excludes expenditure on Community Charge Benefit)
Source: 1993 Departmental Report data.

Disability Benefits

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many women who qualify for severe disablement allowance and invalid care allowance will receive their full entitlement following the European Court of Justice's decision C328/91; when they will receive payments; if the payment of arrears will extend to periods of time before April 1992; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Scott: Claims from women who qualify for severe disablement allowance or invalid care allowance as a result of the above case, are currently being adjudicated and may be paid with any arrears due for up to a maximum of 12 months before the date of claim.

State Pension

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the Government's policy at the present time towards the contribution of the state pension.

Mr. Hague: We are firmly committed to maintaining the value of the basic pension as a solid foundation for retirement. In addition we are improving choice and flexibility in pension provision so that now 67 per cent. of recently retired pensioners have income from occupational pensions; and we have targeted additional resources on poorer pensioners through increases to income-related benefits.

National Insurance

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security further to the information provided in table 8, page 16 of "The Growth of Social Security", if he will show for each year 1993-94 and 1999-2000 the level of combined employer/employee national insurance contributions that would be required to balance the national insurance fund, assuming 1·5 per cent. real earnings growth per annum.

Mr. Hague: In 1993-94, to achieve a balance between national insurance contribution income and the benefit and administration expenditure associated with the national insurance fund it is estimated that a combined employer/employee national insurance contribution rate of 22·6 per cent. would be required. Currently a lower rate of 19·4 per cent. applies, the availability of a Treasury grant enables the NI fund to be kept in balance.

The case two projection for benefit expenditure shown in "The Growth of Social Security" provides an estimate of £88·4 billion for total benefit expenditure in 1999-2000. The level of combined contributions required to achieve a balance of national insurance contribution income with benefit and administration expenditure is estimated to be 20·5 per cent., assuming 1·5 per cent. real earnings growth per annum.

Pension Age

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will update the information provided in figure 7, page 77 of "Options for Equality in State Pension Age", giving figures also for 1993-94, and including estimates of contribution rates under the assumption of earnings uprating.

Mr. Hague: The information contained in figure 7, page 77 of "Options for Equality in State Pension Age" is the most up-to-date available. The data underlying that information is currently being updated. New information will be available later this year. The information requested for the year 1993-94 is not available.

TRANSPORT

Regional Air Routes

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is his policy on the priority of regional air routes in the US-United Kingdom bilateral negotiations; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: Liberalisation of routes from the US to regional United Kingdom airports has been a consistent priority. We have made offers to the US which included total or partial liberalisation of such routes. We were disappointed that these were rejected. The interests of the regions will continue to be borne in mind as the liberalisation negotiations progress.

Aircraft (Terrorist Attacks)

Mr. Gapes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures have been taken at national level and in a European context to prevent a repetition of the kind of terrorist attack made on Pam Am flight 103 over Lockerbie.

Mr. Norris: Much has been, and is being, done to improve aviation security in order to prevent an attack like

Lockerbie happening again. Our national aviation security programme has been considerably strengthened since December 1988. Current major initiatives involve proposals for screening all hold baggage on international flights, for requiring airlines to account for and authorise for carriage all the baggage they carry—unaccompanied as well as accompanied—and for improving the security of air cargo, mail and courier traffic.

The United Kingdom also plays an active role in both the European Civil Aviation Conference and International Civil Aviation Organisation to seek improvement of security standards in Europe and internationally.

M25

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what were the design free flows in passenger car units per hour for each section of the M25 motorway, other than the Dartford crossings and their approaches, and the related increase in design flow for those sections for which widening of that road has already been programmed, or placed in the first phase; and if he will list the approximate capital cost for that widening and associated approach road works for each increase of 100 passenger car units per hour, together with any cost benefit calculations made in respect of any such increase.

Mr. Key: The design flow for a section of motorway will vary depending on factors such as the mix of traffic, its distribution throughout the day, the proportions of traffic joining or leaving at junctions and gradients. However, a level of 1,800 vehicles per lane per hour can be taken as a resonable average value and a suitable starting point for design. Figures in passenger car units are not available. Widening from dual three-to dual four lanes and the provision of dual three lane link roads would provide for an additional two-way flow of approximately 3,600 and 10,800 vehicles per hour respectively. The widening costs requested are:

	£ million/km	*£/km per 100 vehicles/hour*
Dual 3 to dual 4 lanes	5	140,000
Dual 3-lane link roads	12	110,000

No cost/benefit calcualtions are available in the form requested.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the proportion of delays to free flow conditions on the M25 occasioned by *(a)* excess demand of traffic over saturated lane flows, *(b)* accidents, *(c)* road works and *(d)* shed loads or breakdowns or other causes.

Mr. Key: No estimate of this type has been made.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what are the average traffic flows, in both crude vehicles per hour and passenger car units per hour, northbound and southbound on the M25 between its intersections with the M3 and M40 for the peak 12 and 18 hour weekday and weekend periods; and what measurements have been made of delays for traffic wishing to join that road between these points during those periods.

Mr. Key: The information is as follows:

M25 traffic flows between junctions 12 and 16 (1991)

	Average weekday 16 hour		*Average weekday 24 hour*		*Maximum peak hour*	
	North bound	*South bound*	*North bound*	*South bound*	*North bound*	*South bound*
Junction 12-13	71,800	73,100	72,100	73,600	7,500	7,100
Junction 13-14	78,600	79,200	79,300	80,300	8,300	8,100
Junction 14-15	72,900	74,000	74,300	75,600	6,800	6,700
Junction 15-16	69,600	68,600	74,300	73,700	6,100	6,200

The sections between junctions 12 and 15 are dual four lanes and the section between junctions 15 and 16 is dual three lanes.

Sainsbury Store, Worthing

Sir Terence Higgins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who is paying for the alteration to the road layout on the A27 near Worthing in relation to the Sainsbury store; what assessment he has made of the extent to which this scheme will reduce the size of the lay by in front of the small shops opposite; and what proposals he has to stop this happening or compensate the shop owners affected.

Mr. Key: The full cost of these highway alterations, and the full cost of satisfying any valid claims made under part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 arising from the execution of the works, will be met by J Sainsbury plc.

Regrettably, the roadworks have reduced the length of the layby on the A27 by Sompting Road. My Department's agents have now instructed the contractor to restore the layby to its former size as soon as practicable.

BR Finance

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when an announcement will be made regarding the £150 million lease finance package for British Rail; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Freeman: I expect British Rail to announce what rolling stock it intends to lease later in the summer.

Disabled Drivers

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what representations he has received from motoring organisations regarding the operation of the orange badge scheme for disabled motorists;

(2) what guidance he issues to local authorities in respect of provision for visiting drivers in parking schemes for disabled drivers.

Mr. Key: The main representations we have received concern restrictions on access for orange badge holders' vehicles into pedestrian zones and the difficulties that can arise when local authorities introduce their own local schemes of parking concessions.

Guidance in respect of access into pedestrian zones is contained in local transport note 1/87. Orange badge holders' vehicles should not normally need to be exempted from access restrictions if a sufficient number of convenient parking places can be provided. If this is not possible, there may be a case for allowing some form of access for orange badge holders' vehicles. Advice on local schemes is contained in local authority circular 3/91, Department of Transport. This circular highlights the unnecessary and inconvenient restrictions such schemes can place on badge holders, and asks local authorities that have introduced their own schemes to review their position in the light of the new arrangements introduced in March 1992 to the national scheme which were designed to ensure that only those with a genuine need receive a badge.

West Coast Main Line

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to his answer of 13 July, *Official Report*, column *423*, to the hon. Member for Cheadle (Mr. Day) concerning the future of the west coast main line, what is the approximate cost of the refurbishment of *(a)* fixed and *(b)* rolling equipment necessary to bring each to standards comparable with those extant at the completion of its electrification; and what areas of increased efficiency in operation by private management he expects to yield sufficient revenue to cover the costs of purchases and refurbishment to be defrayed by the purchasing interest.

Mr. Freeman: British Rail estimates that it will cost about £450 million to renew the infrastructure of the west coast main line, and about a further £350 million to replace the rolling stock.

While we hope that using a joint venture to re-equip the line will result in efficiency gains, the joint venture will not need to rely on these alone in order to remunerate its investment. Were the line to be re-equipped using public funds, Railtrack would be expected to recover its investment through access charges for the use of the line. That income from access charges would, directly or otherwise, be made available to the joint venture to remunerate its investment.

Bridge Closures, London

Ms Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions bridges for which he is responsible between and including Hammersmith bridge and Tower bridge have been closed for essential maintenance for periods of more than 24 hours since May 1979; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: None of the bridges between and including Hammersmith bridge and Tower bridge is the responsibility of the Secretary of State. The information that the hon. Member requires concerning these bridges is not held by the Department. Consultation between my officials and the Association of London Borough Engineers and Surveyors continues regarding proposals to improve the co-ordination of works involving the Thames bridges.

Network SouthEast

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what possibilities exist in the short and medium terms for the Network SouthEast London to Tilbury and Southend line slam-door trains to be replaced in the event of Network SouthEast not being successful in obtaining the £150 million lease finance;

(2) what impact the award of the £150 million lease finance to Network SouthEast would have on the re-equipment of the London to Tilbury and Southend line rolling stock.

Mr. Freeman: New outer suburban trains for Network SouthEast are one of two options being considered by BR for the £150 million leasing facility. Should BR decide on that option, I understand that some of the new trains will be used on NSE's great northern division, allowing modern rolling stock to be released to the London to Tilbury and Southend line. This would enable all 112 of the oldest vehicles on LT and S to be withdrawn from service.

BR is expected to announce its preferred leasing option later in the summer. Whatever the outcome, I shall be looking to support further leasing deals, provided they comply with the Treasury's guidelines.

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what safe working life is now put on the Network SouthEast London to Tilbury and Southend line slam-door trains.

Mr. Freeman: The safe working life of the trains in the LT and S fleet will vary from vehicle to vehicle. For this reason, each unit is assessed by BR engineers on a regular basis. It is also possible to extend the life of vehicles by refurbishment.

River Safety

Sir Michael Neubert: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which recommendations in the marine accident investigation branch report into the collision between the Marchioness and the Bowbelle have now been implemented and what action has been taken on the recommendations in the report of the inquiry into river safety, the Hayes report.

Mr. Norris: The MAIB report into the loss of the Marchioness contained 27 recommendations. All have now been implemented.

The Hayes report contained 22 recommendations, and action is in hand on all.

Copies of schedules which give details of the up-to-date progress on each recommendation in both the MAIB report and the Hayes report have been placed in the Library of the House.

Early morning Flights, Gatwick

Mr. Kenneth Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many more early morning flights will be made at Gatwick in the winter of 1993-94, as a result of the change in the end of the quota period if it is assumed that the number of movements is the same as last winter.

Mr. Norris: No significant increase or shift in movements is likely to occur in the winter season 1993-94.

Night Traffic

Mr. Gorst: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what surveys his Department has conducted to measure the volume of night traffic using motorways starting from London since the European internal market arrangements came into force on 1 January.

Mr. Key *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The Department of Transport has not conducted any surveys specifically to measure the volume of night traffic on motorways since 1 January.

Residential Properties (Insulation)

Mr. Gorst: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department has to modify regulations affecting the elegibility for financial assistance towards the cost of insulating residential properties affected by significantly increased levels of noise that have occurred since the prescribed time limit for initial claims expired; and what representations he had had on this subject.

Mr. Key *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* I have no plans to modify the regulations to admit claims for increased noise outside the present time limits. I and my predecessors have received a number of representations.

DEFENCE

Toxic Waste

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Denton and Reddish (Mr. Bennett) of 25 June, *Official Report*, column *307*, what assessment he has made of the extent to which the procedures to be followed for the discharge of toxic waste were not adhered to in the case of contamination of soil at Aldermaston court from a pipeline.

Mr. Aitken: The low level contamination of soil at Aldermaston court was not the result of AWE failing to follow procedures for the discharge of toxic waste. In all cases where AWE has a requirement to discharge or dispose of toxic materials, the statutory requirements and need for authorisations, consents or licences are observed.

Test Ranges

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what applications his Department has received to date under the Environmental Information Regulations 1992 in regard to the test ranges operated by his Department; and what charging arrangements exist for provision of information released.

Mr. Aitken: No applications have been received in regard to the test ranges. For any information supplied under the Environmental Information Regulations 1992, there is no charge if the costs of answering the inquiry do not exceed £50; where the costs exceed £50 charges will be raised up to a limit of £200.

Environmental Research

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under what headings in his departmental report, United Kingdom Defence Statistics 1993, his Department's expenditure on *(a)* environmental research and *(b)* environmental clean-up and restoration is covered.

Mr. Aitken: My Department does not have separately funded environmental research or clean-up and restoration programmes. Much practical work is carried out which may produce environmental data. These costs are not always readily identifiable and do not lend themselves to presentation as discrete elements of the programme.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many requests for information have been made to his Department under the Environmental Information Regulations 1992; what proportion have been answered in full; and if he will make a statement on the criteria adopted for withholding information requested.

Mr. Aitken: The Ministry of Defence has received one request for information which was answered in full. It is our policy to make environmental information available wherever possible. The criteria adopted in deciding whether to withhold information accord with the regulations and take account of the guidance issued by the Department of Environment.

Scott Inquiry

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what has been the cost of the provision of the 20,000 pages of documents to the Scott inquiry, to which reference is made at paragraph 633 of the Statement on the Defence Estimates 1993, Cm 2270.

Mr. Aitken: The direct cost of the provision of documents to the Scott inquiry to date is estimated to be approximately £50,000.

Nuclear Testing

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under what heading in figure 12 in his Statement on the Defence Estimates 1993, Cm 2270, his Department's protected expenditure on nuclear testing is included.

Mr. Aitken: It would not be in the national interest to reveal the costs of the Defence nuclear programme. For this reason such costs are not separately identified in the statement on the defence estimates.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his Department's policy regarding nuclear testing in the light of the announcement of a further testing moratorium by President Clinton.

Mr. Aitken: I refer the hon. Member to the response that I gave to the hon. Member for South Shields (Dr. Clark) on 13 July, *Official Report*, column *470*.

Chemical Weapons

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, column *520*, when the quantity of clostridium perfringens beta-toxin was transferred from the United States Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases to the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment at Porton Down; for what reason it was transferred; what safety precautions were taken during the transfer; and which British safety authorities, American safety authorities and British local councils were informed beforehand of the transfer;

(2) when nerve agent was last transported from the Ministry of Defence establishment at Nancekuke to Porton Down;

(3) pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, column *516*, when his Department carried out research on animals using BZ; what number of each species of animals were involved; and what was the conclusion of these tests;

(4) what work Porton Down has done on evaluating pyrroles as an incapacitating agent; when this work was carried out; how many tests and studies were carried out on animals and service volunteers; what was the conclusion of the studies and tests; when the results were shared with the United States of America; and through which defence agreement this scientific information was exchanged;

(5) how the defence agreement outlined in his answer to the hon. Member for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone) on 21 May 1992, *Official Report*, column *255-56*, will be affected by the chemical weapons convention;

(6) pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Mr. Smith) on 2 February, *Official Report*, column *156*, if he will list the external suppliers which have supplied chemical and biological compounds for prophylactic research at Porton Down since 1979.

Mr. Hanley: These are matters for the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment under its framework documents and I have asked the chief executive to reply.

Letters from Graham S. Pearson to Mr. Harry Cohen, dated 19 July 1993:

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him pursuant to his answer of 12 May, Official Report, column *520*, when the quantity of Clostridium perfringens beta-toxin was transferred from the US Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases to the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment at Porton Down, for what reason it was transferred; what safety precautions were taken during the transfer; and which British safety authorities, American safety authorities and British local councils were informed beforehand of the transfer (Question 9, Order Paper 9 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The sample of clostridium perfringens beta-toxin was transferred from the US Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases to the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment on 5 August 1992. The sample was packed and transported in accordance with the IATA regulations for air transport of such materials. Import of the sample into the United Kingdom did not require an import licence and there was no requirement to advise British safety authorities, American safety authorities or British local councils beforehand of the transfer.

3. The sample was used for experimental work to investigate the molecular biology of the beta-toxin with the objective of designing gene probes and testing antibodies to detect the beta-toxin.

4. Prior to commencing work at the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment with the sample of beta-toxin, an assessment of the risk posed was carried out under the HSE Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations. This assessment was reviewed and accepted by a local Safety Committee. In view of the very small quantity of the toxin, the risk to individuals was considered to be low and the sample was handled appropriately in a microbiological laboratory.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him when nerve agent was last transported from the Ministry of Defence establishment at Nancekuke to Porton Down (Question 17, Order Paper 9 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. Nerve agent was last transported from the Ministry of Defence Establishment at Nancekuke to Porton Down in May 1977. The quantity concerned was small and appropriate precautions were taken to ensure that there was no hazard to the public.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him pursuant to his Answer of 12 May, Official Report, column *516*, when his Department carried out research on animals using BZ; what number of each species of animals were involved; and what was the conclusions of these tests (Question 20, Order Paper 9 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The role of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment is to carry out research to ensure that the UK Armed Forces are provided with effective protective measures against the threat that chemical or biological weapons may be used against them. As part of this work the potential hazard of possible chemical and biological warfare agents is assessed and the effectivenes of British protective measures evaluated.

3. Research into BZ was carried out between 1960 and 1975. About 350 animals were involved in this research. These were mostly rats, mice and guinea pigs. The conclusion of the research was that BZ possessed high psychotomimetic (incapaciting) properties. The studies also showed the BZ induced effects could be effectively antagonised by the anticholinesterase drug physostigmine.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him what work Porton down has done on evaluating pyrroles as an incapacitating agent; when this work was carried out; how many tests and studies were carried out on animals and service volunteers; what was the conclusion of the studies and tests; when the results were shared with the United States of America; and through which defence agreement this scientific information was exchanged (Question 23, Order Paper 9 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The role of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment is to carry out research to ensure that the UK Armed Forces are provided with effective protective measures against the threat that chemical or biological weapons may be used against them. As part of this work the potential hazard of possible chemical and biological warfare agents is assessed and the effectiveness of British protective measures evaluated.

3. Studies in the early 1960s indicated that simple pyrrole derivatives might show pharmacological effects that might be used by an aggressor as an incapacitating agent. Several classes of pyrroles were studied in the early 1960s using small laboratory animals. No studies were carried out with Service volunteers. The results of the work indicated that pyrroles did not appear to present much hazard as an incapacitating agent.

4. The information arising from these studies was part of the chemical and biological defence programme and would therefore be part of the technical database drawn upon in cooperation with the United States of America under The Technical Cooperation Programme and its predecessors.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him how the defence agreement outlined in his Answer to the honourable Member for Brent East on 21st May 1992, Official Report, column *255-56*, will be affected by the Chemical Weapons Convention, (Question 32, Order Paper 9 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The Chemical Weapons Convention prohibits the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. As all the agreements referred to in the previous answer relate to the provision of chemical and biological defence, the signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention and its entry into force will have no effect on these agreements.

3. Indeed Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention states that nothing in the Convention shall be interpreted as impeding the right of any State Party to conduct research into, develop, produce, acquire, transfer or use means of protection against chemical weapons. It goes on to encourage the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information concerning means of protection against chemical weapons and requires the

provision annually to the Technical Secretariat of information on States Parties programmes related to protective purposes.

4. It is becoming apparent that the provision of effective protective measures is an essential element of the web of deterrence which also includes arms control and export monitoring and controls. The provision of effective protective measures not only reduces the utility of chemical weapons to a potential aggressor but also reduces the range of chemicals that might be used as chemical weapons and hence need to be subject to arms and export controls.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him, pursuant to his Answer to the honourable Member for Blaenau Gwent on 2 February, Official Report, column *156*, if he will list the external suppliers which have supplied chemical and biological compounds for prophylactic research at Porton Down since 1979 (Question 34, Order Paper 9 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The role of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment is to carry out research to ensure that the United Kingdom Armed Forces are provided with effective protective measures against the threat that chemical or biological weapons may be used against them. As part of this work the potential hazard of possible chemical and biological warfare agents is assessed and the effectiveness of British protective measures evaluated.

3. The normal practice at the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment at Porton Down is to purchase any required chemical and biological compounds from commercial suppliers when these are commercially available. If they are not commercially available then the Establishment will synthesise the appropriate compounds.

4. In order to support the programme of work, chemical and biological compounds are purchased from a number of commercial suppliers. We do not maintain records which enable us to identify which suppliers provided the compounds used for prophylactic research.

Trucks (Drop Tests)

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many drop tests have been carried out on the truck cargo heavy duty mark II vehicles, or components thereof, operated by his Department; when they were carried out; and what was the total cost of these tests.

Mr. Aitken: The prime contractor conducted three drop tests on full size vehicle sections and 11 other impact tests on vehicle sections, sub-assemblies and component parts during the period March 1988 to February 1992.

It is not possible to identify the total costs of these tests since they were not separately priced in the contract. However, one drop test, using a full size vehicle section, was priced individually at approximately £300,000.

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what has been the expenditure, so far, on projects to evaluate the options for the future theatre nuclear weapon.

Mr. Aitken: Expenditure to the end of March 1993 on studies of possible vehicles has been as follows:

Year	*£*
1989-90	928,518
1990-91	1,372,329
1991-92	1,870,285
1992-93	2,658,471

Expenditure on the warhead programme cannot be released for reasons of national security.

British Manufacturing and Research Company

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contracts his Department has had with BMARC since 1979.

Mr. Hanley: Comprehensive records for the period in question are no longer available. Current records show that BMARC received 36 contracts with a total value of £42,100,000 between September 1985 and July 1991. This includes contracts placed during the period—1989-1991—when BMARC was known as Astra Defence Systems Ltd.

Al-Yamamah Project

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what has been the total expenditure by Her Majesty's Government in support of administration of the Al-Yamamah contracts to the most recent available date.

Mr. Aitken: None. the cost of my Department's administration of Al-Yamamah contracts is met by the Government of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what has been the total expenditure by Her Majesty's Government in promotion of project Al-Yamamah to the most recent available date.

Mr. Aitken: It is not practicable to apportion the costs of the Defence Export Services Organisation to individual projects.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what amounts have been paid to British Aerospace in connection with the Al-Yamamah agreement with Saudi Arabia; and on what dates.

Mr. Aitken: It has been the practice of successive Governments not to comment on detailed matters concerning individual defence export sales.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what has been the total expenditure by Her Majesty's Government on brokerage fees or commissions in support of the Al-Yamamah contracts.

Mr. Aitken: My Department has not employed business agents in connection with Al-Yamamah contracts and has consequently paid no fees or commissions.

Guard Service

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether members of the MoD Guard Service who are transferred to contractors under the market testing programme will still be required to attend training provided by his Department and apply for career and promotion opportunities within the Ministry of Defence.

Mr. Aitken: Should members of the MGS be transferred to contractors under the market testing programme they will cease to be civil servants, and will no longer be part of the Department's training programme and career structure.

Operations West

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures he is taking to ensure that if Operations West is run by a contractor *(a)* in the event of

the failure of the contractors, the operation can be brought back into his Department and *(b)* where the contractor buys the site and equipment that his Department or other contractors will be able to compete for a successor contract.

Mr. Aitken: The contract contains provisions against failure on the part of the contractor, ranging from financial penalties to cancellation of the contract. The site is to be leased rather than sold; the lease will end if the service contract is terminated. Title to the computer equipment will remain with my Department for the duration of the service contract.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps are being taken to ensure that the investment appraisal model which will be used for the market testing exercise at Operations West *(a)* conforms to the latest management accounting rules and *(b)* includes the cost of transferring staff to other posts who do not wish to work for the successful contractors.

Mr. Aitken: Prior to the market test, the Operations West market testing project team was advised on an investment appraisal model format which conformed to the latest management accounting rules. Under the provisions of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981, my Department has no obligation to find alternative employment for staff who do not wish to transfer to a contractor. It was therefore assumed, for the purposes of comparing bids, that no staff would be transferred elsewhere in the MoD.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence why he is proposing to contractorise the Ministry of Defence Guard Service at Operations West; and what support his Department is giving to the in-house bid for Operations West.

Mr. Aitken: Following the market testing of the service undertaken by Operations West, it has been decided that the whole of the undertaking, including the guard service, should be contractorised as this offers the best value for money. The in-house bid was fully resourced and supported by expert consultants.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps are being taken to ensure that the successful contractor who takes over Operations West under the current market testing exercise will be able to ensure *(a)* the security of personal information relating to his Department's staff held on the computer system and *(b)* the security and commercial confidentiality of information held on the press system.

Mr. Aitken: The security standards applicable to Operations West have not changed. The security policy which will be implemented at the site will be the same as that which applied when the site was operated by my Department. Contractors employed on defence work are required, as a condition of contract, to safeguard information to which they might have access in the course of their work, and to adhere to security requirements and procedures laid down by my Department.

Site Security

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how he will ensure the security and safety of sites which pass to the custody of private contractors as a result of the market testing programme.

Mr. Aitken: Where a site passes to the custody of private contractors as a result of the market-testing programme, the contractors are required to conform to strict guidelines. Their adherence to these is monitored closely and regularly.

Market Testing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he will publish the investment appraisal models for market testing exercises.

Mr. Aitken: No. There are no standard investment appraisal models for market-testing exercises; appraisal models are designed for specific market tests and may therefore contain commercially sensitive material. Each appraisal is conducted in accordance with the Department's investment appraisal and market testing accounting rules.

Maritime Refitting and Repair

Mr. Loyden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with the management of *(a)* Rosyth and *(b)* Devonport concerning the future of the British maritime refitting and repair industry.

Mr. Aitken: Officials from my Department have regular meetings with the commercial managers at both Rosyth and Devonport dockyards, although it is not our policy to discuss the future of other United Kingdom commercial yards with them.

Porton Down

Mr. Livingstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many deaths or accidents requirng treatment in hospital have occurred in his Department's chemical and biological warfare establishment at Porton Down in each of the last 30 years.

Mr. Hanley: This is a matter for the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment under its framework documents and I have asked the chief executive to reply.

Letter from Graham S. Pearson to Mr. Ken Livingstone, dated 19 July 1993.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him how many deaths or accidents requiring treatment in hospital have occurred at his Department's chemical and biological warfare establishment at Porton Down in each of the last 30 years (Question 35, Order Paper 8 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment at Porton Down has its own small hospital to support the volunteer programme, which is the focus for occupational health in the Establishment. Consequently any members of staff requiring first aid treatment attend the Establishment hospital.

3. The records of the Safety Section of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment, and before that the Chemical Defence Establishment (1972-1991) and before that the Chemical Defence Experimental Establishment (1953-1972) go back to 1965. Prior to 1988, the Safety Section only has records of more serious accidents for which local enquiries were held.

4. There have been no deaths or permanent disability cases in the past 30 years. The number of accidents involving treatment at the Establishment hospital for each year since 1965 and recorded in the Safety Section records are tabulated below:

Year	Number
1965	1
1966	nil
1967	1
1968	nil
1969	nil
1970	nil
1971	nil
1972	1
1973	nil
1974	1
1975	1
1976	1
1977	4
1978	nil
1979	1
1980	1
1981	nil
1982	1
1983	1
1984	2
1985	1
1986	1
1987	3
1988	1
1989	5
1990	4
1991	8
1992	2
1993	4

The apparent increase from 1988 is due to improved reporting procedures for accidents. Most of the accidents since 1988 have been fairly minor injuries, not associated with chemical or biological warfare agents, requiring first aid treatment.

Vaccines

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service personnel volunteered to accept vaccination against biological agents during Operation Granby.

Mr. Hanley: All vaccinations for service personnel are given on a voluntary basis. Information relating to measures against biological warfare agents is classified.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if the United Kingdom possesses stocks of vaccine against penicillin-resistant anthrax.

Mr. Hanley: As I stated in the answer I gave the hon. Member on 12 July, *Official Report*, column 366, details relating to all vaccines giving protection against biological warfare agents are classified.

Civil Servants

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* grade 3 and *(b)* grade 5 civil servants were in post in his Department at the latest available date; what were the comparable figures for the same month in 1980; and if he will publish the equivalent data for the armed forces.

Mr. Hanley: The information is as follows:

Civilian staff in post	1 April 1993	1 April 1980
Grade 3	50	81
Grade 5	355	396

Service staff in post	1 April 1993	1 January 1980
Major Generals (and equivalents)	128	[1]172
Brigadiers (and equivalents)	371	[1]395

[1] Service data at 1 April 1980 are not available.

RAF Anniversary, Fairford

Mr. Robert Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what invitations have been issued to the South African air force to participate in the Royal Air Force 75th anniversary at Fairford on 24 and 25 July and on what basis; and what response has been received;

(2) whether aircraft and/or crews will be participating at the RAF's 75th anniversary on 24 and 25 July from *(a)* the South African air force and *(b)* citizen force aircraft.

Mr. Hanley: I refer the hon. Member to the announcement made by my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 17 June, *Official Report*, column *1006*. The RAF benevolent fund has also issued an invitation to the South African chief of air staff. We understand that no South African aircraft—civilian or military—are able to take part in the airshow, but the South African CAS will attend.

RAF Stornaway

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the contract to expand the residential facilities at RAF Stornoway is expected to be announced.

Mr. Hanley: The activation of RAF Stornoway as a forward operation base for RAF aircraft is under review. The requirement for additional residential facilities depends upon the outcome of that review. A decision on whether or not to proceed with the contract will be announced once the review is complete.

Hong Kong Garrison

Dr. Twinn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the future of the Hong Kong garrison; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: Broad plans have now been finalised for the withdrawal of the Hong Kong garrison by 30 June 1997. Units of all three services—the Army, the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force will remain in Hong Kong until then. The garrison will, however, continue to reduce in stages over the period, as local forces assume responsibility for its former operational tasks. In the latter part of 1994, the 1st Battalion the Black Watch will return to the United Kingdom and the two Gurkha battalions will merge to form the 1st Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles. One battalion will remain in Hong Kong until June 1997.

The strength of logistic and other supporting units will be reduced in line with that of front-line units. The three Royal Navy patrol craft currently in Hong Kong will remain until 1997. Royal Air Force helicopters will also remain in Hong Kong until 1997, although their numbers may be reduced. The plans mean that for the final two years of British sovereignty the garrison will be about 3,000 strong. It will comprise a headquarters, an infantry battalion group, logistic support, naval patrol craft and Royal Air Force helicopters.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday, 20 July 1993

NORTHERN IRELAND

Driver and Vehicle Licensing

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in establishing the executive agency within the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland to carry out the work of driver and vehicle licensing in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Atkins: I am pleased to announce that the agency, which will be called Driver and Vehicle Licensing Northern Ireland, will be established on 2 August 1993. It will assume responsibility for the registration and licensing of vehicles and the collection and enforcement of vehicle excise duty in Northern Ireland on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport and for licensing of drivers in Northern Ireland.

I am confident that the new status as a next steps agency will produce significant improvements in the provision of this important service. I am delegating full managerial authority for the agency's day-to-day operations to the chief executive. The policy and resource framework for the agency is set out in the framework document, copies of which are being placed in the Library of the House. For 1993-94, the following targets have been set out for the agency:

1. Turnaround Times

(a) Vehicle Licensing

(1) Registration Books for new vehicles: to achieve a yearly average of 90 per cent. of books dispatched within 16 working days of receipt of the application and not exceeding 17 working days in any one month.

(2) Refunds of vehicle excise duty: to achieve a yearly average of 90 per cent. of refunds dispatched within 11 working days of receipt of the application and not exceeding 12 working days in any one month.

(3) Postal Licensing: to achieve a yearly average of 90 per cent. of licences dispatched within six working days of receipt of the application and not exceeding eight working days in any one month.

(4) Duplicate Registration Books: to achieve a yearly average of 90 per cent. of books dispatched within six working days of receipt of the application and not exceeding seven working days in any one month.

(5) Changes to Registration Books: to achieve a yearly average of 95 per cent. of amended books dispatched within eight working days of receipts of the application and not exceeding 10 working days in any one month.

(b) Driver Licencing

Turnaround targets exclude cases requiring referral for medical or conduct recommendations.

(1) Ordinary Driving Licences: to achieve a yearly average of 90 per cent. of licences dispatched within 11 working days of receipt of the application and not exceeding 12 working days in any one month.

(2) Vocational Driving Licences: to achieve a yearly average of 95 per cent. of licences dispatched within 11 working days of receipt of the application and not exceeding 13 working days in any one month.

(3) Provisional Driving Licences: to achieve a yearly average of 90 per cent. of licences dispatched within 10 working days and not exceeding 12 working days in any one month.

(c) Written Enquiries

90 per cent. to be dispatched within five working days of receipt.

2. Waiting Time at Local Vehicle Licensing Offices

	Maximum waiting time (minutes)
Peak Period (First 8 and last 2 working days of each month)	25
Other working days	10

3. Error Rates

Reduction of error rate (errors on any item sent out by the Agency) to 0·6 per cent. of total Agency output.

4. Unit cost of Vehicle Excise Enforcement Cases

Achievement of a unit cost of £22·12 (at 1992-93 prices) per vehicle excise enforcement case completed.

5. Aggregate Unit Cost and Efficiency Indicator

(1) Achievement of an aggregate unit cost calculated on the basis of cost per standard hour of work of £26·37 (at 1992-93 prices).

(2) Achievement of an efficiency saving of at least 4·29 per cent.

NATIONAL FINANCE

UN Expenditure

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what additional United Kingdom expenditure will result from the UN Security Council resolution 816; how this expenditure will be met; and what effect this expenditure will have on Government spending totals.

Mr. Portillo: The additional annual operating costs of RAF aircraft engaged under UN Security Council resolution 816, which are charged to the defence budget, is currently estimated by MOD to be £20 million. The costs will not add to the planned total of public expenditure.

Income Tax

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what figures he has for aggregate income tax payments in Yorkshire and Humberside listed by tax office and for each constituent local authority area during the most recent financial year for which figures are available.

Mr. Dorrell: I regret that the information requested is not available. Estimates of tax liabilities for residents of counties and regions are given in table 3.11 of the Inland Revenue Statistics 1993.

Tax Returns

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many completed 12FR tax returns were received by the Inland Revenue in 1991-92 and 1992-93.

Mr. Dorrell: The specialised offices dealing with these tax returns recieved approximately 43,000 completed forms 12FR in each of the years 1991-92 and 1992-93.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many completed 11K tax returns were received by the Inland Revenue in 1991-92 and 1992-93.

Mr. Dorrell: Separate records are not kept of the numbers of these tax returns received in tax districts which deal with them.

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Asbestos-related Diseases

Mr. Watson: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department how much has been paid out in civil compensation in respect of asbestos-related diseases in each year from 1988 in England and Wales; and what was the average payment in each of those years.

Mr. John M. Taylor: This information is not available and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

BBC

Mr. Pendry: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will meet the chairman of the board of governors and the director general of the BBC; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Brooke: I met the chairman and other governors of the BBC, and the senior managers, on 16 June and I have no plans for a further meeting in the next few weeks.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Japanese Diplomatic Wireless Traffic

Mr. Allason: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to declassify and release to the Public Record Office Government code and cypher school decrypts of intercepted pre-war and wartime Japanese diplomatic wireless traffic.

Mr. Hurd: The decrypts shown to Sir Winston Churchill when Prime Minister, referred to in the Open Government White Paper at chapter 2 and annex D, include selected translations of wartime Japanese diplomatic messages. The papers are being reviewed and it should be possible to make them available in the next nine months.

Other wartime and earlier records of the Government code and cypher school will be reviewed thereafter. These records also include translations of pre-war Japanese diplomatic messages; I cannot at this time say exactly when these records will reach the Public Record Office.

Iran

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations have been made to the Iranian Government on the new wave of persecution of the Baha'i community in Iran.

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking in respect of current human rights violations against members of the Baha'i faith in Iran.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We regularly raise our concerns about human rights in Iran, including the treatment of the Baha'i community, with the Iranian authorities. Together with our EC partners, we sponsored a resolution adopted by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on 10 March which highlighted the position of the Baha'i community. We and our EC partners underlined our concerns during recent discussions between the EC and Iran.

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking following the publication on 22 February of the final report on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran by the special representative of the Commission on Human Rights, Mr. Reynaldo Galindo Pohl.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Together with our EC partners we co-sponsored a resolution tabled at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in the light of the February report of the United Nations Special Representative on Human Rights in Iran. The resolution was adopted on 10 March by a sizeable majority. We regularly raise our concerns about human rights in Iran with the Iranian authorities.

NATO Summit

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what subjects will be discussed at the NATO summit in December.

Mr. Goodlad: This is still under discussion, but we would expect the agenda to include the further development of NATO's relations with the countries of central and eastern Europe: the adaptation of the alliance in its new roles, including peacekeeping under United Nations and CSCE auspices: the European identity within the alliance: and non-proliferation.

Ukraine

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to persuade the Ukraine to ratify START I.

Mr. Goodlad: We have repeatedly urged Ukraine to fulfil its commitment to ratify START I and accede to the non-proliferation treaty as a non-nuclear weapons state. We have made clear our view that this will facilitate Ukraine's development of full and positive relations with the international community. We have acknowledged the security and economic concerns which Ukraine has raised in this context. We have made clear that we are prepared to offer security assurances to Ukraine once it has acceded to the NPT, and that we support efforts to meet its economic concerns in a way which is compatible with the non-nuclear commitments it has given.

Kosovo

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what requests the Atlantic Council have made to the appropriate bodies within NATO to prepare contingency plans for an appropriate military response in the event of a deterioration of the political and humanitarian situation in Kosovo.

Mr. Goodlad: NATO military authorities have assessed measures which might be taken in support of the United

Nations to prevent spillover of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia beyond present confines, including to Kosovo. This assessment has been passed to the United Nations in confidence.

Serbia

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice has been given to the Atlantic Council by the NATO military committee on the feasibility and advisability of air strikes against Serbia.

Mr. Goodlad: The NATO military committee has examined a wide range of options for the use of air power in relation to the crisis in former Yugoslavia. Airstrikes against Serbia would, however, require a fresh United Nations Security Council resolution; no consideration has been given to such a resolution.

Tibet

Mr. Devlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the oral answer of 14 July, *Official Report*, column 972, if he will make a statement on the position of Her Majesty's Government as regards Tibet that was communicated to the Chinese Government.

Mr. Goodlad: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs raised human rights issues in his meeting with Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen on 8 July and specifically expressed concern about the situation in Tibet. He also handed over a copy of the report by Lord Howe's delegation on human rights in China and an updated list of cases of concern, including two Tibetans recently detained in Lhasa.

Russia

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action Her Majesty's Government are taking with regard to proposed legal amendments in Russia which would restrict the activity of foreign religious organisations in that country.

Mr. Goodlad: We raised with the Russian authorities on 15 July our concern at the passing by the Russian Supreme Soviet the previous day of an amendment of the 1990 law on freedom of religion. We have drawn attention to Russia's international commitments under the CSCE documents in relation to religious freedom and the free passage of information and urged that the new legislation, which has not yet received the president's signature, should not be brought into force.

PRIME MINISTER

Stone, Kent

Q7. **Mr. Dunn:** To ask the Prime Minister whether he has any plans to pay an official visit to Stone, Kent.

The Prime Minister: I have no immediate plans to do so.

Council of Europe and WEU

Mr. Ward: To ask the Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the information bulletin on the activities of the United Kingdom delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Assembly of Western European Union which has been sent to him.

The Prime Minister: I have done so today.

Engagements

Sir Peter Tapsell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 20 July.

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 20 July.

The Prime Minister: This morning I had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in the House I shall be having further meetings later today.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Central Office of Information

Mrs. Angela Knight: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make an announcement about when the Central Office of Information's annual report and accounts for the year just ended will be published.

Mr. David Davis: I have pleasure in informing the hon. Member that I have today arranged for copies of the annual report and accounts to be placed in the Library of the House.

Citizens Charters

Mr. Pike: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list in the *Official Report* all the current citizens charters, indicating those which do not have specific reference to the needs of people with disabilities; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. David Davis: There are 32 charters, 27 of which have specific reference to the needs of people with disabilities. The full list is as follows:

Charter
- Benefits Agency Customer Charter
- Child Support Agency Charter
- Courts Charter
- Jobseeker's Charter
- London Underground Customer's Charter
- Parent's Charter
- Passenger's Charter
- Patient's Charter
- Tenant's Charter
- Traveller's Charter
- Contributor's Charter[1]
- Employer's Charter[1]
- Redundancy Payments Service Charter[1]
- Taxpayer's Charter (HM Customs and Excise)[1]
- Taxpayer's Charter (Inland Revenue)[1]

Northern Ireland
- Bus Passenger's Charter
- Charter for Patients and Clients
- Charter for Social Security Agency Clients
- Child Support Agency Charter
- Northern Ireland Charter

Northern Ireland Tenant's Charter
Parent's Charter
Railway Passenger's Charter
RUC Charter
Training and Employment Agency Customer's Charter

Scotland
Justice Charter for Scotland
Parent's Charter for Scotland
Patient's Charter for Scotland
Tenant's Charter for Scotland

Wales
Parent's Charter for Wales
Patient's Charter for Wales
Tenant's Charter for Wales

[1] Charters that do not make specific reference to the needs of people with disabilities.

Science

Ms Mowlam: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the measures additional to the small grants scheme taken by the Office of Science and Technology as part of the campaign to promote the public understanding of science.

Mr. David Davis: The White Paper, "Realising our Potential" (Cm. 2250), lists a number of measures which the Government intend will be part of this campaign, in addition to the public understanding of science grants scheme. These include support for the creativity in science and technology awards scheme in schools; working with the Gatsby Charitable Foundation and the British Association for the Advancement of Science to bring greater coherence to regional initiatives in the field; and co-sponsorship of a mobile exhibition on the theme of science for the 21st century. We shall also be discussing with organisations active in the public understanding of science the scope for encompassing within the campaign their own activities and events. I shall make further announcements on all these proposals in due course.

Small Grants Scheme

Ms Mowlam: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to what extent the funding for the Office of Science and Technology small grants scheme is to be taken from existing budgets; and if he will list the vote subheads or budgets concerned.

Mr. David Davis: The £100,000 made available in 1993-94 to fund the Office of Science and Technology grants scheme for the public understanding of science will be financed from the provision made for Office of Science and Technology science policy studies and initiatives shown at subhead A8 of class XVIII, vote 2 of the Supply Estimates.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Sheffield Exhibition

Mr. Cabom: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if he has considered an application for an exhibition relating to Sheffield's manufacturing base; an exhibition for Sheffield's centenary year, to be displayed in the Upper Waiting Hall.

Mr. Michael Martin: I understand that, under procedures agreed by the Administration Committee, arrangements have been made for the exhibition to be held in the Upper Waiting Hall from 25 to 29 October.

ENVIRONMENT

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what advice he has received from British Nuclear Fuels plc or the Radioactive Waste Management advisory group on the range and number of movements of radioactive waste resulting from the lifetime operation of the thermal oxide reprocessing plant *(a)* with substitution and *(b)* without substitution.

Mr. Yeo: The consequences, in terms of waste movements, of adopting waste substitution would depend on the nature of the scheme implemented.

Housing Association Grants

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what estimate he has made of the effect on the percentage of new housing association tenants reliant on housing benefit for the payment of rent of the proposed reduction of housing association grants in 1995-96.

Mr. Baldry: The Government have announced their objective of reducing the average housing association grant rate in England from the current year's level of 67 per cent. to 60 per cent. in 1994-95 and 55 per cent. in 1995-96.

Final decisions will be taken when Ministers have considered all the relevant evidence, including the likely impact on rents, on housing benefit and the availability of private finance. No decisions about grant rates for 1995-96 will be taken until much closer to the time.

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what guidance he issues to the Housing Corporation on the maximum housing association grant level per person for a new scheme.

Sir George Young: Grant rates are proposed by the Housing Corporation and approved by my right hon. Friend after he has considered all the relevant information, including advice from the Housing Corporation on the implication of different grant levels on rents and the availability of private finance.

Grant rates vary according to scheme type and location and represent the maximum proportion of scheme costs which will be funded by any form of public subsidy including housing association grant. They are determined by reference to the income of tenants, the unit costs of schemes in a given area and other factors such as management and maintenance costs.

Housing Associations

Dame Angela Rumbold: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what advice he gives to housing associations on the appropriate level of finance from the private sector.

Sir George Young: The Government do not give specific advice on the appropriate level of private finance to

housing associations. However, our objective is to increase the proportion of private finance input to new housing association schemes in order to get the maximum output from public resources.

Dame Angela Rumbold: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to reduce the grant rates to housing associations; and what estimate he has made of the effect of his plans on rent levels.

Sir George Young: Our objective is to increase the proportion of private finance input to new housing association schemes by reducing grant rates to 60 per cent. in 1994-95 and 55 per cent. in 1995-96.

Final decisions will be taken when Ministers have considered all the relevant evidence, including the likely impact on rents.

Dame Angela Rumbold: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to allow housing association tenants the right to buy.

Sir George Young: The right to buy is already available to secure tenants of housing associations, except in cases where the association is a charity: there are no plans at present to extend this statutory right. Associations may, however, sell to tenants on voluntary terms. There is also an alternative scheme for promoting home ownership to housing association tenants—the tenants incentive scheme —under which they may be eligible to receive a grant to help them purchase a home in the owner-occupied sector. Similarly, the do-it-yourself-shared-ownership scheme is available to eligible housing association tenants who wish to pursue the shared equity route towards home ownership.

Local Government Corruption, Bolsover

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representations he has received about local government corruption in Bolsover.

Mr. Baldry: None.

Countryside Stewardship Scheme

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many hectares are currently under agreement with the countryside stewardship scheme; how many hectares involved additional payments for public access in *(a)* England and *(b)* each county; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: There are 59,836 hectares currently under agreement with the countryside stewardship scheme which is run by the Countryside Commission. Of these, 11,596 hectares involve additional payments for open access. Payments are also being made for 190·4 km of linear access —payment for the creation of linear routes such as footpaths, bridleways and routes for those with mobility difficulties.

The breakdown of the access figures by county is as follows:—

County	*Open Access Hectares*	*Linear Access Kilometres*
Northumberland	893	14·2
Cumbria	358	6·8
Durham	261	2·5
Cleveland	40	2·7
Lancashire	61	7·6
Derbyshire	850	5·4
Merseyside Met	0	0·0
Greater Manchester	4	0·9
Cheshire	8	2·3
North Yorkshire	1,178	24·7
Humberside	62	2·2
South Yorkshire	13	0·4
West Yorkshire Met	0	0·0
Nottinghamshire	58	0·0
Shropshire	119	0·0
Staffordshire	18	2·6
Leicestershire	369	3·7
West Midland Met	0	0·0
Hereford and Worcester	163	0·1
Warwickshire	152	0·0
Northamptonshire	678	4·3
Lincolnshire	329	12·1
Cambridgeshire	189	5·6
Norfolk	282	14·9
Suffolk	193	2·5
Bedfordshire	67	0·0
Oxfordshire	107	1·5
Buckinghamshire	258	4·1
Hertfordshire	120	0·0
Essex	219	0·6
Berkshire	81	0·0
London	45	0·0
Hampshire	136	5·4
Surrey	156	0·2
Kent	298	2·1
West Sussex	317	1·1
East Sussex	431	11·0
Isle of Wight	111	4·1
Gloucestershire	180	5·9
Cornwall	810	12·0
Devon	361	6·8
Somerset	324	3·4
Avon	220	0·5
Wiltshire	718	13·6
Dorset	359	2·6

Countryside stewardship is a pilot scheme. The Countryside Commission has reviewed arrangements for publicising access in the light of its experience in the first two years of the experiment. The answer given by the then Minister for the Environment and Countryside on 2 April, *Official Report*, column *520*, gives details of further steps being taken to improve information about public access.

Waste Disposal Levy

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) on what relative tax base the waste disposal levy is apportioned between constituent authorities in metropolitan areas; and what considerations account for the choice of this base for apportionment;

(2) what account was taken of the desirability of providing an incentive to reduce the volume of waste to be disposed of in the choice of a base for apportionment of the waste disposal levy for metropolitan areas;

(3) what consideration has been given to apportioning the waste disposal levy between constituent authorities in metropolitan areas according to tonnage dealt with rather than a tax base; and if he will make a statement;

(4) if he will make it his policy to review the basis of apportioning the waste disposal levy in metropolitan areas in time for changes to come into effect for 1994-95.

Mr. Yeo: The constituent boroughs of each statutory joint waste disposal authority are at liberty to agree among themselves the apportionment of the levy. Should they fail to agree, the levies are apportioned on the basis of the tax base in force at the time, which, under the current system of local government finance, is the tax base for the council tax.

The reason for using the tax base is that the cost of providing the service then adds the same amount to the local tax in each area. This general principle applies to other statutory authorities, such as certain combined police authorities, which supply a service across more than one local authority area.

Under the community charge system, the general basis of apportionment was "relevant population". As part of the preparation for the introduction of council tax, the Government sought to apply the same principle and therefore proposed to change to the council tax base—the number of Band D equivalent dwellings. This proposal was the subject of consultation with the local authority associations.

The majority of constituent boroughs appear to be satisfied with the apportionment of the levy according to the tax base for the council tax and in considering these arrangements, I take the view that it is important to listen to the concerns of all those involved and to act in the best interests of the authorities' areas as a whole.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representations he has received to allow councils to continue spending capital receipts beyond the end of the current year; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: The local authority associations have asked for the temporary concession on the use of capital receipts, announced in the autumn statement, to be extended beyond 31 December 1993.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is his Department's latest assessment of the total of capital receipts accruing to local authorities during the current capital receipts holiday; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: As a result of the temporary relaxation in the capital receipts rules announced in the autumn statement, local authorities are able to spend 100 per cent. of virtually all the capital receipts they receive during the period 13 November 1992 to 31 December 1993. Estimates of local authorities' capital receipts are based on information provided by authorities themselves. My Department has sought provisional outturn information for receipts which local authorities obtained between 13 November 1992 and 31 March 1993, and estimates of the receipts which authorities expect to receive between 1 April and 31 December 1993. This information will be published in due course, once authorities' returns have been received and processed.

Standard Spending Assessments

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) what assessment he has made of the advantages and disadvantages of the reduction in the number of indicators in changing the standard spending assessment systems of local authority grant distribution;

(2) what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the indicators used in the SSA system to reflect fully in the distribution of grants to local authorities the range and variety of different needs which they experience.

Mr. Baldry: The system of standard spending assessments was intended to simplify the method of distributing grant to local authorities compared with previous methods. One of the main simplifications was the reduction in the number of indicators used. SSAs were also intended to be easier to understand without any reduction in fairness. We are currently reviewing SSAs and in particular the range of social factors used and the weight placed upon them. As part of the review we will consider the scope for using new indicators.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to appoint outside consultants to advise him on the review of standard spending assessments.

Mr. Baldry: Some external research has already taken place which will inform the review of standard spending assessments. We will appoint outside consultants to advise further on the review, if it is felt to be necessary.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the validity of area cost adjustment in the standard spending assessments for 1993-94 as a measure of the differences in providing similar services in different parts of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Baldry: The area cost adjustment for 1993-94 aims to reflect variations in average employment costs facing authorities in the provision of their services in different areas. It is confined to London and the south-east because survey evidence has shown that these are the only regions facing employment costs which are consistently and significantly above the national average. We are reviewing the calculation of the area cost adjustment, in consultation with the local authority associations, as part of the wider review of standard spending assessments in progress.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the extent to which additional educational needs parts of the standard spending assessment reflect different needs and costs which face different local government areas.

Mr. Baldry: We are considering the additional educational needs index used in standard spending assessments as part of the current review. The social factors used in standard spending assessments are selected to be representative of variation in the potential need for spending on the particular services for which different authorities have responsibility.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) if he will consider using information on health available for the first time in the 1991 census as part of the standard spending assessment for 1994-95;

(2) what assessment he has made of the validity of the use of the percentage of single-parent families in a case as a measurement of need as part of the education and social services element of the standard spending assessment system.

Mr. Baldry: We are considering a range of health and social factors for use in standard spending assessments as part of the current review.

Local Government Commission

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what recent discussions he has had with the chairman of the Local Government Commission about its work programme and timetable; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: My hon. Friend the Minister for Local Government and Planning has met the chairman on several occasions, most recently on 14 July, to discuss these and related sums.

Modbury Plan

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he expects to receive Mr. David Fenton's report, following the hearing at the public inquiry into the Modbury plan, south Devon, on 13 January; what steps he is taking to expedite this report; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: Mr. David Fenton was appointed to conduct an inquiry into objections to the South Hams local plan on behalf of South Hams district council. The plan is the responsibility of the district council, and the inspector's report will be delivered to the planning authority. They are required under The Town and Country (Development Plan) Regulations 1991 to supply my right hon. Friend with a copy of the inspector's report when they publish their intention to modify or to adopt the plan.

Council Tax

Mr. Gorst: To ask the Secretary of State for the Enviornment how many representations he has received alleging that the provisions of the council tax transitional reduction scheme are not in accordance with natural justice, or have given rise to anomalies.

Mr. Baldry: Since the introduction of the council tax the Department has received approximately 800 queries about transitional relief. In many cases taxpayers were simply inquiring about the way in which relief is calculated.

Mr. Gorst: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the extent to which the requirement that purchasers of houses since 31 March receive council tax transitional reduction scheme on a basis determined by the personal circumstances of previous occupants has worked fairly.

Mr. Baldry: It is reasonable to expect purchasers of a property to consider all the costs involved, including the council tax applying to that property, in their decision to purchase. A transitional relief calculation which accommodated changes in the household composition would require authorities to hold detailed records of household composition which would be both costly and unpopular.

Mr. Gorst: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to carry out a review of the regulations governing the calculation of the council tax transitional reduction scheme, with a view to their amendment.

Mr. Baldry: I have no plans to review the operation of the 1993-94 transitional relief arrangements.

Sustainable Development

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he intends to publish proposals for the United Kingdom's national strategy for sustainable development.

Mr. Gummer: I will be publishing tomorrow a consultation paper outlining the Government proposals. I am placing copies in the Library of the House.

Local Authority Services

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he intends to publish the results of research into the effects of competitive tendering for local authority services.

Mr. Baldry: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment has today published the full report of a major study into the impact of competitive tendering under the Local Government Act 1988, which has been carried out for us by the university of Birmingham. Copies have been placed in the Library of the House.

The research shows that competition produces significant benefits for local taxpayers. Competitive tendering has resulted in fundamental service review within local authorities, leading to more efficient management, reduced costs and a sharper focus on performance and quality. In particular it shows, in the authorities studied, that an average reduction of 6·5 per cent. in the annual cost of services subject to competitive tendering has been achieved, due in large part to significant improvements in productivity. Service standards have been maintained and often raised in the process and competition has been an important spur to greater emphasis on performance, target setting and quality assurance in local authority service delivery.

Council Rent Arrears

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment which local authorities have the highest rent arrears; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: I have today arranged for the information on rent arrears in all English local authorities at 31 March 1992, to be placed in the Library.

At 31 March 1992, the total amount of rent arrears owing to housing authorities in England amounted to £458 million, 8 per cent. of rent roll, compared to £434 million, 8·6 per cent. of rent roll, in the previous year. Despite a small overall increase in cash terms, the latest figures bring to an end a long upward trend in local authority rent arrears.

About half all rent arrears arise in London, £223 million, with eight of the 10 authorities which perform least satisfactorily found in the capital. These authorities have rent arrears totalling £163 million, equal to 36 per cent. of the national total.

Closer analysis of returns from local authorities confirms a recent general improvement in rent collection rates. During 1991-92, for example, local authorities estimated that £87·2 million of rent due during the year remained uncollected at the end of the year, 1·5 per cent. of the rent roll, with 20 authorities responsible for half this total. This compares to £109·5 million, 2·2 per cent. of rent roll, of rent due in 1990-91 uncollected at the end of the year.

Despite this general improvement in rent collection rates, there is no room for complacency and many authorities, particularly those in London, need to do more to improve their performance in this critical area.

Hams Hall Power Station

Mr. Robert Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he will make an announcement on the application to turn Hams Hall power station into a channel tunnel freight terminal.

Mr. Baldry: The inspector's report on this called-in planning application is being studied. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will announce a decision shortly.

County Hall

Mr. Dykes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he last had discussions with the London Residuary Body on plans for the disposal of county hall; what plans he expects to go ahead; what are the reasons for the delays in disposal which have occurred; what is the current state of the buildings; and if he will list the names of those various prospective purchasers which need to apply to his Department for final approval.

Mr. Curry *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend has not as yet had any discussions with the London Residuary Body, but the Department is in regular contact with it. The riverside building of county hall has already been sold. Discussions are going ahead with various parties over the sale of the remaining buildings on the site. The conduct of these negotiations is a matter for the residuary body and the identity of those involved is a matter of commercial confidence. There would in fact be no need for prospective purchasers to ask my right hon. Friend for his approval. The state of the buildings is satisfactory and the residuary body ensures that planned routine maintenance is carried out to all the buildings.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

Mr. Hardy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what response he made to the CITES standing committee in regard to the proposed new criteria for listing species on the appendices to the convention prior to the deadline date of 30 June.

Mr. Yeo *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* None, but we shall submit comments shortly. I will ensure that a copy of our response is sent to the hon. Member as well as to interested organisations.

Peatlands

Mr. Kevin Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Newham, North-West (Mr. Banks) of 6 July, *Official Report*, column 79, how much longer it is expected to take to finalise the agreement between English Nature and Fisons to secure areas of lowland peatland of conservation importance.

Mr. Yeo *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* Both English Nature and Fisons remain fully committed to this agreement. It is taking some time to complete the conveyance because of the legal complexity of the transaction.

Water (Complaints)

Mrs. Helen Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many complaints have been received by the Office of Water Services customer services committees about the water supply industry in the current year and the past year, region by region.

Mr. Yeo *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* OFWAT's annual report 1992 lists the number of complaints received by each customer services committee for each individual company for the years requested, together with the companies assigned to each region. Copies of the report are available in the Library.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list those sites where *(a)* BNFL, *(b)* Nuclear Electric, *(c)* Scottish Nuclear or *(d)* others have applied for planning permission for, or had any form of initial discussions with, his Department as to the construction of a dry store capable of taking spent AGR fuel.

Mr. Eggar: I have been asked to reply.

My Department has had no such applications or discussions. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland has received an application from Scottish Nuclear Ltd. in respect of a proposed dry store at Torness power station. My right hon. Friend has not yet received the report following the public inquiry into this application.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what consideration Her Majesty's Government have given to the dry storage of spent AGR fuel as waste as an alternative to reprocessing.

Mr. Eggar: I have been asked to reply.

Management options for dealing with spent fuel are commercial matters for the owners of the fuel.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what consideration is given, in deciding whether to allow imports of spent nuclear fuel for the thermal oxide reprocessing plant, to the possible effect of the build-up of such stocks on the outcome of the further consultation process and eventual adjudication on revised draft authorisations for the Sellafield site; if he will now make it his policy to allow no further imports until a final decision is made; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: I have been asked to reply.

I am advised by British Nuclear Fuels plc that, under its contracts with overseas customers, some 70 per cent. of the overseas spent fuel due to be reprocessed in the first ten years of operating its thermal oxide reprocessing plant has already been delivered to Sellafield. In accordance with scheduled deliveries, this proportion is not expected to change materially in the next few months. It would be inappropriate to take an initiative of the kind proposed by the hon. Member.

Rent Arrears

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing English local authorities' own estimates of both former and current tenants' rent arrears at 31 March *(a)* by cash value and *(b)* as a percentage of the rent roll.

Sir George Young *[holding answer 19 May 1993]:* I have now placed information in the Library on local authority rent arrears at 31 March 1992. It has not been practice in recent years to make available local authority's latest estimates of rent arrears. I shall let my hon. Friend have provisional figures for the year to 31 March 1993 later in the summer, once my officials have had the opportunity to validate the data.

EDUCATION

Non-vocational Courses

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many non-vocational courses open to adults were offered in 1991-92, 1992-93 and 1993-94 in *(a)* the local authorities sector not transferred to Government on 1 April and *(b)* the local authorities sector transferred to Government on 1 April.

Mr. Boswell: Information about the number of further education courses for adults is not collected by the Department.

Open University

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many Open university students have applied for the new post-graduate certificate of education programme beginning in 1994; and how many students with Open university qualifications went on to enter the teaching profession.

Mr. Boswell: To date, 586 Open university students have applied for the new PGCE programme beginning in 1994. The number who enter the teaching profession will not be known until after the first entrants complete the course in July 1995.

Teacher Training

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his oral answer to the hon. Member for Wyre (Mr. Mans), *Official Report,* 13 July 1993, c. 826, concerning teacher training, what additional funding for schools will be made to cover the costs of supervising trainee teachers in the proposed two thirds training time in schools; and, for the academic years 1995-96 and thereafter, what he expects to be the overall ratio of qualified and trainee teachers in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools.

Mr. Robin Squire: Schools which enter into teacher training partnerships with higher education institutions will receive funding from their partner institution; the amount transferred will depend on the nature of the partnership in each case. Schools taking part in the pioneering scheme of school-centred training will receive up to £4,000 per student, equivalent to the full cost of a PGCE course in higher education. All student teachers have for many years spent time in the school classroom; the 56,000 students currently enrolled on courses of initial teacher training compare with a total teaching force of 450,000. On current plans student numbers are expected to decline from 1995-96 onwards.

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is his estimate of the intake into teacher training in the next decade based on the present birth rate; and what statistics and information he has available to plan for educational trends in the next two decades.

Mr. Robin Squire: In January this year the Higher Education Funding Council for England was given planning numbers for intakes into initial teacher training courses for the period 1993 to 1996. These were as follows:

	1993	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*
Primary phase	14,295	12,930	12,115	10,855
Secondary phase	14,450	16,050	17,000	17,935
Total	28,745	28,980	29,115	28,790

These numbers were based on the latest projections of pupil numbers taking account of the Government Actuary's estimates of birth rates, and other indicators of teacher supply and demand such as total numbers, retirements and other wastage, and out of service teachers. The planning figures will be reviewed annually as new data become available. Estimates beyond 1996 will be made towards the end of the present planning period.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what studies he has made of the effect on *(a)* pupils and *(b)* staff of his proposal that two thirds of teacher trainee time shall be in the schools with particular reference to the quality of supervision and training that might be available in smaller schools; and which such studies have been published.

Mr. Robin Squire: The requirement that two thirds of a student's time is to be spent in school will apply, from September 1994, to postgraduate courses of training for secondary school teachers. The requirements for undergraduate courses, and proposed requirements for primary courses to take full effect in 1996, are set out in DFE Circular 9/92 and the draft circular on primary teacher training recently issued by the Department; both are in the Library. Schools able and willing to play a part in teacher training may choose to enter into partnership with higher education institutions. OFSTED will be monitoring the impact of these new arrangements on schools and students; OFSTED's "New Teacher in School" survey, published last month, noted that those with the most extended school experience felt best prepared for their first posts.

Adult Learning Centres

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many adult learning centres closed in England and Wales in 1991-92 and 1992-93; what information he has on the likely closure figure for 1993-94; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Boswell: Information on the number of closures of adult education establishments in England is not collected by the Department. Information on Wales is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales.

The duty to secure the provision of adequate facilities for the further education of adults is clearly set out in the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. That duty is divided between the Further Education Funding Council and local education authorities. The Government have ensured that both the council and LEAs have sufficient resources to carry out their duties.

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many adult learning centres in England and Wales received local authority grants in 1991-92, 1992-93 and 1993-94.

Mr. Boswell: In 1991-92 and 1992-93 there were, respectively, 1,682 and 1,562 adult education establishments maintained by local education authorities in England and recorded on annual returns to the Department. Figures for 1993-94 are not yet available. Information on Wales is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales.

Speech Therapy and Child Psychotherapy

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what funds are available from the European Community to enable individual students to receive funding to pursue postgraduate courses in Britain leading to qualifications in *(a)* speech therapy and *(b)* child psychotherapy.

Mr. Boswell: I am not aware of EC funding specifically for post-graduate study in these areas. Within the ERASMUS programme eligible students in any discipline, including postgraduate students, undertaking an integrated period of study in another participating state as part of their home course may receive assistance towards the cost of mobility. Students from elsewhere in the EC undertaking a course in the United Kingdom are eligible for payment of their tuition fees on the same basis as home students.

General Studies A-Level

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make a statement on the future of the general studies A-level examination; how many students have passed this examination for each of the past 10 years; and how many students there were whose qualifications to enter university included the general studies A-level for the same period.

Mr. Robin Squire: The future of individual GCE A-level syllabuses is a matter for the GCE examination boards to decide, in consultation with the School Examinations and Assessment Council. Information about the numbers entering universities with general studies GCE A-level is not held centrally. The Department estimates that in 1982 approximately 27,000 candidates achieved a pass at general studies GCE A-level and figures published by SEAC show that in 1991, 52,085, and in 1992, 53,724 candidates achieved passes in this subject.

Student Unions

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what outside advice he sought or received in making his decision as to *(a)* the publication date and *(b)* the closing date of his consultation paper on student unions.

Mr. Boswell: The Government's announcement of their proposals for student union reform on 1 July followed extensive consultations over the principles to be applied in student union affairs. The consultations now under way relate to the implementation of these reforms. In the light of representations received, we have decided that it would be helpful to extend the period for these follow-up consultations to four months to 1 November, to enable constructive discussions to take place.

Non-contact Time

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is his estimate of the average weekly non-contact time of primary and secondary school teachers for 1992 and 1993.

Mr. Robin Squire: The latest available information on teachers' non-contact time is that provided in the reply given to the hon. Member on 3 February 1993, *Official Report*, column *211*.

Students (Socio-economic Background)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what information he has on recent changes or trends in the socio-economic background of students; and if he will provide an estimate of the relative chances of entering full-time higher education among the present cohort of 18-year-olds relative to the socio-economic group of their parents.

Mr. Boswell: The Department has two main sources of information about the socio-economic background of students in higher education: the youth cohort study and the higher education admissions agencies, UCCA and PCAS. The youth cohort study is a sample survey of young people at ages 16, 17 and 18. Universities Central Council on Admissions and Polytechnics Central Admissions System data cover entrants of all ages to full-time and sandwich courses of higher education, but not all applicants provide information about their socio-economic background. PCAS collected information on socio-economic background for the first time in 1991-92. The most recent available figures are shown in the tables.

The proportion of all young people entering full-time and sandwich higher education reached the record level of 28 per cent. in 1992. The Department does not have the necessary information to estimate relative participation rates for different socio-economic groups in that year.

Youth Cohort Study: 1988-89 academic year

	Percentage distribution by socio-economic group of		*Percentage of young people from each socio-economic group in higher education at age 18*
	All 18 year olds	*18 year olds in higher education*	
Professional	8	18	35
Managerial	17	24	21
Other non-manual	21	29	21
Skilled manual	38	24	9
Semi and unskilled manual	16	6	5

Percentage distribution by socio-economic class of home applicants accepted through UCCA:

Academic Year	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*
Professional	21	20	19
Intermediate	49	50	50
Skilled non-manual	11	11	11
Skilled manual	12	12	12
Partly skilled and unskilled manual	7	7	7

Percentage distribution by socio-economic class of home applicants admitted through PCAS:

Academic Year	*1991-92*	*1992-93*
Professional	12	13
Intermediate	46	42
Skilled non-manual	13	13
Skilled manual	18	20
Partly skilled and unskilled manual	12	11

Students (Vacation)

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps his Department is taking to relieve the hardship of students with dependent families over the long summer vacation.

Mr. Boswell: The mandatory awards system provides dependants' allowances covering the summer vacation for eligible students. Local education authorities may make such discretionary award payments as they think fit to students on courses not designated for mandatory awards. Universities and colleges may use their access funds to give additional help to eligible students in particular need during the vacation.

Further Education Colleges

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to increase the level of access funds for further education colleges.

Mr. Boswell: The Further Education Funding Council has been allocated £4·8 million from the access funds to disburse to colleges in the further education sector in the 1993-94 academic year, an increase of 9·6 per cent. on the sum available to FE colleges in 1992-93.

HEALTH

Quangos

Mr. Grocott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the former members of this House who have been appointed since 1988 by her Department to quasi autonomous non-governmental organisations; and if she will list, in each case, the title of the post, the salary, the duration of the appointment, and the party which each represented as an hon. Member.

Mr. Sackville: The available information is shown in the tables.

National Health Service Authorities and Trusts

Mrs. R. Barnes, Director, Greenwich Healthcare Trust, 4 November 1992 to 31 October 1994 (Social Democratic Party).

Mr. T. Benyon, Chairman, Milton Keynes District Health Authority, 1 April 1990 to 31 March 1993 (Conservative).

Mr. T. Brinton, Chairman, Dartford and Gravesham District Health Authority, 1 April 1988 to 31 March 1990 (Conservative).

Lord Hayhoe, Chairman, Guy's and St. Thomas' Trust, 21 March 1993 to 30 November 1995 (Conservative).

Mrs. H. Hayman, Chairman, Whittington Hospital Trust, 4 November 1992 to 31 October 1996. (Labour).

Lord Jenkin of Roding, Chairman, Forest Healthcare Trust, 1 November 1991 to 30 November 1993 (Conservative).

Mr. J. Lee, Chairman, Christie Hospital Trust, 1 December 1992 to 30 November 1994 (Conservative).

Dr. J. D. Mabon, Chairman, Royal London homeopathic Hospital Trust, 4 November 1992 to 31 October 1996 (Labour/Social Democratic Party).

Sir Robert McCrindle, Director, Havering Hospital Trust, 4 November 1992 to 31 October 1996 (Conservative).

Sir Michael McNair-Wilson, Director, West Berks Priority Care Trust, 4 November 1992 (died 28 March 1993) (Conservative).

Professor E. Moonman, Chairman, Islington District Health Authority, 1 April 1982 to 31 March 1990 (Labour).

Sir David Price, Director, Southampton University Hospital Trust, 4 November 1992 to 31 October 1994 (Conservative).

Sir Timothy Raison, Chairman, Aylesbury Vale Community Trust, 1 June 1992 to 30 November 1994 (Conservative).

Chairmen of district health authorities and National Health Service trusts are currently remunerated at between £15,125 and £19,285 a year. Non-executive directors of NHS trusts receive £5,000 a year.

Non-Departmental Public Bodies

Sir Michael McNair-Wilson, Member of the Unrelated Live Transplant Regulatory Authority from February 1990 to his death in March 1993. Paid expenses only. (Conservative).

Mr. James Welbeloved, Member of the Unrelated Live Transplant Regulatory Authority from February 1990 to 31 March 1994. Paid expenses only. (Labour).

Mr. Grocott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the names of individuals who *(a)* are spouses of hon. Members, *(b)* are members of the House of Lords,

(c) are spouses of members of the House of Lords and *(d)* have been party candidates for Parliament, indicating for which party, who have been appointed by her Department since 1988 to quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations giving, in each case, the title of the post, any salary payable, and the duration of the appointment.

Mr. Sackville: Of appointments to health authorities and trusts and non-departmental public bodies made by the Secretary of State for Health since 1989, when Health became a separate Department, our records show the following as spouses of hon. Members or Members of the House of Lords or spouses of members of the House of Lords or as party candidates for Parliament:

National Health Service Authorities and Trusts

Spouses of Hon. Members

Mr. T. Shepherd, Director, King's Lynn and Wisbech Trust, 1 November 1991 to 30 November 1994.

Mrs. S. Taylor, Chairman, Southend Community Trust, 1 November 1991 to 30 November 1993.

Members of the House of Lords

Baroness Cox of Queensbury, Director, West Lambeth Community Trust, 1 November 1991 to 30 November 1994.

Baroness Cumberlege of Newick, Chairman, South West Thames Regional Health Authority, 1 August 1988 to 13 April 1992.

Baroness Eccles of Moulton, Chairman, Ealing District Health Authority, 1 April 1988 to 31 March 1993; Chairman, Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster District Health Authority, 1 April 1993 to 31 March 1995.

Baroness Flather, Director, Hillingdon Hospital Trust, 1 December 1992 to 30 November 1996.

Baroness Gardner of Parkes, Member, National Heart and Chest Hospital Special Health Authority, 1 April 1982 to 16 September 1990; Member, North East Thames Regional Health Authority, 26 July 1990 to 31 October 1994.

Lord Glenarthur, Chairman, St. Mary's Trust, 1 November 1992 to 30 November 1994.

Lord Hayhoe, Chairman, Guy's and St. Thomas' Trust, 21 March 1993 to 30 November 1995.

Lord Jenkin of Roding, Chairman, Forest Healthcare Trust, 1 November 1991 to 30 November 1993.

Lord Stafford, Director, Mental Health Foundation of Mid Staffordshire Trust, 21 December 1990 to 30 November 1994.

Lord Wade of Chorlton, Director, Countess of Chester Hospital Trust, 4 November 1992 to 30 November 1994.

Spouses of Members of the House of Lords

Lady Archer, Director, Addenbrooke's Trust, 23 December 1992 to 31 October 1995.

Mr. K. Gardner, Chairman, Royal National Throat Nose and Ear Hospital Trust, 21 December 1990 to 30 November 1994.

Countess of Limerick, Member, Eastman Dental Hospital Special Health Authority, 26 September 1990 to 31 March 1994.

Lady Parkinson, Director, Barnet Community Trust, 1 November 1991 to 30 November 1993.

Chairmen of regional health authorities are currently remunerated at a rate of £20,925 per annum, and chairmen of district health authorities and National Health Service trusts at between £15,125 and £19,285 a year. Non-executive directors of NHS trusts and SHAs receive £5,000 a year.

Information on appointees to NHS authorities and trusts who have been party candidates for Parliament is not available centrally.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Spouses of hon. Members

Mrs. O. J. Benyon, member of Mental Health Act Commission 1 September 1983 to 30 September 1989 (in April 1989 members received £98 per meeting).

Members of the House of Lords

Baroness Cumberlege of Newick, unpaid member of United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting 1 April 1988 to 31 March 1993.

Baroness Eccles of Moulton, member of the Unrelated Live Transplant Regulatory Authority February 1990 to 30 April 1993. Paid expenses only.

Baroness Brigstocke, member of the Health Education Authority April 1989 to 31 March 1995. Paid £5,000 a year.

The Rt. Rev. William Westwood, member of the Health Education Authority October 1992 to 31 March 1995. Paid £5,000 a year.

Previous Prospective Parliamentary Candidates

Mrs. W. Tumin, chair of the Secretary of State's Special Advisory Group on the Youth Treatment Service 1 August 1991 to 31 July 1994. Paid £10,000 a year. Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Social Democrat Party in 1983 and 1987.

Mr. Tom White, member of the Secretary of State's Special Advisory Group on the Youth Treatment Service 1 August 1991 to 31 July 1994. Paid £100 per meeting. Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Labour 1964.

Mrs. E. Owen, member of the Mental Health Act Commission 9 November 1987 to 13 March 1992 and 13 May 1992 to 30 September 1995. Paid £132 per meeting. Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Labour 1992.

Purchasing Agencies

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will issue guidelines so that purchasing agencies' annual reports available to the public should show levels of their financial commitment to meeting the patients charter standards; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: Such guidelines are not considered necessary. The patients charter is about using existing resources in a more focused way to produce a higher standard of service for patients.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which board members of district health authorities are also board members of NHS trusts; and if he will name the trusts and authorities involved.

Mr. Sackville: Chairmen of district health authorities are ineligible under national health service regulations to serve concurrently as chairmen of NHS trusts.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Martin) of 26 January, *Official Report*, columns *701-2*, if she will list the projects approved for each health authority unit or national health service trust in the Northern regional health authority in 1993-94.

Mr. Sackville: The major capital schemes approved for commencement in 1993-94 in the territorial area covered by the Northern regional health authority will be placed in the Library.

The list of schemes excludes minor schemes initiated by trusts and directly managed units within their delegated authority.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 26 October, *Official Report*, columns *478-80*, if she will update the table on trust expenditure.

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 12 July 1993]:* Updated information will be placed in the Library.

Community Care

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much is spent per head of population on care at home by each local authority responsible for community care services.

Mr. Bowis: In 1990-91, the latest year for which this information is available, annual expenditure per head of population on home care services and meals on wheels was as shown in the table.

Expenditure per head of population on home care and meals on wheels. (1990-91)

Local authority	*£ per head of population*
Bolton	13·3
Bury	12·2
Manchester	21·9
Oldham	15·3
Rochdale	21·9
Salford	16·6
Stockport	13·4
Tameside	19·5
Trafford	16·1
Wigan	16·2
Knowsley	9·8
Liverpool	22·4
St. Helens	20·3
Sefton	10·7
Wirral	18·0
Barnsley	16·0
Doncaster	13·9
Rotherham	16·6
Sheffield	22·2
Gateshead	15·9
Newcastle	22·4
North Tyneside	23·6
South Tyneside	14·6
Sunderland	17·1
Birmingham	23·1
Coventry	14·0
Dudley	10·2
Sandwell	16·3
Solihull	12·6
Walsall	10·5
Wolverhampton	13·9
Bradford	15·8
Calderdale	16·0
Kirklees	15·2
Leeds	20·7
Wakefield	11·3
City of London	44·6
Camden	53·8
Greenwich	25·4
Hackney	37·5
Hammersmith	26·7
Islington	26·8
Kensington	16·6
Lambeth	37·3
Lewisham	32·3
Southwark	20·0
Tower Hamlets	23·9
Wandsworth	27·0
Westminster	28·0
Barking	19·9
Barnet	9·1
Bexley	16·2
Brent	19·9
Bromley	13·3
Croydon	11·3
Ealing	10·9
Enfield	16·1
Haringey	27·3
Harrow	5·9
Havering	14·6
Hillingdon	20·8
Hounslow	14·5
Kingston	13·9
Merton	17·8
Newham	23·0
Redbridge	11·8
Richmond	20·0
Sutton	13·8
Waltham Forest	23·5
Isles of Scilly	2·5
Avon	14·6
Bedfordshire	10·0
Berkshire	9·6
Buckinghamshire	10·6
Cambridgeshire	11·5
Cheshire	9·6
Cleveland	12·7
Cornwall	10·7
Cumbria	11·9
Derbyshire	21·0
Devon	10·7
Dorset	10·3
Durham	12·4
East Sussex	10·7
Essex	12·9
Gloucestershire	9·5
Hampshire	8·3
Hereford and Worcester	10·0
Hertfordshire	11·0
Humberside	15·0
Isle of Wight	11·7
Kent	9·8
Lancashire	11·4
Leicestershire	11·6
Lincolnshire	9·2
Norfolk	15·4
Northamptonshire	9·7
Northumberland	15·0
North Yorkshire	10·9
Nottinghamshire	14·6
Oxfordshire	10·7
Shropshire	7·2
Somerset	9·2
Staffordshire	12·3
Suffolk	9·4
Surrey	7·3
Warwickshire	13·5
West Sussex	9·9
Wiltshire	9·0

Accident and Emergency Departments

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 1 July, *Official Report*, column *616*, if she will give the number of accident and emergency departments in England.

Mr. Sackville: In 1991-92 there were 238 national health service trust hospitals and directly managed units with accident and emergency departments.

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information is known to her Department about average and maximum waiting times for patients attending hospital accident and emergency units.

Mr. Sackville: The patients charter requires health authorities to set a local standard for waiting time for treatment following immediate assessment in accident and emergency departments. Details of performance against this standard are not available centrally, but will appear locally in health authorities' patients charter annual reports.

Additionally, to give patients ready access to information about the level of performance being achieved locally, providers are required to display prominently local standards and how well they are performing against them.

NHS Patients

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of patients were treated *(a)* as day patients, *(b)* as in-patients and *(c)* in the community by the NHS in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Sackville: The information is not available in the form requested. The number of day cases, day care attendances and in-patients is shown in the tables. Information on the number of patients receiving treatment in the community is not available.

Day case admissions, NHS hospitals, England

Year	Day case admissions (000's)
1987-88	881
1988-89	1,016
1989-90	1,163
1990-91	1,261
1991-92	1,548

Sources: 1987-88 Estimated by regional health authorities.
1988-89 onwards KP70.

Day attendances at NHS day care facilities, England[1]

Year	Day care attendances (thousands)
1987-88	6,621
1988-89	6,666
1989-90	6,532
1990-91	6,687
1991-92	n/a

[1] First and re-attenders.
n/a = Not yet available.

Ordinary admissions, NHS hospitals, England (All specialties)

Year	Ordinary admissions (thousands)	
1987-88	6,619	Discharges and deaths
1988-89	6,586	
1988-89	7,335	Finished consultant episodes
1989-90	7,477	
1990-91	7,524	
1991-92	7,759	

Sources: SH3A 1987-88 to 1988-89 (Discharges and deaths)
KP70 1988-89 onwards (Finished consultant episodes).

Baby Care Units

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many qualified nurses, unqualified nurses and midwives there were in special care baby units in each of the last five years.

Mr. Sackville: The information is shown in the table.

Nurses and midwives (excluding agency) in Special Care Baby Units by qualification as at 30 September, England: whole-time equivalents.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Qualified nurses	1,310	1,480	1,740	1,850	2,050
Unqualified nurses	700	660	370	310	300
Midwives	1,080	1,120	1,100	1,150	1,270
Others	—	—	—	—	[1]10
Total	3,090	3,250	3,210	3,310	3,630

[1] Includes nurses/midwives on an undetermined payscale

Notes:
1. All figures are rounded to the nearest ten whole-time equivalent.
2. Totals may not add due to rounding.
3. "—" means there are none.

Elderly Patients

Mr. Kevin Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the number of emergency admissions of elderly patients to hospitals in each of the regional health authorities in England in 1990-91, 1991-92 and 1992-93.

Mr. Sackville: The number of non-elective admissions purchased in each region in 1991-92 and 1992-93 for persons aged 65 and over is shown in the table. Comparable information for 1990-91 is not available.

Purchases of non-elective admissions of persons aged 65 and over

	1991-92 '000s	1992-93 '000s
Northern	93	96
Yorkshire	86	109
Trent	131	129
East Anglia	49	58
North West Thames	82	75
North East Thames	104	108
South East Thames	80	106
South West Thames	76	88
Wessex	80	106
Oxford	54	54
South Western	105	102
West Midlands	114	132
Mersey	80	68
North Western	116	121
England[1]	1,251	1,353

[1] Figues may not add to England due to rounding.

GPs (Complaints)

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints against general practitioners were lodged *(a)* with family health service authorities and their predecessors and *(b)* with her Department in each of the last 10 years.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally. However, figures for the number of complaints about general practitioners investigated formally by family health services authorities are contained in table 5.14 (Family Health Services) of the annual Health and Personal Social Services Statistics, copies of which are available in the Library.

New Surgical Procedures

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to accredit or license surgeons to use new procedures.

Mr. Sackville: The Department of Health, the Medical Royal Colleges and clinical managers share the objective of enabling well-trained clinicians to offer the latest forms of health care to patients. We do not see the licensing of consultants in each new procedure as a practical means of furthering this objective.

Children's Homes

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy to ensure that all children's homes are registered, regardless of the numbers housed.

Mr. Bowis: I have no plans to do so.

Disabled Children

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidelines have been given by her Department to local authorities concerning the involvement of children and service users in the compilation of registers of disabled children;

(2) if she will make a statement outlining the progress made to date by local authorities in England on establishing registers of disabled children; and when she expects the first registers to be published.

Mr. Bowis: Guidance was issued to local authorities on the setting up of registers in "The Children Act 1989: Guidance and Regulations Volume 6 Children with Disabilities". The first report to Parliament of the working of the Children Act 1989, a copy of which is available in the Library, shows that at 30 June 1992, 73 local authorities had completed their arrangements for establishing such a register which represents two thirds of all local authorities in England. Since registers contain confidential personal information, it would not be right for them to be published.

Optical Consumer Complaints Service

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dispensing opticians have joined the optical consumer complaints service; and what percentage that represents of the total number of dispensing opticians.

Mr. Sackville: The optical consumer complaints service does not hold figures on the numbers of individuals who have become members. Since it was set up in January this year, 2,127 optical practices, both ophthalmic optician-managed and dispensing optician-managed, have become members.

Hip Replacements

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health is she will list the types of hip replacement prostheses that are used in the NHS and the number of each type that was used in the last year for which figures are available.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Corporate Affairs Intelligence Unit

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the remit of the corporate affairs intelligence unit.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Bradford, West (Mr. Madden) on 22 February at columns *482-83*.

NHS Pensions Agency

Mr. Congdon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the plans of the National Health Service Pensions Agency; and how the agency has performed against its 1992-93 performance targets since its launch on 20 November 1992.

Mr. Sackville: I am pleased to announce that I have now approved the three-year corporate plan of the National Health Service Pensions Agency and its annual business plan for 1993-94. In addition the agency has been set long-term customer service targets. These are shown in the table; also recorded is the agency's achievement against its 1992-93 targets for the first four months of its operations and the new key service and efficiency targets for 1993-94.

National Health Service Pensions Agency Customer Service Targets

Product and Clearance Standard	*Long Term Target*	*Achieved 1992-93*	*Key Targets 1993-94*
	Per cent.	*Per cent.*	*Per cent.*
Pension Awards[1]			
Within four weeks of receiving application from employer	95	90·3	91
Within eight weeks of receiving application from employer	99	97·4	99
Pension Estimates (Non-Practitioner)			
Within four weeks of receiving request	95	89·8	91
Within eight weeks of receiving request	99	98·0	99
Pension Estimates (Practitioner)			
Within six weeks of receiving request	95	43·8	71
Within eight weeks of receiving request	99	83·4	99
Transfer Payments			
Within eight weeks of receiving application	99	98·0	99
Transfer Estimates			
Within eight weeks of receiving application	99	[2]—	99

Product and Clearance Standard	Long Term Target	Achieved 1992-93	Key Targets 1993-94
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Correspondence			
All replies to be sent within four weeks	100	[2]—	100

[1] For incapacity awards, the periods start from confirmation of medical incapacity.
[2] New Targets.
Efficiency gains: Ensure that Agency's expenditure is contained within running costs and other cash limits and deliver at least 2 per cent. efficiency gains.

Public Bodies

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the names, occupations and current employers of those who currently hold positions in each public body to which she makes appointments; if she will make a statement on the considerations taken into account when making such appointments; and if she will list details of the posts and salaries or allowances payable which have changed since the publication of "Public Bodies 1992".

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 25 June 1993]:* The information available will be placed in the Library.

The Department's aim is to appoint people from a wide range of different backgrounds and many professional and voluntary bodies are consulted when appointments are made to public bodies. Members of public bodies who are not paid a fee receive the same rates of travel allowances as civil servants and subsistence is paid according to actual costs.

WALES

Computer Systems

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) what has been the financial contribution made by his Department towards the development of the joint Department of the Environment and Welsh Office computer systems adopted in England and not in Wales;

(2) what moneys have been expended by his Department relating to computerisation of valuation tribunals in Wales; what was the cost per valuation tribunal office of the computer system devised by the Department of the Environment and his Department for the management of council tax and non-domestic rate appeals; and if he will make a statement;

(3) what is the total cost of the computer system which his Department proposes to introduce into the valuation tribunal offices in Wales in 1993; what is the estimated cost of the alternative PC-based system put forward by Gwynedd valuation tribunal in 1992; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The Welsh Office withdrew in August 1992 from the tripartite Department of the Environment and Inland Revenue computer project to provide valuation tribunal offices with a mini-computer system to handle council tax and non-domestic rate appeals. The grounds for withdrawal were that, given the small caseload of tribunal offices in Wales, a more cost-effective personal computer-based system could be provided.

It is estimated that the costs for development, procurement, installation and operation of the mini computer system over the first five years of operation would have been £1,256,000 for four offices plus the cost of additional development required for an off-site user in Powys and bilingual administration procedures. This included costs of £215,985 which were incurred by the Welsh Office.

The cost of the personal computer system now being developed is estimated at around £450,000 over the same period which would mean savings of £590,000.

The ideas put forward by the Gwynedd valuation tribunal did not constitute a developed proposal, but were taken into account in reaching the decision to develop a personal computer based system for Welsh tribunal offices.

National Health Service Expenditure

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much expenditure has been allocated by the national health service in Wales on *(a)* general and senior management staff, *(b)* administrative and clerical staff, *(c)* medical staff and *(d)* nursing staff in each year since 1990; and if he will express the figure as total expenditure and as a percentage of national health service expenditure (i) in general and (ii) on staffing.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information requested is as follows:

	1989-90			1990-91			1991-92		
	£ thousands	Percentage of staff costs	Percentage of revenue expenditure	£ thousands	Percentage of staff costs	Percentage of revenue expenditure	£ thousands	Percentage of staff costs	Percentage of total revenue expenditure
(a) General and senior management	6,479	0·94	0·73	9,207	1·22	0·94	16,849	2·00	1·35
(b) Administration and clerical	64,317	9·37	7·24	73,616	9·79	7·53	84,949	10·11	6·80
(c) Medical and dental	94,594	13·78	10·64	107,080	14·24	10·95	120,692	14·36	9·67
(d) Nursing	338,347	49·29	38·07	364,864	48·53	37·31	403,047	47·95	32·28
Total staff costs	686,468	100·00	—	751,832	100·00	—	840,525	100·00	—
Total revenue expenditure	888,642	—	100·00	978,024	—	100·00	1,248,459	—	100·00

Source: Health Authorities Annual Accounts.
Notes:
1. Consists of expenditure by health authorities, the Welsh health common services authority and the health promotion authority for Wales. Excludes the family health services authorities whose corresponding costs are not identifiable on the same basis.
2. With effect from 1991-92, the figures for total revenue expenditure in health authorities' annual accounts include capital charges.
3. It should be noted that over the period some senior nurse professionals have transferred to the senior manager grades; there has been a growth in health care assistants employed in nursing roles; and the introduction of Project 2000 nursing reforms has led to the reclassification of student nurses from salaried nurses to bursaried students.
4. The growth in expenditure on general and senior management staff costs arises from the extension in 1989 of senior managers terms and conditions to second and third level managers, and to the transfer of senior nurses and other professional staff to that group.

Certificate of Education (Gwent)

Mr. Roy Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what response he has made to the representations from Gwent county council relating to reconsideration of his decision to withdraw the certificate of education.

Sir Wyn Roberts: On 13 July, I announced continued approval for the certificate of education until 1995. This extra year before its planned withdrawal in 1996 will provide an extended opportunity to consider the implications arising from the current review of the national curriculum framework and for schools to adjust to any revised assessment arrangements.

Mastectomies

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many women have undergone mastectomies in Wales in each year since 1982.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Based on the returns from hospitals, the number of masterctomies performed on women in NHS hospitals in Wales is given as follows:

	Mastectomies performed[1]
1982	774
1983	748
1984	781
1985	733
1986	685
1987	702
1988	631
1989	786
1990	729

[1] Includes partial excision of breast, but excludes excision of lesion (lumpectomy). Figures may understate the true position in that not all hospitals supply complete medical details on patient discharges and deaths.

Postgraduate Studies

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what funds are available other than at the discretion of the local education authority to enable a graduate to pursue a two-year course in clinical communication studies leading to the M. Med. Sc. degree.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Local education authorities are unable to assist students undertaking full-time courses or research leading to a higher degree since these are the responsibility of either the Department of Education, the British Academy or one of the five research councils. A two-year M.Med. Sc course in clinical communications studies does not currently attract a postgraduate award from the relevant award-making body.

Publicly funded institutions receive access funds to provide discretionary assistance to students in further or higher education who may be in financial difficulty. Full-time postgraduate students are able to apply for help from the funds. Many students at this level, however, obtain sponsorship, loans from banks or receive help from the educational trusts.

Secondary Aggregates

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what efforts are currently undertaken by his Department to encourage the use of secondary aggregates in Wales.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The Government are committed to making greater use of waste and recycled materials in construction. An extensive research programme is in hand to support this. Research has identified the availability of these materials and how to increase usage. A current project is examining steps to encourage greater recycling of demolition materials. We are also participating in an EC priority waste streams project on recycling building and demolition wastes. The revised minerals planning guidance note 6 on aggregates, which is currently in draft, will also set out policies to increase the use of recycled and waste materials. Final guidance is expected later this year.

Disabled Children

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish the latest available figures showing the number of children registered as disabled by each social services department in Wales.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information requested is not available centrally.

Single Teenage Mothers

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many single-parent households were headed by teenage women in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991 or the latest available date.

Mr. Redwood: The 1991 census recorded 1,076 lone parent households with dependent children in Wales which were headed by women aged 16 to 19. Comparable data are not available from the 1981 census. Around one in 100 girls aged 13 to 15 resident in Wales became pregnant in 1990.

One-parent Families

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the average income of one-parent families in Wales for *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991 expressed in (i) 1979 prices and (ii) cash prices.

Mr. Redwood: Reliable estimates for Wales are not available.

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many single-parent families there were in Wales in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991 or at the latest available date.

Mr. Redwood: It is estimated from the 1991 census that there were 68,000 lone parent families with dependent children resident in Wales. The 1981 census recorded an estimated 43,500 lone parent families in households with at least one dependent child. This figure is not comparable with that for 1991 due to changes in methodology of classification of family types.

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will provide a table to show the percentage by age group of single parents in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: The information requested is not currently available. It is due to be published in 1994 in the 1991 census report on household and family composition.

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many, and what percentage of, single-parent families had social security benefit as their main source of income in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991.

Mr. Redwood: Reliable estimates for Wales are not available. For the United Kingdom as a whole in the 1991 family expenditure survey, social security benefits accounted for 40 per cent. of the income of single parent families.

Low Pay

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) what were the average earnings by the lowest-paid decile of the population in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991 in (i) 1979 prices and (ii) 1991 prices;

(2) what was the change in income of the lowest paid 10 per cent. of the population in Wales between 1979 and 1991, expressed in real terms.

Mr. Redwood: It is not statistical custom to calculate average earnings within the lowest or highest deciles. Information on the lowest decile earnings of men and women combined are not readily available in 1979. At constant 1979 prices, 10 per cent. of full-time male employees in Wales earned below £60·10 per week in 1979 compared with 10 per cent. earning under £60·30 in 1991. The corresponding figures for full-time female employees were £39·70 and £46·50.

At constant 1991 prices, 10 per cent. of full-time male employees earned below £147·30 in 1979 while 10 per cent. earned below £147·90 in 1991, an increase of 0·4 per cent. The 1979 and 1991 figures for full-time female employees were £97·30 and £114·10 respectively, an increase of 17·3 per cent.

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the threshold wage level for the lowest paid 10 per cent. of the population in Wales in 1991, expressed in 1979 prices.

Mr. Redwood: The new earnings survey estimates that, in 1991, 10 per cent. of full time adult employees in Wales earned below £52·5 per week, expressed in 1979 prices deflated by the retail prices index.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

THORP

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is his estimate of the potential for use of plutonium separated at the thermal oxide reprocessing plant in United Kingdom nuclear reactors; and what forecast was made in the Windscale inquiry report.

Mr. Eggar: The use of reprocessing products arising in the thermal oxide reprocessing plant is a matter for the customers of British Nuclear Fuels plc, subject to the relevant national and international regulations. Chapter 8 of the Windscale inquiry report considered possible requirements for plutonium, should it be decided to embark upon a fast breeder reactor programme.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what are the current estimates for the cost of disposal or storage of high level waste, intermediate level waste, and low level waste produced by the thermal oxide reprocessing plant at 1993 prices; and what were the costs projected in 1993 prices in the Windscale inquiry report.

Mr. Eggar: This is a matter for British Nuclear Fuels plc and its customers. No projections of costs were given in the Windscale inquiry report.

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assessment his Department has made of the total employment consequences in West Cumbria of a decision to cancel THORP.

Mr. Eggar: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mrs. Campbell) on 9 July 1993, *Official Report*, column *309*.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if, pursuant to the oral reply by the Minister for Energy to the hon. Member for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell) of 28 June, *Official Report*, column 691, he will set out the scenarios to which reference was made under which British Nuclear Fuels plc would be liable to pay compensation to customers for THORP; and if he will indicate the breakdown of the £5,000 million compensation figure mentioned.

Mr. Eggar: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Linlithgow on 15 July, *Official Report*, columns *616-17*.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what applications his Department has received for licences for a trial return of high level waste to an overseas customer of THORP; and what licences have been granted.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 14 July 1993]:* I understand from British Nuclear Fuels plc that a small test sample of vitrified high-level waste from the Windscale vitrification plant has recently been delivered to Japan in accordance with the provisions of the Export of Goods (Control) Order 1991.

Biotechnology

Mr. Hanson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will outline the steps being taken by Her Majesty's Government in regard to the EC directive on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions (*Com.* (88) 496).

Mr. McLoughlin: We accept the need for the directive, but the present draft will need a number of amendments before it is acceptable to us. The provisions on farm-saved seed and cross-licensing between patents and plant breeders' rights are not satisfactory to United Kingdom industry and other interest groups are not satisfied with the provisions intended to exclude from patentability certain inventions which would cause suffering to animals. In future negotiations we shall seek to resolve these concerns and ensure that the directive provides an acceptable framework in which the potential benefits of biotechnology can be realised.

Franking Machines

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many franking machines were sold by the Post Office; and how many of them were sold under the small business franking machine scheme, in each year since the scheme began.

Mr. McLoughlin: The Post Office does not sell franking machines and does not operate a small business franking machine scheme.

High-definition Television

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what contribution the Government have now agreed to make to the EC high-definition television programme; at what rate such funds will be released; which British companies are participating in the present HDTV programme; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. McLoughlin: At the Telecommunications Council on 16 June, agreement was reached on the framework for an action plan to help launch widescreen television services, in both standard and high definition. Under the framework, a community subsidy totalling 228 MECU, about £160 million, will be used over a four-year period to offset up to 50 per cent. of the additional costs to broadcasters and programme makers of producing and broadcasting in the widescreen format; 36 MECU has been allocated under the action plan for 1993. The United Kingdom contribution to the Community subsidy will be calculated on a gross contribution of about 16 per cent., less abatement which would depend on the level of United Kingdom receipts. The rate of disbursement for the remaining years of the plan has yet to be decided. There is no analogous scheme currently in operation. However, there are research and development projects into various aspects of advanced TV technologies, including HDTV. British companies are active in many of these. For example, the BBC, ITV Association, BT Laboratories and National Transcommunications Ltd. have participated in the European collaborative research project which developed a studio standard and transmission system for HDTV.

Uranium

Mr. Hood: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many tonnes of uranium have been separated from United Kingdom magnox fuel by reprocessing at Sellafield; and how many tonnes of this uranium have been reused in nuclear reactors.

Mr. Eggar: I understand from British Nuclear Fuels plc that to date it has reproduced magnox fuel, from reactors in the United Kingdom, Japan and Italy, containing some 35,000 tonnes of uranium. Over 15,000 tonnes of uranium arising from reprocessing have been recycled in the United Kingdom for use in reactor fuel to generate electricity.

Nuclear Waste

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what studies he has undertaken in response to paragraph 216 of the First report of the Environment Committee of Session 1985-86, HC 191, on radioactive waste, into alternative job scenarios in the Sellafield area, or the potential for job creation in the construction of nuclear waste dry stores.

Mr. Eggar: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to her of 7 July 1993, *Official Report*, column *149*.

Mining (Doncaster)

Mr. Kevin Hughes: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what information he has as to how many persons have left employment in mining in the Doncaster travel-to-work area since 1985; and how many of these went on *(a)* a JACCS-funded training scheme and *(b)* a Government training scheme.

Mr. Eggar: I regret that the information is not available in the form requested.

American Free Trade Area

Mr. Spellar: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assessment he has made of the effect of the creation of the north American free trade area on the ability of the United Kingdom to export *(a)* cars, *(b)* car components, *(c)* textiles, *(d)* yarn and fabrics and *(e)* financial services and insurance.

Mr. McLoughlin: While the benefits of the North American Free Trade Agreement will, in the first instance, accrue to companies incorporated in the NAFTA area and goods which originate there, regional free trade agreements which meet the requirements of GATT also contribute to the liberalisation of world trade. My Department's initial assessment is that the NAFTA will both stimulate economic growth in the region and provide new export and investment opportunities for British companies. My Department is undertaking a more detailed analysis of the provisions of the NAFTA and the specific effects they might have on United Kingdom exports to the region.

Environmental Management Systems

Dr. Liam Fox: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will make a statement on the accreditation of organisations who wish to offer certification to the Environmental Management Systems Standard BS 7750.

Mr. McLoughlin: My Department, in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, has today issued a consultation document on the implementation of the EC regulation establishing a Community eco-management and audit scheme and the provision of an accreditation system for organisations wishing to certificate compliance to BS7750. We propose that the National Accreditation Council for Certification Bodies be asked to set up

arrangements to accredit organisations to certificate to BS7750 and to act as verifiers under the EC Eco-Management and Audit Scheme Regulation. NACCB will need to be reorganised and to take on environmental expertise. The consultation document also signals our intention to enlarge the remit of the United Kingdom Ecolabelling Board to become the competent body under the terms of the regulation. The document will be sent to parties with a known interest and will be made available to others with an interest on request. I have arranged for copies of the consultation document to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Aviation

Dr. Liam Fox: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how he will respond to the national strategic technology acquisition plan submitted to him by his Department's aviation committee; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Sainsbury: I have today written to the chairman of the aviation committee to confirm to him that my Department will adopt the technologies and priorities identified in NSTAP to inform its activities. We have already ensured that DTI's own aeronautics research programme—CARAD—is focused on NSTAP's category 1 priorities; for example, advanced aerodynamic wing design and manufacture using fibre composites, aircraft engine emissions limitation and control, and system integration. But there is clearly an opportunity for a more wide-ranging effort, within both the public and the private sector, to consider priorities jointly using NSTAP as a starting point. Over the coming months the DTI will be working with those responsible for other publicly funded science and technology programmes to identify ways to meet the priority needs of the aerospace industry.

Dungeness B Nuclear Power Plant

Dr. Liam Fox: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make available a copy of the International Atomic Energy Agency's assessment of safety significant events team mission to Dungeness B nuclear power plant in December 1992.

Mr. Eggar: I have today arranged for a copy to be placed in the Library of the House.

Machine Tools

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what communication he has had with DG III of the European Commission in regard to the implications for EC non-proliferation and export control policy of the proposals put forward by CECIMO, to enhance the export potential of member state machine tool manufacturers.

Mr. McLoughlin: DTI Ministers have no communication with directorate general III of the European Commission on this matter.

Mr. Henderson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what new measures his Department proposes to stimulate increased investment in machine tools in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Sainsbury: The latest machine tool survey by Benchmark Research found that 88 per cent. of companies invest in new machinery because of the levels of the orders they are taking rather than because of Government incentives. Machine tool companies will benefit most from measures to create the right climate for industry.

Mr. Henderson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he next expects to meet representatives of the machine tool industry to discuss levels of manufacturing investment.

Mr. Sainsbury: My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade has no current plans to meet members of the machine tool industry. However, Ministers have met representatives of the industry nine times since June 1992 and are fully aware of their concerns. Officials continue to work closely with the sector to identify how best to help them increase competitiveness.

Combined Heat and Power

Mr. Barron: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what actions he is planning to take to include suitable arrangements for new combined heat and power schemes in the non-fossil fuel obligation.

Mr. Eggar: My Department is currently considering the detailed arrangements for a further renewables order under the non-fossil fuel obligation, including further support for schemes with the long-term potential to use CHP.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Bennett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list all the establishments that have used *(a)* the intermediate level and *(b)* the low-level waste store at AEA Dounreay over the last five years; how often they have used the store; and how much intermediate waste they have stored.

Mr. Eggar: This is a management matter for the Atomic Energy Authority.

Shipbuilding

Mr. Hutton: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the extent of implementation of the seventh directive on aid to the shipbuilding industry in each member state of the European Community.

Mr. Sainsbury: The seventh directive on aid to shipbuilding provides a framework for regulating the amount of investment and operating aid to the industry. Member states may provide operating aid up to the ceiling imposed by the Commission each year.

Car Delivery Charges

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps the Director General of Fair Trading is taking to examine factory-to-salesmen delivery charges for cars.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: Delivery arrangements from factory or depot were considered by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in its report on the supply of new motor cars, published in 1992. The Monopolies and Mergers Commission concluded that no case had been made for a change in these arrangements.

Nuclear Review

Mr. Tipping: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer of 21 April, *Official Report*, column *319*, when he expects to make an announcement about the review of nuclear power.

Mr. Eggar: A further announcement about the nuclear review will be made in due course.

Inspectors' Reports

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will publish a list showing the cost of the reports completed by his Department's inspectors but which remain unpublished.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The following table lists the costs of unpublished inspectors' reports where the decision to publish remains under consideration.

Name of company	[1] *Cost* £
Graylaw Holdings plc Link Service Stations Ltd. British Anzani plc	474,045
Bank Street Securities Ltd.	171,628
Medwey Secondary Metals Ltd.	99,971
The Bestwood plc Atlanta Fund Managers Ltd.	2,725,354

[1] Including VAT.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many directors have been disqualified under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 as a result of the criticisms contained in DTI inspectors' reports.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: Four.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer of 24 June, *Official Report*, columns *261-62*, if he will list the accountancy and law firms criticised in the inspectors' reports published during the year to 31 March.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: Of the four reports detailed in the reply given to the hon. Member on 24 June, two contain

criticism of either accountancy or law firms or both. The degree of criticism varies and reference should be made to the individual reports.

Investigation	*Accountancy firm*	*Law firm*
Norton Group plc	Hacker Young	Taylor Joynson Garrett
Edencorp Leisure plc	Ernst & Young	—

Ramor and Gilgate Reports

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he will publish the inspectors' final report on Gilgate Holdings Ltd.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The report was published on 8 September 1981 under ISBN 0 11 513485 9 and a copy is in the library.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he received the Ramor report.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: An interim report was submitted on 23 December 1981 and was published on 22 March 1993. The final report was submitted on 11 December 1987 and remains unpublished.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what representations he received requesting him not to publish the final reports on *(a)* Ramor and *(b)* Gilgate.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: *(a)* Two of those criticised in the Ramor report made representations against publication of the final report. It would not be proper to go into further detail.

(b) I am unable to say whether there were any representations against publication of the final report in Gilgate. It was published on 8 September 1981 and the papers have been destroyed.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any hon. Members made representations to him urging him not to publish the inspectors' final report of the investigations relating to the collapse of Ramor Investments.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: No.

Departmental Inspectors

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many inspectors have been appointed by the DTI since 1979; and what proportion were *(a)* female or *(b)* from ethnic minorities.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: Of the 78 individuals who have acted as inspectors since February 1979, three have been women. There appear to have been no inspectors from ethnic minorities.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the basis on which payments are made to accountants acting as inspectors for his Department.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: At the start of an inspection hourly fee rates are agreed with the inspectors. With accountant inspectors these rates cover various grades of staff involved. The rates are commercially confidential. Payments are against invoice submitted normally each month.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answers of 24 June, *Official Report*, column *261-62*, if he will list the inspectors for each of the investigations completed during the year to 31 March or currently in progress; if he will list the firms to which each inspector belongs; and if he will list each inspector who is under investigation by a recognised supervisory body for unprofessional conduct.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The list of inspectors for each of the investigations completed during the year to 31 March or currently in progress is as follows:

Investigation	*Accountant inspector*	*Legal inspector*
Completed		
National Westminster Bank plc	David L. Spence, CA of Grant Thornton	Michael Crystal, QC; Victor Temple
Norton Group plc	John Heywood, FCA of Price Waterhouse	Richard McCombe, QC
Edencorp Leisure plc	David Dean, FCCA (DTI officer)	Anthony Fausset, LLB (DTI officer)
James Neill Holdings plc; Francis Industries Ltd; F. H. Lloyd Holdings plc; The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company; Metal Closures Group plc; Winchmore plc	Brian Worth, FCA formerly of Clark Whitehill	D. Anthony Evans, QC
In progress		
Guinness plc	Ian Watt, FCA formerly of KPMG Peat Marwick	David Donaldson, QC
Pennine Commercial Holdings plc	Peter Foss, FCA formerly of Moores Rowland	Elizabeth Appleby, QC

Investigation	*Accountant inspector*	*Legal inspector*
James Ferguson Holdings plc; Barlow Clowes Gilt Managers Ltd.	Walter Hoffman, FCA of Baker Tilly	Lawrence Ziman of Nabarro Nathanson
Consolidated Gold Fields plc	Richard Lewis, FCA of Kidsons	Philip Heslop, QC
Atlantic Computers plc; Atlantic Computer Systems plc	James Scott, FCA of BDO Binder Hamlyn	Eben Hamilton, QC
London United Investments plc; C. R. Driver and Company Ltd.	Angus Gilroy, FCA of BDO Binder Hamlyn	William Gage, QC
Wace UK Holdings Ltd.; Tinsley Robor plc; European Colour plc	Christopher Mayhew (DTI officer)	Anthony Robertshaw (DTI officer)
Mirror Group Newspapers plc	Raymond Turner, FCA of Neville Russell	John Thomas, QC

In May 1993 the Institute of Chartered Accountants reported that it had decided to bring disciplinary proceedings against Brian Worth, FCA.

Astra Holdings

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what action he will be taking against Stoy Hayward in relation to criticisms of the firm by the Department of Trade and Industry inspectors in their report on Astra Holdings.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: A copy of the inspectors' report has been sent to the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales for them to consider the conduct of their members.

Public Bodies, Merseyside

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the names, addresses, occupations, current employers and addresses of any chairmen and appointers which are within his power to make to any bodies on Merseyside.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade has no responsibility for any public bodies on Merseyside.

Environmental Information

Mr. Ainger: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps he is taking to review and set out the environmental information his Department holds for the purpose of the Environmental Information Regulations 1992.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* My Department is fully committed to dealing with all relevant requests for information in accordance with the provisions of the regulations. Given the diversity of activities potentially affected within DTI and the form in which information is held, requests for access to particular types of information will be dealt with on an individual, case by case basis.

As an example of this, I refer the hon. Member to the answer that my hon. Friend the Minister for Energy gave to the hon. Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack) on 16 July, *Official Report*, column *705*, which deals with disclosure of information regarding the special conditions attached to oil and gas licences awarded in the 14th round.

EC Patent Offices

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade in which EC countries the patent offices are privately owned or controlled.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 12 July 1993]:* Financing and control arrangements vary in Europe and a number of patent offices are currently the subject of reviews, as is the case with the United Kingdom Office. No EC patent office is privately owned or controlled at present, but some reviews may consider the scope for greater private sector involvement.

Patent Office

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what arrangements he intends to make to publish the consultants' report on the Patent Office.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 12 July 1993]:* I have said that I will report to the House on my conclusions. I will consider whether it would be appropriate to publish the report after it has been received.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what are the total costs of relocating the Patent Office in Newport incurred in *(a)* building, *(b)* staff and *(c)* other costs.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 12 July 1993]:* The gross costs were respectively *(a)* £29·3 million, *(b)* £13·0 million and *(c)* £6·7 million. However, they are being offset by major consequential savings on accommodation and staff costs of approximately £6·0 million per annum.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the market-testing exercise at the Patent Office will be suspended during the period of the consultants' study.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 12 July 1993]:* No. The purpose of market testing is to ensure value for money and applies to Government activities whether or not they are subject to other reviews.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the full range of options that will be considered by consultants on the future of the Patent Office.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 12 July 1993]:* The review will consider whether other forms of ownership and

management might offer better value for money and enable the Patent Office to offer a better service to its customers. Consultants will be asked to identify as wide a range of options as possible.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Personal Crime Victims

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the age profile of the victims of personal crime; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. David Maclean: The latest police recorded crime figures on victims of offences against the person relate to 1989, although only 10 of the forces were able to provide data. The figures show that the highest rate of victimisation was in the 16 to 24 age group, which accounted for nearly 40 per cent. of offences. The lowest rate was in the age group 60 and over. A full breakdown of rates of victimisation, by age group and sex of victim, is contained in figure 2.5 and table 2E of "Criminal Statistics 1990," copies of which are in the Library.

British crime survey results for 1987 present a similar picture for the risks of assault. A comparison of these results with those of the 1987 police figures are described in "Recent trends in crimes of violence against the person in England and Wales", Davidoff and Dowds, Research Bulletin No. 27, Home Office Research and Planning Unit, also in the Library.

Corresponding figures from the 1992 British crime survey, covering 1991, will be published in the early autumn. A new survey of police violent crime statistics is planned for later this year.

Missing Children

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children under the age of 17 years were reported missing in each year since 1988.

Mr. Maclean: The available information is collated by the Metropolitan police and comprises missing persons reported to the Metropolitan police and those notified by provincial forces. It is published in the annual report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis; copies of it are available in the Library.

Notifiable Offences

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to his answer of 12 July, *Official Report*, column *339*, on notifiable offences in the metropolitan area in the first three months of 1993, when the information will be available.

Mr. Maclean: I understand from the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis that he intends to publish these figures towards the end of this month.

Child Prostitution

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are being taken in Wales to tackle child prostitution; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The chief constables of the four Welsh police forces are not aware of any widespread problem of child prostitution in Wales. Wherever it is suspected, they tackle it with a combination of high-profile uniform patrols and discreet observation.

The police also work very closely with local authorities and voluntary agencies in order to identify any abuse of children and in order to give high priority to the protection of the children involved.

Kerb Crawling

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been convicted of kerb crawling in each county in Wales in each year since 1987.

Mr. Maclean: Information given in the table is by police force area. 1992 data will not be available until the autumn.

Number of males convicted in Wales of the offence of kerb crawling under Section 1 of the Sexual Offences Act 1985 by police force area 1987-91

Police force area	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*
Dyfed-Powys	—	—	—	—	—
Gwent	—	—	—	—	—
North Wales	—	—	—	—	—
South Wales	—	3	15	21	1
Wales	—	3	15	21	1
England and Wales	275	517	891	1,215	1,132

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are being taken to tackle kerb crawling in Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The chief constables of the four Welsh police forces are not aware that kerb crawling is a particular problem in Wales. Any complaints made by the public about specific incidents will be thoroughly investigated. The police themselves occasionally mount an operation to deal with kerb crawling in residential areas.

Welsh Police

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are being taken to encourage the recruitment of a higher number of black and Asian officers into the Welsh police forces.

Mr. Charles Wardle: All forces in England and Wales have been encouraged in recent years to recruit from ethnic minority groups, in proportion to the ethnic minority population in the communities which they serve.

Welsh forces have taken a number of initiatives. For example, Gwent constabulary have forged a close liaison with Gwent racial equality council, which supports the force in its attempts to increase applications from ethnic minorities. The force also held a careers information day in 1992 for those from ethnic minority backgrounds which resulted in the appointment of four officers.

New Age Travellers

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are being taken in Wales to protect farms from damage caused by new age travellers; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The policing of such gatherings is a matter for the appropriate chief constable. Chief officers have this year improved their intelligence on new age travellers, which is now co-ordinated nationally.

On 31 March my right hon. and learned Friend the then Home Secretary announced our proposals to strengthen section 39 of the Public Order Act 1986, which gives the police powers to deal with aggravated trespass on land, and to introduce new police powers to prevent illegal rave parties on land.

Miscarriages of Justice

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases of possible miscarriage of justice have been reviewed by his Department for each of the last five years; and how they were disposed of.

Mr. Maclean: The information requested is set out in the table as follows:

Representations of wrongful conviction and action taken

Year	*Number of cases considered (individual defendants)*	*References to the Court of Appeal[1] Cases (defendants)*		*Outcome of Appeal*				*Free Pardons granted[2]*
				Allowed		*Dismissed*		
1988	536	[3]2	(2)	—	—	1	(1)	39
1989	568	3	(6)	3	(6)	—	—	50
1990	731	7	(20)	7	(20)	—	—	47
1991	714	10	(12)	[4]10	(12)	—	—	37
1992	763	[5]8	(11)	2	(5)	1	(1)	19

[1] Under section 17(1) of the Criminal Appeal Act 1968.
[2] These were granted in summary cases where there is no power to refer back to the courts.
[3] One case later abandoned.
[4] Court ordered a re-trial in one case: defendant later acquitted.
[5] Five cases outstanding.

In the other cases there were found to be no grounds to justify any action by my right hon. Friend.

Cautions

Mr. John Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will set up a central register to record cautions; and what is his policy on multiple cautions and cautions for second or further offences.

Mr. Charles Wardle: It is planned that details of those who are cautioned in respect of reportable offences will be recorded on the police national computer from the second half of 1994. Whilst policy on cautioning does not preclude the issue of more than one caution to an offender where this is warranted by the circumstances of a particular case.

Home Office guidance reminds chief officers that repeated use of cautions may undermine the credibility of the police and ultimately of the law.

Criminal Offences

Sir Richard Body: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criminal offences he has introduced in the last five years under delegated legislation.

Mr. Maclean: The information requested is not recorded centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Immigration Offences

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many operations against people alleged to be in the United Kingdom illegally involving both immigration officers and police took place during 1992, and 1993 to the latest convenient date; and for each operation by date and by name, how many *(a)* immigration officers and *(b)* police officers were involved; how many people were arrested and found to be (i) legally in the United Kingdom, (ii) in breach of immigration conditions, (iii) alleged illegal entrants and (iv) British citizens; how many requested and were granted legal advice before interview; how many were detained for *(x)* one day or less, *(y)* between a day and a week and *(z)* over a week; and how many subsequently have left the United Kingdom.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Joint immigration service/police operations are undertaken at local level and many are on a relatively small scale. Information in the form requested is not available centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications from over-age reapplicants from the Indian sub-continent seeking to join a sponsor settled in the United Kingdom have been *(a)* made, *(b)* deferred, *(c)* refused and *(d)* granted in each year since 1988, to the first quarter of 1993; and how many such reapplicants in each category had undergone successful DNA tests.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is not readily available and could not be provided except at disproportionate cost.

Posts in the sub-continent would have to search all settlement applications made since 1983 to find out in which cases DNA tests had been made.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* husbands, *(b)* wives and *(c)* dependent children applying for settlement entry clearance in the Indian sub-continent in each quarter since January 1992 were (i) successful and (ii) refused (1) on first application and (2) on second or subsequent application.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information is given in the table.

Applications for entry clearance made by husbands, wives and dependent children in the Indian subcontinent, 1992 to 1st quarter 1993[1]
Indian subcontinent

	1992				1993
	1st quarter	*2nd quarter*	*3rd quarter*	*4th quarter*	*1st quarter*
Applications granted initially					
Husbands	510	670	1,380	1,110	1,100
Wives	1,550	1,200	1,290	1,360	1,430
Dependent Children	610	470	520	520	570
Applications refused initially					
Husbands	660	420	460	530	680
Wives	250	160	200	260	280
Dependent Children	170	13	140	190	275
Applications granted on appeal[2]					
Husbands	130	170	180	170	150
Wives	40	40	30	40	30
Dependent Children	40	20	30	30	30

All figures have been rounded to the nearest ten.

[1] Latest available information.
[2] Initial refusals and numbers granted on appeal do not necessarily refer to the same individuals as an appeal may not be decided in the same year.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for settlement by wives and children in *(a)* Dhaka and *(b)* Islamabad were (i) received, (ii) granted, (iii) refused (iv) deferred at first interview, (v) lapsed and (vi) outstanding and awaiting first interview for each quarter since the beginning of 1992.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information is given in the table.

Applications for entry clearance made by wives and children in Dhaka and Islamabad 1992 to 1st quarter 1993[1]

	1992				1993
	1st quarter	*2nd quarter*	*3rd quarter*	*4th quarter*	*1st quarter*
Applications newly received					
Dhaka	490	540	650	710	570
Islamabad	1,000	750	810	840	1,020
Applications granted initially					
Dhaka	410	330	390	490	540
Islamabad	980	730	740	740	850
Applications granted on appeal[2]					
Dhaka	10	10	30	20	20
Islamabad	50	30	20	30	30
Applications refused initially					
Dhaka	130	80	80	160	270
Islamabad	170	110	150	170	200
Applications withdrawn or lapsed this quarter					
Dhaka	1,950	2,040	2,250	2,430	2,340
Islamabad	70	60	70	60	80
Applications outstanding at end of period					
Dhaka	30	70	20	40	20
Islamabad	2,290	2,150	2,070	2,000	1,990
Applications awaiting 1st interview at end of period					
Dhaka	660	750	760	860	980
Islamabad	660	290	[3]	560	760

Note: All figures have been rounded to the nearest ten.
[1] Latest available information.
[2] Initial refusals and numbers granted on appeal do not necessarily refer to the same individuals as an appeal may not be decided in the same year.
[3] Not available.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for entry clearance as *(a)* wives, *(b)* husbands, *(c)* fiancés and *(d)* fiancées in each British post in all countries for which figures are available apart from those of the Indian sub-continent were (i) granted and (ii) refused in each quarter since January 1992; how many such applications in each category, at each post and in each quarter were refused (1) wholly and (2) partly because of the primary purpose rule;

what was the refusal rate at each post; and what percentage of those refusals were *(x)* wholly and *(y)* partly on primary purpose grounds.

Mr. Charles Wardle: This information is not held centrally and could not be obtained without disproportionate expense.

Prison Jobs

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what checks are made by his Department to ensure that in prisons in England and Wales there is a fair allocation of wing No. 1 jobs being given to inmates of ethnic minority origin.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about what checks are made by the Home Department to ensure that in prisons in England and Wales there is a fair allocation of wing No. 1 jobs being given to inmates of ethnic minority origin.

The race relations policy of the Prison Service seeks to ensure that prisoners have equal access to all facilities provided in prison, including all types and grades of jobs. To check the fair allocation of work, ethnic monitoring is undertaken by all prisons. Monitoring will cover most areas of work, and should include wing No. 1 jobs where these exist.

The results of monitoring will be checked and acted upon by the prison's Race Relations Management Team, advised by the Race Relations Liaison Officer. The Team is also expected to undertake audits of the adequacy of its monitoring and to send a quarterly report detailing the results of monitoring to Area Managers and the national Prison Service Race Relations Group.

Immigration Rules

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Government plan to amend the current immigration rules to take into account the decision of the European Court of Justice in R *v.* Immigration Appeal Tribunal ex parte Surinder Singh of 7 July 1992.

Mr. Charles Wardle: There is no need to amend the immigration rules.

The effect of the European Court of Justice's judgment in the particular circumstances of this case is that, where a British citizen has been exercising rights under the treaty of Rome to work in another member state and has a spouse who is not a European Community national, on their return to the United Kingdom the entry of the spouse is governed by European Community law rather than by the United Kingdom immigration rules.

Rights of Residence

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Government propose to introduce the legislation required under Council directives 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 90/366/EEC.

Mr. Charles Wardle: We are planning to lay before Parliament in the autumn an Order in Council under the European Communities Act 1972 to bring into domestic legislation these EC directives. They are being implemented administratively in the meantime.

Asylum

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for entry clearance in order to seek asylum in the United Kingdom were *(a)* received and *(b)* granted by country during 1992 and the first quarter of 1993.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested is not separately identifiable in the statistics.

Multiple-occupation Houses (Fires)

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have died or been injured in fires in houses in multiple occupation in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The following table shows casualties in fires attended by local authority fire brigades in the United Kingdom in detached, semi-detached and terraced dwelling houses, that were in multiple occupation, for the years 1987 to 1991.

Fire related deaths and injuries in fires in multiple occupancy dwelling houses[1], attended by local authority fire brigades, United Kingdom

Year	*Fire related deaths*	*Fire related injuries*
1987	110	1,404
1988	93	1,232
1989	85	1,295
1990	68	1,297
1991	48	1,321

[1] Includes detached, semi-detached and terraced houses and bungalows.

Source: Home Office Fire Statistics, based on reports from local authority fire brigades.

Lorrain Osman

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much it cost the United Kingdom to keep Lorrian Osman in custody prior to his extradition.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Dr. Robert Spink, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the costs of keeping Lorrain Osman in custody for seven years before his extradition.

We do not collect figures on the costs of individual prisoners, but the average cost of holding a person in custody from 6 December 1985 to 15 December 1992 in local and remand prisons would have been £140,242 at 1992-93 prices.

Metropolitan Police

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were employed by the Metropolitan police for each year from 1980 to 1992; how many were women officers and how many were from ethnic minority groups; and if he will give the equivalent figures for those stationed in Lewisham.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information available is in the table:

Figures as at 31 December each year apart from [1]below

Year	Total MPS strength	Total female strength	Total ethnic minority strength	Lewisham strength
1980	23,691	2,074	109	n/a
1981	25,161	2,315	137	n/a
1982	26,350	2,464	182	n/a
1983	26,806	2,483	238	n/a
1984	26,844	2,484	253	n/a
1985	26,783	2,528	287	n/a
1986	27,005	2,637	334	n/a
1987	27,438	2,935	418	292
1988	28,009	3,211	426	299
1989	28,267	3,408	441	[1]298
1990	28,364	3,551	483	349
1991	28,455	3,714	552	329
1992	28,229	3,834	594	313

[1]Strength as at 23 July 1989.

Prisons (AIDS)

Mr. Keith Hill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have died as a result of AIDS in Her Majesty's prisons.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Keith Hill, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to write to you directly in response to your recent Parliamentary Question on deaths in custody attributable to AIDS.

Twelve prisoners in England and Wales have died as a consequence of AIDS related illness while in custody. All were in an outside hospital or hospice at the time of death.

Crime, Harwich

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what are the figures for reported crime in Harwich between 1979 and 1992.

Mr. Maclean: The information is not collected centrally.

Registration and Naturalisation

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of how many applications for *(a)* adult registration with entitlement, *(b)* naturalisation and *(c)* registration of minors his Department (i) will receive and (ii) expects to grant in 1993-94.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The latest estimate of the numbers of citizenship applications likely to be received and granted in 1993-94 is as follows:

	Intake	Applications granted
Adult registration	5,500	5,000
Naturalisation	24,500	30,000
Minor registration	6,000	10,000
Total	36,000	45,000

Cautions

Mr. John Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what are the current levels of cautioning by police officers in the last available six months and the corresponding period two and three years ago.

Mr. Maclean: The latest available information is given in the table. 1992 data will not be available until the autumn.

Offenders cautioned for all offences, excluding motoring offences, during July to December by type of offence
Number and percentage of offenders found guilty or cautioned
1988 to 1991
England and Wales

Thousands

Type of offence	July to December 1988	1989	1990	1991
Indictable offences[1]	63·9	69·3	84·4	94·3
Summary offences[1]	47·1	51·0	51·7	51·3
All offences[1]	111·0	120·3	136·1	145·6

[1] Excludes motoring offences.

Offenders cautioned as a percentage of offenders found guilty or cautioned

Per cent.

Type of offence	July to December 1988	1989	1990	1991
Indictable offences[1]	28	31	34	37
Summary offences[1]	18	18	19	19
All offences[1]	22	24	26	28

[1] Excludes motoring offences.

Prison Custody Officers

Mr. Hoon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what are the labour costs for HM Prison Service prison custody officers for each hour spent at court; and what are the corresponding costs to public funds for Group 4 prison custody officers.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Geoffrey Hoon, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the hourly labour costs of Prison Service officers while they are at court and the corresponding costs of Group 4 prison custody officers.

We do not collect costs for Prison Service staff specifically while they are on court duty, but the average hourly costs of prison officers in 1992-93 were as follows:

Region	Grade: Principal Officer £	Senior Officer £	Officer £
Inner London	15·31	14·12	12·73
Intermediate zone	14·71	13·52	12·15
Outer London	14·49	13·30	11·94
National	13·85	12·68	11·32

Group 4 are paid an overall price for the escorting of prisoners to courts from prisons and police stations, their subsequent custody at court and as necessary escort to prison after their hearings. The constituent costs are a matter for them as the contractor.

Bail Information Schemes

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many bail information schemes currently exist in *(a)* courts and *(b)* prisons in England and Wales; and if he will list those in each category.

Mr. Maclean: As at 15 July 1993, there was a total of 179 court-based and 131 prison-based bail information schemes in operation. A list of those schemes in each category follows.

Prison-based bail information schemes

Avon
Bristol
Bedfordshire
Bedford
Cheshire
Risley
Cleveland
Holme House
Devon
Exeter
Durham
Low Newton
Essex
Chelmsford
Hampshire
Winchester
Kent
Canterbury, Elmley
Lancashire
Lancaster Farms, Preston
Leicestershire
Glen Parva
Lincolnshire
Lincoln
Greater London
Bellmarsh, Brixton, Feltham, Pentonville, Wandsworth, Holloway, Wormwood Scrubs
Greater Manchester
Hindley, Manchester
Surrey
Camberley, Chertsy, Dorking, Epsom,. Esher, Farnham, Godstone, Guildford, Reigate, Staines, Woking
East Sussex
Brighton
West Sussex
Worthing, Crawley, Chichester, Horsham, Haywards Heath
Warwickshire
Leamington Spa, Mid-Warwickshire
West Midlands
Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Solihull, Walsall, Warley, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton
North Yorkshire
Harrogate, York
South Yorkshire
Sheffield, Doncaster
West Yorkshire
Bradford, Leeds, Calder, Brighouse, Todmorden
Wiltshire
Swindon, Chippenham
South Glamorgan
Cardiff, Barry, Vale of Glamorgan
West Glamorgan
Swansea, Neath, Port Talbot
North Wales
Wrexham, Mold
Powys
Brecon, Llandrindod, Ysradgynlais
Merseyside
Liverpool
Oxfordshire
Bullingdon
Shropshire
Shrewsbury
West Midlands
Birmingham, Brinsford
South Yorkshire
Moorland
West Yorkshire
Leeds
West Glamorgan
Swansea

Court-based bail information schemes

Avon
Bristol, North Avon, Woodspring

Bedfordshire
Luton

Berkshire
Forest, Maidenhead, Reading, Slough, Newbury, Windsor

Buckinghamshire
Amersham, Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Buckingham, Wycombe, Milton Keynes

Cheshire
Chester, Ellesmere Port, Halton, Macclesfield, South Cheshire, Vale Royal, Warrington

Cleveland
Teeside

Cumbria
Carlisle, Barrow, Whitehaven, Millom, Ulverston, Wigton, West Allerdale, Kendal, Windermere

Derbyshire
East Derbyshire, Derby, Chesterfield

Devon
Exeter, Torbay, Newbridge, Teignmouth, Totnes, Plymouth

Dorset
Bournmouth, Poole, Weymouth

Gloucester
Cheltenham, Gloucester

Hampshire
Southampton, Portsmouth

Hereford and Worcester
Hereford, Worcester, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove, Redditch

Hertfordshire
Bishops Stortford, Cheshunt, Dacorum, Hatfield, Hertford, Hitchin, Letchworth, Stevenage, St Albans, Watford

Humberside
Scunthorpe, Hull, Grimsby

Lancashire
Preston, Blackpool, Fleetwood

Leicestershire
Leicester

Lincolnshire
Lincoln, Grantham, Boston, Skegness, Gainsborough

Greater London
Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Harrow, Hendon, Highbury, Horseferry, Sutton, Richmond, Wimbledon, Kingston

Greater Manchester
Manchester, Bolton, Oldham, Stockport, Trafford, Thameside, Wigan

Merseyside
Liverpool, St. Helens, Wirral, Huyton, Knowsley

Norfolk
King's Lynn, Norwich, Thetford, Great Yarmouth, Central Norfolk

Northumbria
Newcastle, Sunderland, Gateshead, North/South Tyneside

Somerset
Illminster, Somerton, Wincanton, Yeovil

Staffordshire
Burton, Cannock, Moorlands, Newcastle, Stoke, Central Staffs.

Shropshire
Telford

Suffolk
Ipswich, Woodbridge, Felixstowe, Lowestoft, Beccles, Saxmundham, Mildenhall, Haverhill, Sudbury, Newmarket, Bury St. Edmunds

Court Escort Service

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will announce the awarding of contracts for the court escort service in London; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply directly to your recent Parliamentary question about the court escort and custody service in London.

It is hoped that a contract for the service will be awarded by the end of this year.

Strangeways Prison

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will give the full cost of the market-testing exercise in connection with Strangeways Manchester prison from its inception to completion on 15 July.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated July 1993:

MANCHESTER PRISON

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question asking for the full cost of the market testing exercise in connection with Strangeways Manchester prison from its inception to completion on 15 July.

The in house team and evaluation panel used consultancy support at a cost of £130,000. Additionally a number of Prison Service staff, both full and part time, worked on preparing the tender documents, preparing the bid and evaluating it.

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library a copy of the contract awarded to the in-house bid with respect to Strangeways Manchester prison announced on 15 July.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to recply diretly to your recent Parliamentary Question asking if the contract for the management of Manchester prison can be placed in the Library of the House.

The decision announced on 15 July was the selection of the in-house team as the preferred Service Provider tto manage HMP Manchester. Work is now underway to draw up the Service level Agreement which will incorporate the Operational Specification placed in the Library on 27 October 1992.

Prison Officers

Ms Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to his answerr of 27 April, *Official Report*, column *358*, regarding prison officers, if he will make a statement about the deployment of those staff not retained within establishments within the contract area.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Ms Joan Ruddock, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question pursuant to his Answer of Tuesday, 27 April, Opal Report, column 358, about the deployment of those prison officers not retained in establishments within the East Midlands and Humberside court escort contract area.

The Prison Service was required to surrender the 78 posts occupied by those staff in order to fund the contract. The staff are therefore being deployed to fill vacancies in establishments as they arise. In the case of Hull, additional posts have since been found to enable a change of role towards that of a community prison. Staff do not therefore need to be deployed away from Hull.

Bail Hostels

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many (i) bail hostels and (ii) combined probation and bail hostels there are in England and Wales; how many places there are in each category of hostel; how many additional places the Government aim to provide by 1995; and how many of these hostels are managed by voluntary organisations.

Mr. Maclean *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* There are 30 approved bail hostels providing 659 places, of which one is managed by a voluntary managing committee. There are 84 approved combined probation and bail hostels providing 1991 places, of which 16 are managed by voluntary managing committees. The expansion plans set

out in the Home Office Annual Report 1993 envisaged the provision of a total of 3,010 places by the end of 1993-94 and 3,190 places by the end of 1994-95; but because of unforseen closures and delays in obtaining suitable sites these figures have had to be revised downwards to 2,858 and 2,978.

Juvenile Offenders

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Reading, West (Sir A. Durant) of 16 June, *Official Report*, column *571*, how many representations about his current proposals to deal with persistent juvenile offenders have been made in total; how many of these representations were from *(a)* individuals and *(b)* organisations; and, of the organisations which made representations, which were opposed to the proposals.

Mr. Maclean *[holding answer 19 July 1993]*: A total of 62 written representations have been received in response to the Government's proposals, of which 10 were from individuals. The majority of those who responded agreed that the powers of the courts should be strengthened in order that they could deal more effectively with persistent juvenile offenders. Respondents differed about the nature of the new powers that were required and the ways in which they should be put into effect.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Veterinary Products

Mr. Lord: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food which other EC countries are implementing a relicensing procedure as part of their enforcement of EEC directive 81/851 on the harmonisation of veterinary products.

Mr. Soames: Details of implementation of directive 81/851/EEC in other member states, is a matter for those member states and the EC Commission. So far as we are aware, however, all member states are reviewing and relicensing, where appropriate, long standing pharmaceutical veterinary medical products in accordance with the terms of the directive.

Mr. Lord: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what assessment she has made of the uniformity with which the EC directive 81/851 on the harmonisation of veterinary products is being applied throughout the Community.

Mr. Soames: This is a matter for the EC Commission. All member states are required to conduct the review of pharmaceutical veterinary medical products in accordance with the terms of directive 81/851/EEC.

Mr. Lord: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many veterinary products have been withdrawn from sale in the United Kingdom as a result of the Veterinary Medicine Directorate's relicensing policy.

Mr. Soames: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given to the hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Mitchell) on 14 July, *Official Report*, column *543*.

Mr. Lord: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what information she has on the cost of relicensing veterinary products under EEC directive 81/851 *(a)* in France and *(b)* in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Soames: No fee is charged for the review of an old product in the United Kingdom. We have no information on whether any fee is payable in France. In both countries, the costs to a company of relicensing a medicine are variable, and will depend on what data are necessary to demonstrate that a product meets current standards of safety, quality and efficacy.

Employees

Mr. Lord: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many extra staff have been taken on by her Department to deal with *(a)* recent integrated administration and control system forms and *(b)* her Department's deregulatory initiatives.

Mr. Jack: My Department has provision in 1993-94 for a total of 700 additional posts to deal with work arising out of CAP reform as a whole. It is not possible to distinguish the actual number taken on to deal with recent IACS forms.

The Ministry has made deregulation a high priority task for all its operating divisions. This work is co-ordinated by a deregulation unit which now has four full-time staff and one part-time member compared with four part-time members at the beginning of the year.

Mr. Lord: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many people were employed by her Department in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available.

Mr. Jack: The information requested is given in the table, which covers all established staff in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, including its agencies. Part-time staff are counted as half-units and the year total are rounded to whole numbers. Figures for 1984-92 are those published by Her Majesty's Treasury in "Civil Sevice Statistics". The 1993 figure is taken from Her Majesty's Treasury statistical system MANDATE.

Year[1]	*Total*
1984	11,476
1985	11,393
1986	11,009
1987	10,480
1988	10,318
1989	10,100
1990	9,881
1991	10,097
1992	9,782
1993	10,038

[1] 1 April.

Sheep Dips

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if he will place a copy in the Library of the report produced by the national poisons unit on organophosphates in sheep dips.

Mr. Soames: Yes. This has been done.

Sea Fishing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) what requirement remains for the United Kingdom to make good its failure

to achieve its objectives under the second multi-annual guidance programme; what carry-over there is as a result into the third MAGP; and what sanctions arise as a result;

(2) what sanctions the Commission imposed on the United Kingdom for its failure to achieve its MAGP effort reduction targets; how much aid was lost to United Kingdom industry as a result; and what protests were made by the United Kingdom;

(3) how she proposes fulfilling the requirement to the MAGP to reduce capacity by 20 per cent. to take account of technical growth accounting for an increase of 2 per cent. a year;

(4) if she will specify the factors which led the Government to decide to introduce a decommissioning scheme; and when she decided that such a scheme would make a contribution to conservation;

(5) what is the Government's target for reducing United Kingdom fishing efforts in the life of the third MAGP;

(6) what were the reasons for the United Kingdom fishing effort growth in the second multi-annual guidance programme;

(7) how she intends to ensure that the decommissioning scheme meets its targets in those sectors where reductions are required but does not affect those sectors where no reduction is required;

(8) what representations she received in the first and second MAGPs about the failure of the United Kingdom to achieve its target reductions;

(9) if she will give her estimate of the reduction in effort which will be achieved through her decommissioning scheme; and how far will this go to fulfil the MAGP targets.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 12 July 1993]:* At the end of 1991, the capacity of the United Kingdom fishing fleet exceeded our MAGP target under the 1987-91 programme by 9 per cent. It is not possible to be precise on the reasons for this, but the economics of the fishing industry did result in an enlarged fleet. This backlog of capacity reduction was added to the new MAGP target for 1993 to 1996. Because of the backlog, the EC Commission ceased to award aid for the construction of new United Kingdom fishing vessels. We received a number of representations about these matters.

We will be aiming to meet our MAGP target for 1993 to 1996, and the backlog from earlier programmes, by application of the measures announced by Ministers in February 1992. These measures comprise decommissioning, days at sea controls and revised licensing arrangements. They allow differentiation in terms of segments of the fleet. In proposing MAGP targets for 1993 to 1996, which for the United Kingdom fleet as a whole require a reduction of about 10 per cent.—19 per cent. allowing for the backlog—the Commission took account of technical efficiency improvements in fishing methods of about 2 per cent. per year.

The United Kingdom decommissioning scheme recently introduced, combined with effort control measures, should provide a positive contribution to conservation by reducing fishing effort and thus the number of fish being caught and killed.

Salmon

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many *(a)* salmon and *(b)* grilse were taken by each type of net in the fisheries of England and Wales in each of the last 10 years; and how many such fish were taken by anglers in each of those years.

Mr. Jack: I regret that separate figures for catches of salmon and of grilse are not available. Combined catches of salmon and grilse in England and Wales, by method of capture, in each of the years 1983 to 1991, are given in the table. Catch data for 1992 are still being collated by the National Rivers Authority.

Reported catches of Salmon and Grilse in England and Wales by method: 1983-91

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Drift Nets[1 3]	79,794	62,798	60,222	66,931	40,658	54,687	42,310	52,695	25,948
Seine Nets[2]	11,740	10,860	10,919	14,212	16,555	13,364	12,973	7,900	4,045
Lifting Nets[3]	6,611	6,449	1,484	4,751	3,152	2,298	4,727	4,259	2,893
Fixed Nets[4 5]	3,986	3,096	3,275	4,553	3,363	6,968	8,902	6,967	4,789
Rod and Line	14,811	11,021	19,601	20,347	19,711	32,846	14,728	14,849	13,974

[1] Includes trammel and coracle nets.
[2] Includes wade nets.
[3] Lave, haaf and dip nets.
[4] Fixed nets and traps.
[5] Catch statistics for the Northumbrian net fisheries for the years 1983-87 did not distinguish between method of capture. All salmon and grilse caught in these years have therefore been included under the drift net heading, even though some will have been caught in fixed nets.

Source:—MAFF: Salmon and Migratory Trout Fisheries Statistics 1983-88.
—NRA: Fisheries Statistics 1989-91.

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list for each drift salmon fishery in England and Wales the number of salmon and grilse taken in each of the last 10 years and the average weight of each category of such fish.

Mr. Jack: The numbers and average weights of salmon and grilse caught in each of the salmon drift net fisheries in England and Wales, in each of the years 1983 to 1991, are given in the table. Separate figures for salmon and for grilse are not available. Catch data for 1992 are still being collated by the National Rivers Authority. Data for 1982 are not readily available in the form requested.

Reported catches and average weight of salmon and grilse caught in drift net fisheries in England and Wales: 1983-91

		Numbers caught	Average weight (kg)
Northumbria Coast[1]			
	1983	62,944	3·6
	1984	50,685	3·6
	1985	46,652	3·7
	1986	53,898	3·8
	1987	33,064	3·6
	1988	42,066	3·6
	1989	31,328	3·5
	1990	40,496	3·9
	1991	20,098	3·8

		Numbers caught	Average weight (kg)
Yorkshire Coast			
	1983	12,245	3·8
	1984	7,810	3·6
	1985	9,291	3·6
	1986	8,059	3·6
	1987	2,562	3·3
	1988	5,399	3·4
	1989	4,908	3·1
	1990	7,723	3·4
	1991	2,365	3·6
River Camel			
	1983	219	3·2
	1984	225	2·9
	1985	286	3·4
	1986	220	3·3
	1987	110	3·6
	1988	729	2·8
	1989	—	—
	1990	—	—
	1991	—	—
River Ribble			
	1983	432	4·2
	1984	507	5·1
	1985	395	5·5
	1986	434	5·0
	1987	508	4·7
	1988	829	4·8
	1989	502	4·9
	1990	239	5·1
	1991	206	4·6
River Lune			
	1983	1,152	3·5
	1984	1,306	3·1
	1985	912	3·4
	1986	1,497	3·4
	1987	1,703	3·2
	1988	2,402	3·3
	1989	2,284	3·4
	1990	1,405	3·5
	1991	1,472	3·6
North West Coast			
	1983	1,167	3·3
	1984	735	3·7
	1985	417	3·3
	1986	868	3·4
	1987	416	3·6
	1988	760	3·2
	1989	816	3·1
	1990	479	4·0
	1991	195	3·7
Anglian Coast			
	1983	—	—
	1984	—	—
	1985	—	—
	1986	—	—
	1987	—	—
	1988	—	—
	1989	4	4·5
	1990	9	2·1
	1991	34	3·2
River Wye			
	1983	135	4·0
	1984	144	5·1
	1985	—	—
	1986	—	—
	1987	—	—
	1988	—	—
	1989	—	—
	1990	—	—
	1991	—	—
River Usk			
	1983	757	4·1
	1984	689	4·7
	1985	1,656	4·7
	1986	1,290	4·4
	1987	1,579	3·7
	1988	1,807	4·0
	1989	1,893	4·5
	1990	1,827	5·4
	1991	1,154	5·5
River Clywd			
	1983	323	2·6
	1984	344	2·5
	1985	295	2·3
	1986	260	2·8
	1987	259	2·4
	1988	267	2·7
	1989	89	3·0
	1990	63	3·3
	1991	135	2·9
River Tywi (coracle nets)			
	1983	80	4·8
	1984	54	2·5
	1985	25	4·2
	1986	72	5·0
	1987	59	4·2
	1988	53	4·3
	1989	57	4·4
	1990	44	4·5
	1991	49	4·2
River Taf (coracle nets)			
	1983	10	9·4
	1984	1	9·0
	1985	26	4·3
	1986	4	7·0
	1987	3	9·3
	1988	6	3·5
	1989	—	—
	1990	9	3·7
	1991	5	3·6
River Teifi (coracle nets)			
	1983	66	3·4
	1984	33	5·1
	1985	29	3·6
	1986	68	4·0
	1987	62	3·5
	1988	49	3·7
	1989	48	3·5
	1990	166	3·4
	1991	42	3·8
River Dee (trammel nets)			
	1983	264	3·6
	1984	265	3·1
	1985	268	3·7
	1986	261	4·5
	1987	333	4·6
	1988	320	3·6
	1989	381	3·9
	1990	235	5·5
	1991	193	4·9

[1] Figures for the years 1983 to 1987 include fish caught in T nets (fixed engines).

Source:

MAFF: Salmon and Migratory Trout Fisheries Statistics 1983 - 1988.

NRA: Fisheries Statistics 1989 - 1991.

Fishing Vessels

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many Spanish-owned fishing vessels are registered as *(a)* British, *(b)* Danish, *(c)* Dutch, *(d)* Irish, *(e)* French and *(f)* Belgian.

Mr. Jack: As at 14 July, there were 69 Spanish-owned or largely Spanish owned fishing vessels registered in the United Kingdom. We do not hold information about registration of such vessels in other member states.

Common Fisheries Policy

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Hastings and Rye (Mrs. Lait) of 7 July, *Official Report*, column *163*, what assessment she has made of the effect of the Maastricht treaty on the operation of the common fisheries policy; and if she will seek a ruling from the appropriate European body on whether article 38 of the treaty of Rome gives sufficient powers to apply a common fisheries policy to *(a)* the catching, *(b)* conservation and *(c)* protection of fish.

Mr. Jack: Article 38 of the treaty of Rome provides:

"The common market shall extend to agriculture and trade in agricultural products. 'Agricultural products' means the products of the soil, of stockfarming and of fisheries and products of first-stage processing directly related to these products."

The products subject to the common policy are listed in annex II to the treaty of Rome. They include fish, crustaceans and molluscs, both live and dead.

The objectives of the common policy are set out in article 39. They include increasing productivity by promoting technical progress and by ensuring the rational development of production, stabilising markets and ensuring the availability of supplies. These objectives are served by measures which regulate the catching, conservation and protection of fish.

The part of the treaty of Rome dealing with agriculture —articles 38 to 47—therefore also provides the legal base for the common fisheries policy, and the Commission has proposed, and the Council has adopted CFP regulations on the basis of article 43.

The Maastricht treaty does not amend the provisions of the treaty of Rome which establish the CFP. However, the CFP, like other policies, will be subject to the general provisions of the Maastricht treaty relating for example to subsidiarity, and to the enhanced enforcement of Community legislation.

Secret Fish Holds

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many Spanish-owned vessels operating in EC waters have been found to have second or secret fish holds in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993 to date; and how many of these were British registered.

Mr. Jack: In 1989 and 1990, no Spanish-owned vessels were found to have second or secret fish holds. For details of the years 1991 to date, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 13 July, *Official Report*, column *459*.

Set-aside

Mr. Cormack: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what progress has been made in agreeing the rules for set-aside for 1994; and if she will make a statement.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: At yesterday's Council of Agriculture Ministers, I stressed the importance for both agriculture and the environment of reaching early agreement on the future for those farmers coming out of five-year set-aside this year. They need to know whether they will be able to put more than 18 per cent. of their land into set-aside under the new arable area payments scheme.

In reply the Agriculture Commissioner indicated that he intended to propose to the Commission that compensation should be paid for voluntary set-aside which exceeded 18 per cent. He also intended to propose arrangements for the transfer of set-aside obligation. A combination of these two measures could offer a solution.

I had hoped that a suitable proposal would have been available for discussion at the Council. The Commissioner acknowledged the deadline, agreed by Ministers at the May Council, of 31 July. I shall urge them to meet this and, subsequently, press for an early agreement by the Council.

However, more progress has been made on some of the other detailed set-aside rules that will apply next year. The cereals management committee voted on these at the end of last week. We expect the regulations to be adopted formally by the Commission in time to come into force on 1 September.

The key points are as follows. The rotational set-aside period will be from 15 January to 31 August. However, from 15 July, subject to any national rules, producers may sow crops for harvest the next year.

For both rotational and non-rotational set-aside, during the period 1 September to 14 January, producers must not sell any green cover remaining on the land whether for grazing or for hay or silage. However, they may harvest hay or silage for their own use during this period or graze their own animals on the land.

Land entered into non-rotational set-aside must remain set-aside from 15 January for at least five years. The set-aside rules apply throughout this period though limited use of the green cover is allowed between 1 September and 14 January. Penalties will be applied if the land does not remain in set-aside for five years, except that, exceptionally, farmers may take land out of non-rotational set-aside without penalty at the end of 1993-94; and they may take land out of set-aside without penalty to join forestry or agri-environment schemes; and the obligation to keep the land in non-rotational set-aside will not apply if the land changes hands. Short rotation coppice may be grown on set-aside land. However, it will not be eligible for establishment grants under the woodland grant scheme.

The rules as they stand do not permit arable land entered into the farm woodland premium scheme or land withdrawn from production under the agri-environment programme to count as set-aside under the arable support arrangements. I shall be urging the Council of Ministers to allow this.

Copies of a free leaflet giving more details of these changes will be deposited in the Library of the House.

Agriculture Council

Mr. Sims: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the outcome of the Agriculture Council held in Brussels on 19 July.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: At this meeting, at which I represented the United Kingdom, the Council adopted two regulations relating to farmers who were not originally allocated milk quotas at the time of their introduction in 1984, because they had, under a scheme in force at the time, undertaken not to produce milk for a five-year period. These measures were necessary to implement the latest in a series of judgments of the European Court that these farmers were entitled to quotas. I abstained in the vote on one of the regulations, providing for cash compensation for the period during which these farmers were deprived of quota, on the grounds that the compensation was too generous.

The Council also adopted, by majority vote, a regulation setting standard qualities for cereals for intervention buying and other purposes. While not voting against, I urged the Commission to embody in legislative form the circumstances in which they have assured us that intervention buying would be available for feed wheat.

Finally, the Council adopted, by majority vote, a directive concerning the labelling and use of animal feedingstuffs designed for special nutritional purposes. I voted against the measure on the grounds that it was unnecessarily detailed and restrictive.

The Council discussed the welfare of farm animals in transport and I welcomed the Commission's intention to present proposals on this subject shortly.

I also raised the issue of those farmers coming out of five year set-aside this year. I have reported the outcome in my reply today to my hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire, South (Mr. Cormack).

TRANSPORT

Motorway Repairs

Ms Mowlam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department has received through penalties charged under the lane rental scheme since July 1991.

Mr. Key: Charges incurred under lane rental contracts completed during the financial year 1991-92 amounted to some £420,000. We expect the corresponding figure for 1992-93 to be about £600,000.

Ms Mowlam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list *(a)* all the roadworks planned or continuing to take place on United Kingdom motorways during the period 1 to 31 August, *(b)* which of those roadworks are covered by the lane rental scheme and *(c)* what maximum length of coned-off carriageway is stipulated in the contracts in each case where lane rental applies.

Mr. Key: Following is the information for major motorway roadworks in England which are expected to be taking place during part or all of the month of August. Motorways in the rest of the United Kingdom are the responsibility of my hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Scheme		*Lane rental*	*Maximum length to be coned off (kilometre)*
Maintenance Schemes			
A1(M)	A177 to A690	No	—
M1	J34 to J35	Yes	9·5
M4	J14 to J16	Yes	5
M5	M6 – J8	No	—
M6	J1 to J2	Yes	4
M6	J35 to J36	No	—
M6	J31 to J39	No	—
M18	J5 to J6	No	—
M25	J8 to J10	Yes	4
M57	A59 to A580	Yes	5·25
M61	J5 to J6	No	—
M62	J30 to J31	Yes	5·5
Widening Schemes			
M1	J9 to J10	No	—
M4	J4b to J5	No	—
M5	J6 to J8	No	—
M6	J20 to J21A	No	—
M6	J30 to J32	No	—
M20	J5 to J8	No	—
M25	J15 to J16	No	—
M56	J4 to J6	No	—
M62	J14 to J17	No	—
M62	J34 to J35	Yes	7
M621	J1 to M62	Yes	7

Overall, for financial year 1993-94, we expect to let some 80 per cent. of major maintenance schemes as lane rental contracts.

In addition to the above schemes some minor roadworks and routine maintenance activities may be necessary. These will be carried out at night whenever possible.

Red Routes

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on parking problems caused by red routes.

Mr. Norris: As a result of the pilot red route scheme in north London there are now an additional 620 parking places along the 12·5 km route. Some concerns have recently been expressed about parking in residential streets adjacent to the pilot route. The traffic director will be reviewing the operation of the pilot scheme and its effects on side roads over the next year to see whether any modifications should be made.

BR Pension Fund

Ms Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) when he next plans to meet representatives of BR pensioners;

(2) when he plans to meet the chairman and chief executive of the BR Pension Fund Trustee Co. Ltd;

(3) what response he has made to the statement by BR pension fund trustees on the effect of the Government's proposals in the Railways Bill on the security of pensioners' entitlement.

Mr. Freeman: Discussions are taking place with the trustees and their actuaries about arrangements for the proposed closed fund for pensioners. I should be happy to meet pensioners' representatives again if they wish.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will set out his targets for the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions by motor vehicles for the next 10 years.

Mr. Key: Under the climate change convention the Government will be committed to taking measures to return carbon dioxide, CO_2, emissions to 1990 levels by 2000. The target applies generally—there is no specific target for the transport sector. The Government are looking at all sectors together in deciding how best to meet the target.

The Government issued a consultative document seeking views on ways of limiting CO_2 emissions. This document contained a wide range of possible measures. We are now considering responses to the document. A full programme of measures will be published by the end of the year.

Some steps in the programme have already been taken. In the Budget speech, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a 10 per cent. increase in road fuel duties. He also announced that in future Budgets he will increase duty on all road fuels by at least 3 per cent. in real terms. This is expected to save 1·5 million tonnes of carbon.

Fishing Vessels

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what search is made for secret fish holds when foreign-owned fishing vessels are registered as British.

Mr. Norris: Surveys and inspections of vessels are thorough. It is anticipated that they would disclose such holds.

Tyres

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what figures he has on the number of motor accidents which can be attributed to the use of imported part-worn tyres; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The information is not available in the form requested. Some 95 per cent. of accidents are caused by driver error rather than by defects in vehicles. The Government nevertheless propose to prohibit the sale of defective part-worn tyres by shortly introducing safety regulations to be made under the Consumer Protection Act 1987.

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what he intends doing to increase public awareness of the new tyre legislation; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: I assume that the hon. Member is referring to the increase in tyre tread depth for cars, light vans and light trailers that came into force on 1 January 1992. Measures were taken by both industry and Government to alert the public to the new law, for example, the industry's "Stay Legal, Stay Alive" campaign, and information in vehicle excise duty reminders. A recent survey has indicated that most tyres are being changed before or when their legal limit of 1·6 mm is reached. In these circumstances, the Government do not consider that further measures are needed to alert the public.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Day: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he intends to issue guidance to local authorities nationally on signing for speed cameras; and whether this guidance will distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate circumstances for erecting such signs.

Mr. Key: Speed camera signs can presently be authorised by the Department's regional offices in appropriate circumstances. I expect to issue a roads circular to provide guidance to authorities following consultation with the local authority associations.

Bus Construction

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it his policy to make representations to the European Community to encourage the adoption of bus construction rules that would establish minimum levels of accessibility for disabled people.

Mr. Freeman: We are already doing so in discussions with the EC Commission and technical experts from other member states, on the possible terms of an EC proposal for a directive on bus and coach construction.

Motorway Widening

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what environmental assessment has been undertaken for current motorway widening schemes and the use of long span overbridges included within these schemes;

(2) what steps are being taken by his Department to protect the environmental advantages of motorway verges; and how are such verges and trees to be protected under stage one and stage two motorway widening schemes;

(3) what steps have been taken to consult the public and environmental organisations over motorway widening schemes which will enable stage two widening to achieve *(a)* 12-lane motorways and *(b)* 10-lane motorways;

(4) what proposals he has to make *(a)* 10 and *(b)* 12-lane motorways the standard motorway gauge;

(5) what consultation has been undertaken with local communities and environmental bodies in relation to current and proposed motorway widening schemes; and if he will list those bodies consulted.

Mr. Key: There is no programme of second stage widening to provide 10 and 12-lane motorways. Consultations and environmental assessments are carried out on all motorway widening schemes. Environmental statements include a description of the design of a project and the measures needed to mitigate significant adverse environmental effects. Existing vegetation will be kept wherever practicable. I am sending the honourable Lady a copy of the standard consultation list.

EMPLOYMENT

Youth Training

Mr. Leighton: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what was the total number of young people who entered youth training in each of the last five years; and what were in each year the qualifications they received.

Miss Widdecombe: Information on the number of starts on youth training is given in table 1. Information on qualifications gained while on youth training is collected when a young person leaves the programme. The percentage of leavers with a qualification is given in table 2.

Table 1
Youth training scheme/youth training
Great Britain—Starts
April 1988 to March 1993

	Number
April 1988 to March 1989	407,200
April 1989 to March 1990	383,800
April 1990 to March 1991	347,800
April 1991 to March 1992	293,000
April 1992 to March 1993	286,600

Source: SPECTRUM, TEC Operating Agreement (Annex J), Scottish & Welsh Management Information.
Notes: Includes Youth Credits.
1992-93 information is provisional.

Table 2
Youth training scheme/youth training
Percentage gaining a qualification—all leavers
Great Britain
April 1988 to September 1992

	Per cent
April 1988 to March 1989	41
April 1989 to March 1990	43
April 1990 to March 1991	38
April 1991 to March 1992	33
April 1992 to September 1992	35

Source: YT follow-up Survey.
Notes: Includes Youth Credits.
April 1991 to September 1992 information is provisional.

London East TEC

Mr. Leighton: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what are the enterprise objectives of London East training and enterprise council in the London borough of Newham.

Miss Widdecombe: London East training and enterprise council's enterprise objectives for the London borough of Newham, set out in its action plan, are:
to establish, support, develop and further enhance both small and medium sized companies operating in the London Borough of Newham.

Older Workers

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will make a statement on the work of the advisory group on older workers.

Miss Widdecombe: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Coventry, North-East (Mr. Ainsworth) on 8 July 1993, *Official Report*, column *261*.

Apprenticeships

Mr. Leighton: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the Department doing to recapture the strength of the old apprenticeship system.

Miss Widdecombe: The Government are keen to promote and encourage the growth of modern apprenticeships offering high-quality training, open to young men and women equally and leading to national vocational qualifications which employers value. The Government already support some apprenticeships and similar training arrangements through youth credits and youth training. All concerned need to be clear that work-based training and vocational qualifications deserve equal esteem alongside other education and training options open to young people.

Training Credits

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment (1) how many 16 and 17-year-olds in Yorkshire and Humberside have taken up training credits;
(2) how many 16 and 17-year-olds in the three Barnsley constituencies have taken up training credits.

Miss Widdecombe: In Yorkshire and Humberside, between April 1991 and March 1993, an estimated 5,400 16 and 17-year-olds took up their entitlement to a youth credit. Youth credits information is not collected at constituency level but at training and enterprise council level and Barnsley and Doncaster TEC is not a youth credit pilot area.

DEFENCE

Jungle Warfare Training

5. **Mrs. Dunwoody:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the total cost to the British Army of training in jungle warfare per annum.

Mr. Hanley: Jungle training is undertaken in Belize and Brunei. The costs of jungle training in Belize are not separately identifiable from the overall costs of the garrison. The cost of the training team in Brunei in 1991-92 was some £2,300,000.

Commitments (Costs)

14. **Mr. Clappison:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what results he expects from the exposition of the cost of each of Britain's defence commitments in the recent White Paper.

16. **Mr. Richards:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what benefits he expects from the exposition of the cost of each of Britain's defence commitments in the recent White Paper.

Mr. Rifkind: I hope that the analysis presented in our White Paper will make an unprecedented contribution to parliamentary and public debate on defence. The underlying methodology, including the attribution of costs, will also provide an invaluable aid to management, assisting future judgments on the most effective use of resources.

Nuclear Testing

15. **Mr. Skinner:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with other EC Defence Ministers in respect of nuclear testing.

Mr. Rifkind: I am in frequent touch with European colleagues to discuss a range of defence issues.

Depleted Uranium Ammunition

17. **Mrs. Anne Campbell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will reconsider the decision to use depleted uranium in anti-tank missiles.

Mr. Hanley: The British armed forces are equipped with only one type of anti-tank ammunition containing depleted uranium: this is high kinetic energy 120mm ammunition fired from tank guns. DU ammunition is used for its particular abilities to penetrate and thereby defeat modern armour. There are no plans to remove it from the Army's inventory.

C130s

18. **Mr. Barry Field:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress he has made on the replacement order for the C130s.

Mr. Aitken: We are currently considering the operational requirement and the associated procurement strategy for replacing or refurbishing our existing C130 fleet. When these matters have been resolved, we expect to invite tenders from those companies able to offer solutions within the required timescale. We should then be able to assess the best way to meet this requirement.

Housing

19. **Mr. Hall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent representations he has received concerning his policy on service housing.

Mr. Hanley: My Department receives an average of some 160 representations on service housing a month and approximately one-third of these are of a general policy nature.

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the estimated cost of rent forgone for empty Ministry of Defence married quarters over the past year.

Mr. Hanley: It is my Department's policy to ensure that the number of vacant married quarters is kept to the minimum necessary to meet operational requirements. The calculation of quartering charges and the high turnover of occupancy in married quarters mean that it is not possible to establish the rent forgone on empty married quarters except at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many applications were received over the last three years from service personnel leaving the forces for discount sales of Ministry of Defence houses; and how many applicants purchased houses.

Mr. Hanley: Over the last three years, ending 31 March 1993, 70,861 applications from service personnel were received through the scheme for purchasing married quarters at a discount and 1,500 sales were completed. Many of these applications were multiple bids from the same individuals.

The scheme is open to all service personnel over the age of 25. It is not possible to identify the number of applications from and sales to personnel leaving the services except at disproportionate cost.

Service Housing

Mr. Bates: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assistance his Department provides for the housing of former RAF personnel; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: A wide range of resettlement advice and support is available to all personnel leaving the services. A joint service housing advice office has been set up to provide advice and guidance on housing options, working closely with local authorities and housing associations. Other measures include the sale or lease of surplus property to housing associations in return for the reservation of places for rent by service personnel, and the provision by the Housing Corporation of do-it-yourself shared ownership opportunities, specifically for those leaving the services. Any personnel who have failed to find accommodation by the time they come to leave the services, will be allowed to stay on temporarily in his or her married quarter provided it is not required for a service family.

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many discount sales of Ministry of Defence married quarters he expects to make in the forthcoming year to service personnel leaving the forces.

Mr. Hanley: The scheme for selling surplus married quarters at a discount is open to all service personnel over the age of 25. It is not possible to identify without disproportionate cost how many surplus married quarters being sold through the discount scheme are being purchased by personnel leaving the services.

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what is his policy towards residence by those other than redundees whose term of service is not renewed in Ministry of Defence married quarters not required for use;

(2) what is his policy towards the residence in his Department's married quarters outside secure perimeters of ex-service personnel.

Mr. Hanley: Ministry of Defence married quarters, whether inside or outside the perimeter fence, are reserved for the use of service families. All married service personnel are therefore required to vacate their quarters by their last day of service. The Ministry of Defence is, however, sympathetic to the needs of all ex-service families with housing difficulties; in these circumstances ex-service personnel may be allowed to remain in their quarter until they have found alternative accommodation, as long as there are no pressing service requirements for the property.

Trident

20. **Mr. Bryan Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the first Trident submarine will become operational.

Mr. Aitken: The first Vanguard class submarine will enter operational service with the Royal Navy towards the end of 1994 or early in 1995.

26. **Mr. Ottaway:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the latest sea trials of the Trident programme.

Mr. Aitken: The United Kingdom's first Trident submarine, Vanguard, successfully completed her contractor's sea trials in January. Following the completion of

planned finishing work at Barrow-in-Furness, the submarine is due to commence further sea trials later this year.

22. **Mr. Raymond S. Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he next expects to meet the United States Defence Secretary to discuss the Trident programme.

Mr. Aitken: I next expect to meet the United States Defense Secretary at a NATO ministerial meeting in the autumn.

Eurofighter-2000 Project

21. **Mr. Luff:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many United Kingdom contractors are involved in the Eurofighter-2000 project; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: Although my Department does not hold detailed information on all sub-contracts, we estimate that some 300 British companies are in the EF2000 supply chain. The project currently supports about 9,000 jobs in the United Kingdom. This figure is expected to rise to some 28,000 at the peak of the production phase.

Expenditure

23. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what has been the percentage change in real terms in his Department's spending relative to the expenditure *(a)* five years ago and *(b)* 10 years ago.

Mr. Hanley: Underlying defence expenditure in 1993-94 is expected to be some 8·2 per cent. lower in real terms, measured using the GDP deflator, than in 1988-89, and some 10·2 per cent. lower than in 1983-84.

Out-of-area Commitments

24. **Mr. Spellar:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the resource implications of current and potential out-of-area commitments.

Mr. Hanley: I refer the hon. Member to chapter 2 of this year's Statement on Defence Estimates, "Defending Our Future" (Cm 2270) published earlier this month.

Western European Union

25. **Mr. Jim Marshall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has held with WEU allies on the organisation's ability to transport troops and equipment to areas of potential conflict in the absence of full United States support; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: WEU Ministers agreed, at their last meeting in Rome on 19 May, that the WEU planning cell should develop studies relating to capabilities for strategic mobility. These studies form part of ongoing work in the WEU on the development of its operational role, as agreed at Maastricht and at Petersberg. The development of WEU concepts in this area is intended to be complementary to and compatible with alliance arrangements.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

27. **Dr. Lynne Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what military support is being provided to ensure the successful implementation of United Nations resolutions concerning safe areas in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Mr. Hanley: In addition to the United Kingdom's already substantial commitment to UN operations in the former Yugoslavia, 12 Jaguar aircraft, with their supporting ground crews, deployed to Italy last week as part of the NATO force.

Equipment

28. **Mr. Jenkin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the latest balance of trade between imports and exports of defence equipment; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: In 1992 there was a surplus of exports of identified defence equipment over imports of £888 million.

RAF Helicopters

29. **Mrs. Browning:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many support and attack helicopters in RAF frontline service there were in *(a)* January 1989 and *(b)* January 1993; and what is the projected number in 1995.

Mr. Hanley: There were 94 support helicopters in RAF frontline service in January 1989 and 93 in January 1993. This number is currently planned to reduce to 90 by mid-1994.

As my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence announced in the Statement on the Defence Estimates 1993, "Defending Our Future" we plan to increase our support helicopter capability in the longer term. The in-service dates and number of additional aircraft will depend on decisions yet to be taken. The RAF does not operate attack helicopters.

Contracts, Chelmsford

30. **Mr. Burns:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on defence contracts awarded by his Department to defence-related industries in Chelmsford.

Mr. Aitken: During the 1992-93 financial year my Department placed work to the value of over £21 million with contractors in the Chelmsford area; to date in the current financial year, work to the value of over £6 million has been placed. In addition, companies in the area have won a significant value of sub-contract work.

Chemical Weapons

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) pursuant to the answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, column *516*, if he will place in the Library a copy of the report on CR gas provided to the United States Department of Defence under the terms of the technical co-operation programme;

(2) how many scientific papers co-authored by scientists from the Chemical Defence Establishment, Porton Down and their counterparts in the United States of America military were published between 1963 and 1979; what were the dates of these papers; and in which scientific journals they were published;

(3) what co-operation exists between Britain and the United States of America on the scientific and technical aspects of binary chemical weapons;

(4) pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, columns *519-20*, for how many years the then Chemical Defence Establishment researched into the behavioural effects of phencyclidine; how many animals and service personnel were tested with phencyclidine; whether these studies were published in open scientific literature; what was the conclusion of this research; and to which other pyschotomimetrics the results of the phencyclidine research were compared;

(5) how many scientific papers co-authored by scientists from Porton Down and their counterparts in the Canadian military have been published since 1979; what were the dates of these papers; and in which scientific journals they were published;

(6) pursuant to his answer of 15 February to the hon. Member for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone), *Official Report*, column *62*, on what date the nerve agent VX was last produced at the Chemical Defence Establishment at Nancekuke, Cornwall; what was the total amount of nerve agent VX produced at Nancekuke; and how all the VX produced at Nancekuke was disposed of;

(7) pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, columns *516-17*, when the United States of America first supplied quantities of the nerve gas VX to Britain; how many times VX was transferred from the United States of America to Britain; to which United Kingdom Ministry of Defence establishment the VX was supplied on each occasion; for what the VX was used on each occasion; how much VX was supplied on each occasion; from which United States military establishment the VX originated in each case; and if the transfer of VX was arranged under the technical co-operation programme;

(8) how many times the United Kingdom supplied nerve agent VX to the United States of America; from which United Kingdom Ministry of Defence establishment the VX originated on each occasion; and for what reason the VS was transferred on each occasion;

(9) how many staff from the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence visited or were posted to the United States nerve gas factory at Newport, Indiana; when these visits or postings occurred; and under which defence agreement they were arranged;

(10) pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Brent, East (Mr. Livingstone) of 26 June 1992, *Official Report*, column *357*, on what dates chemical and biological agents have been transferred from Britain to Canada for the purposes of the provision of effective protective measures; how the agents were used on each occasion; from which British military establishments and to which Canadian military establishments the agents were transferred; and through which defence agreement these transfers were arranged;

(11) pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, column *518*, to the hon. Member for Leyton, when information gained through tests and studies on Francisella Tulerensis was first exchanged between Britain and the United States of America; and under which agreement this was exchanged;

(12) what research his Department carried out on the viral disease psittacosis;

(13) how the workings of the technical co-operation programme were affected by the British decision to give up offensive work on chemical and biological weapons; and how this changed the nature and direction of research exchanged through the technical co-operation programme;

(14) pursuant to his answer of 12 May, *Official Report*, column *515-20*, if he can indicate, without disproportionate cost, the approximate number of service volunteers tested with BZ; in which years these tests were carried out; what was the conclusion of the evaluation of BZ; what monitoring was carried out of the volunteers since the tests; in which year information was exchanged with the United States of America; and under which agreement it was exchanged.

Mr. Hanley: These are matters for the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment under its framework document and I have asked the chief executive to reply.

Letters from Graham Pearson to Mr. Harry Cohen, dated 20 July 1993:

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him pursuant to the Answer of 12th May, Official Report, column 516, if he will place in the Library a copy of the report on CR gas provided to the United States Department of Defence under the terms of The Technical Cooperation Programme (Question 3, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The report on CR gas provided to the United States Department of Defence in 1962 is classified and I am therefore unable to place a copy in the Library.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him how many scientific papers co-authored by scientists from the Chemical Defence Establishment Porton Down and their counterparts in the United States of America military were published between 1963 and 1979; what were the dates of these papers; and in which scientific journals they were published (Question 4, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. I regret that our records do not provide this information in a readily accessible form. Nevertheless, I have consulted my senior staff and two scientific papers co-authored by scientists from the then Chemical Defence Establishment at Porton Down and their counterparts in the United States of America Department of Defence have been identified. Both papers were published in 1977; one appeared in Atmospheric Environment and the other in the Journal of Electronics.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him what cooperation exists between Britain and the United States of America on the scientific and technical aspects of binary chemical weapons (Question 5, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. As the United Kingdom abandoned all work on offensive chemical weapons in the late 1950s and the US binary programme commenced in the 1970s, there has been no cooperation between Britain and the United States of America on the scientific and technical aspects of binary chemical weapons. Some information on binary chemical weapons has been to assist us in our evaluation of the potential hazard to the United Kingdom Armed Forces from potential aggressors who may possess binary chemical weapons.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him pursuant to his Answer of 12th May, Official Report, columns 519-20, for how many years the Chemical Defence Establishment researched into the behavioural effects of phencyclidine; how many animals and service personnel were tested with phencyclidine; whether

these studies were published in open scientific literature; what was the conclusion of this research; and to which other pyschotomimetrics the results of the phencyclidine research were compared (Question 6, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The role of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment is to carry out research to ensure that the UK Armed Forces are provided with effective protective measures against the threat that chemical or biological weapons may be used against them. As part of this work the potential hazard of possible chemical and biological warfare agents is assessed and the effectiveness of British protective measures evaluated.

3. Phencyclidine is a potent analgesic and anaesthetic which has marked psychotomimetic side effects. Such compounds could potentially represent a hazard to the UK Armed Forces and the behavioural effects of phencyclidine in rats has been compared with other psychotomimetic compounds to assess the potential hazard to the British Armed Forces should such material be utilized by an aggressor against British Forces. This work was carried out in the early 1960s and involved about 50 rats. No service personnel scientific literature and the conclusion of this research was that phencyclidine like other psychotomimetics could present a possible hazard to the UK Armed Forces if it were dispersed as an incapaciting agent by an aggressor. The work on phencyclidine was compared with several psychotomimetics including lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD-25), mescaline sulphate, harmine, N-Methyl-3-piperidyl benzilate, dimethyl-tryptamine, diethyl-trymptamine and dipropyl-tryptamine, alpha-methyl tryptamine and bufotenine bioxalate.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him how many scientific papers co-authored by scientists from Porton Down and their counterparts in the Canadian military have been published since 1979; what were the dates of these papers; and in which scientific journals they were published (Question 7, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. I regret that our records do not provide this information in a readily accessible form. I have made enquiries of my senior staff and of my library and have found no trace of any scientific papers co-authored by scientists from the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment at Porton Down and our counterparts in the Canadian Department of National Defence which have been published in scientific journals.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him pursuant to his Answer of 15th February to the honourable Member for Brent East, Official Report, column 62, on what date the nerve agent VX was last produced at the Chemical Defence Establishment at Nancekuke, Cornwall; what was the total amount of nerve agent VX produced at Nancekuke; and how all the VX produced at Nancekuke was disposed of (Question 8, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The role of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment is to ensure that the UK Armed Forces have effective protective measures against the threat that chemical or biological weapons may be used against them. In order to carry out this work, it is necessary to have available small quantities of the materials which may be used as chemical or biological warfare agents by a potential aggressor.

3. The nerve agent VX was last produced at Nancekuke in 1968. The total amount produced was less than 110 kilograms. As the object of the work was to evaluate whether VX could be produced by a potential aggressor in sufficient quantity to present a hazard to the UK Armed Forces, the majority of the product was destroyed chemically immediately after production. Small samples were kept for analysis and for storage trials as part of the overall assessment of the potential hazard. Small quantities of VX were occasionally transferred to CBDE Porton Down for research and trials use.

4. The VX produced at Nancekuke was disposed of by hydrolysis with caustic soda followed by dilution. Before being released into the sea, shrimps were released into the diluted hydrolysed material to ensure that it was harmless to marine life.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him pursuant to his Answer of 12 May. Official Report, columns 516-7, when the United States of America first supplied quantitities of the nerve gas VX to Britain; how many times VX was transferred from the United States of America to Britain; to which United Kingdom Ministry of Defence establishment the VX was supplied on each occasion; for what the VX was used on each occasion; how much VX was supplied on each occasion; from which United States military establishment the VX originated in each case; and if the transfer of VX was arranged under The Technical Cooperation Programme (Question 9, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The United States of America first transferred VX to the Chemical Defence Establishment at Nancekuke in 1957. Subsequent transfers again to CDE Nancekuke took place in 1959 and 1961 and in 1967 to the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment at Porton Down. The total quantity of VX transferred was about 100 kilograms and was used for stablity studies and collaborative trials at CBDE Porton Down on downwind hazard evaluation as part of the evaluation of the potential hazard to the UK Armed Forces from VX. Our records do not clearly indicate where the VX was produced in the US; the usual Establishment involved in arranging the provision of the nerve agent VX was the predecessor of the present Edgewood Research, Development and Engineering Center sometimes known as Edgewood Arsenal. The transfers took place under the Tripartite Toxicological Conferences and in the latter case under The Technical Cooperation Programme.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him how many times the United Kingdom supplied nerve agent VX to the United States of America; from which United Kingdom Ministry of Defence Establishment the VX originated on each occasion; and for what reason the VX was transferred on each occasion (Question 10, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. VX was transferred in 1957 from the Chemical Defence Establishment Nancekuke to the precursor of the Edgewood Research, Development and Engineering Center for comparative analytical studies.

11

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him how many staff from the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence visited or were posted to the United States nerve gas factory at Newport, Indiana; when these visits or posting occurred; and under which defence agreement they were arranged (Question 11, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. Our records about past visits or postings to the United States nerve gas plant at Newport, Indiana are very limited. A visit by two members of staff from the then Chemical Defence Experimental Establishment to the Newport, Indiana factory took place in 1962.

3. This visit took place under a collaborative programme that arose from the authorisation by the US Congress in 1956 under the mutual security programme of financial support for R&D programmes of friendly countries. Information about this collaborative programme is limited but appears to have been on a bilateral basis between the United States and the United Kingdom and also between the United States and a number of countries in Europe. The scope of this collaborative programme was very broad and was known as the Mutual Weapons Development Programme. The programme did include collaboration chemical and biological

defence under the generic headings of detectors, neutralisers and treatment. The visit to the Newport, Indiana factory was arranged under this programme.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Answer to the honourable Member for Brent East of 26th June 1992, Official Report, column 357, on what dates chemical and biological agents have been transferred from Britain to Canada for the purposes of the provisions of effective protective measures; how the agents were used on each occasion; from which British military establishments and to which Canadian military establishments the agents were transferred; and through which defence agreement these transfers were arranged (Question 12, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. Our records do not contain information on whether chemical or biological agents were transferred from the UK to Canada during World War II or the immediate subsequent years. Since the early 1960s, no transfer of biological agents has taken place and small quantities of a chemical agent were transferred from the UK to Canada in the early 1970s. These were transferred from the then Chemical Defence Establishment at Nancekuke to the Canadian Defence Research Establishment Suffield. Our records do not include information on how the agent was used by Canada or on the precise defence agreement involved. The transfer was probably under one of the defence agreements referred to by the Rt Hon. Archie Hamilton, MP in his reply of 21 May 1992, Official Report, columns 255-6.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him pursuant to his Answer of 12th May, Official Report, column 518, to the honourable Member for Leyton, when formation gained through tests and studies on Francisella Tulerensis was first exchanged between Britain and the United States of America; and under which agreement this was exchanged (Question 13, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. Our records do not indicate precisely when information gained from tests and studies on Francisella Tulerensis was first exchanged between Britain and the United States of America. As indicated in the answer of 12 May, Official Report, column 518, tests and studies on this organism had been carried out since the early 1950s by the then Microbiology Research Department, subsequently by the Microbiology Research Establishment, Porton Down until its closure in 1979 and since then by the Chemical Defence Establishment and now the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment at Porton Down. The information gained has been the subject of information exchange and collaboration with the United States of America on a continuing basis. This information was exchanged under the aegis of the defence agreements referred to by the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, the Right Honourable Archie Hamilton, MP, in his reply of 21 May 1992, Official Report, columns 255-256.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him what research his Department carried out on the viral disease psittacosis (Question 14, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. We have no record that any research work has been carried out at the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment or its precursor Establishments into psittacosis.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him how the workings of the Technical Co-operation Programme were affected by the British decision to give up offensive work on chemical and biological weapons; and how this changed the nature and direction of research exchanged through the Technical Co-operation Programme (Question 15, Order Paper 12 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The Technical Cooperation Programme was established in 1958 and the Sub Group E on Chemical and Biological Defence was not activated until 1967. As the United Kingdom had ceased work on offensive chemical and biological weapons in the late 1950s, the Technical Cooperation Programme collaboration on chemical and biological defence through Sub Group E was unaffected by the earlier decision of the United Kingdom to give up offensive work on chemical and biological weapons.

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him pursuant to his Answer of 12 May, Official Report, column 515, if he can indicate, without disproportionate cost, the approximate number of service volunteers tested with BZ; in which years these tests were carried out; what was the conclusion of the evaluation of BZ; what monitoring was carried out of the volunteers since the tests; in which year information was exchanged with the United States of America; and under which agreement it was exchanged. (Question 130, Order Paper 9 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The role of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment is to carry out research to ensure that the UK Armed Forces are provided with effective protective measures against the threat that chemical or biological weapons may be used against them. As part of this work the potential hazard of possible chemical and biological warfare agents is assessed and the effectiveness of British protective measures evaluated.

3. The approximate number of service volunteers tested with BZ was twenty-five in the mid 1960s. The conclusion of the evaluation of BZ was that it could indeed effect the behaviour of Service personnel and as such presented a potential hazard which should not be ignored in considering the potential hazards to which UK Forces might be exposed. The volunteers were examined before and after the tests by the resident Army psychiatrist and no indication of any continuing effect was observed. There have been no reports of any subsequent sequelae from any of the volunteers.

4. The information obtained was part of the UK programme into chemical and biological defence and as such was drawn upon in our collaboration and information exchange with the United States of America under The Technical Cooperation Programme through Sub Group E on chemical and biological defence.

Universities (Research and Development)

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the grounds for allowing universities rather than the Ministry to decide whether to disclose if they are receiving funds from the Ministry for research and development projects.

Mr. Aitken: Universities would prefer us not to disclose whether they are receiving Ministry of Defence funds for research and development projects in order to protect their academic researchers assigned to the projects from potentially violent extremists.

RFA Argus

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for how many weeks since her entry into service Royal Fleet Auxiliary Argus has been available for the purpose for which she was procured; for how many weeks per year it was intended that she should be available; what alternative means of helicopter training have been made available; when RFA Argus is due out of refit; what helicopter training will be available until then; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: Since RFA Argus became fully operational in March 1989, she has been available for operational duties for 142 weeks. She would normally be available for her peacetime role as an aviation training

ship for approximately 36 weeks per year, but due to operational deployments to the Gulf and the Adriatic, she has only been available for this task for a total of 83 weeks since 1989. When she is unavailable, shipborne helicopter aircrew training is provided by alternative RFA vessels. RFA Argus will be in refit until October 1993. During this period shipborne aviation training will be provided by RFA Olmeda and RFA Olna.

Service Bands

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy bands will remain in place after current reorganisation and disbanding proposals; how many personnel each will contain and at what cost; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: On Army bands I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Member for Epsom and Ewell (Mr. Hamilton) gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham (Mr. Couchman) on 16 March, *Official Report*, columns *133-34*. A study team is currently looking at the implementation of the new structure. The team will consider the question of costs.

The future structure and organisation of the Royal Marine Band Service and the RAF music services are currently under review, but no decisions have yet been taken.

President Bush (Assassination Plot)

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his oral answer of 5 July, *Official Report*, column *29*, on the plot to assassinate former President Bush, what evidence about the plot he received from the United States.

Mr. Hanley: The US have kept us informed of progress with their investigations. I am placing in the Library of the House a copy of the statement made by Ambassador Madeline K Albright, the United States permanent representative to the Security Council on 27 June 1993.

Identification Friend or Foe System

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the upgrading of the NATO identification friend or foe system.

Mr. Aitken: NATO nations are actively studying options to replace existing identification friend or foe systems. A five-nation joint expert group—United Kingdom, United States, France, Germany and Italy—is evaluating a number of technically achievable options for a future air combat identification system with the aim of identifying a common solution. The results are expected in mid-1994.

Anti-tactical Ballistic Missile System

Mr. Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is his policy towards United Kingdom participation in a programme for a European anti-tactical ballistic missile system.

Mr. Aitken: I have nothing to add to the answer given to the hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Central (Mr. Cousins) on 21 June, *Official Report*, column *54*.

Nuclear Submarines

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will provide details of the current number of Royal Navy nuclear submarines which have been decommissioned, specifying the dockyard which had undertaken the decommissioning and the relevant date, together with the current docking arrangements; and how many such vessels he now expects to be decommissioned within the next 10 years.

Mr. Aitken: The location of each nuclear-powered submarine which has left Royal Navy service is provided in the table. All these submarines, except HMS Revenge, have completed the process of defuelling, de-equipping and lay-up preparations; details of the locations where this took place are also provided. It is not our practice to reveal in advance details of plans for decommissioning nuclear powered submarines.

HM Submarines	*Where de-fuelled, etc*	*Date completed*	*Present location*
Dreadnought	Chatham dockyard	February 83	Rosyth naval base
Warspite	Devonport dockyard	December 91	Devonport naval base
Churchill	Roysyth dockyard	June 91	Rosyth naval base
Conqueror	Devonport dockyard	September 92	Devonport naval base
Swiftsure	Rosyth dockyard	October 92	Rosyth naval base
Courageous	Devonport dockyard	June 1993	Devonport naval base
Revenge	To be completed in 1994		Rosyth naval base

Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Orangeleaf

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects the royal naval dockyard at Devonport to begin work on the refit of Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Orangeleaf.

Mr. Aitken: Work started on Monday 12 July 1993.

Land Sales

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much land in the United Kingdom his Department has disposed of over each of the past five years.

Mr. Hanley: Statistics are available only for financial years 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92 when 400, 870 and 1,242 hectares of land and buildings were sold respectively.

Personnel (Resignations)

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service personnel he expects to leave the forces in the forthcoming year.

Mr. Hanley: In the financial year ending 31 March 1994, it is estimated that some 34,570 personnel will leave the regular armed forces. This figure includes trainees who are not expected to complete initial training for various reasons and 8,482 personnel who will depart on redundancy terms.

SCOTLAND

Lockerbie

Mr. Gapes: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what progress the Lord Advocate has made in bringing to justice those alleged to have caused the murder of the passengers and crew of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: Warrants remain in force for the arrest of the two Libyans accused of the Lockerbie bombing, but the Libyan authorities have, to date, failed to surrender them for trial in Scotland or the United States. The Government continue to press their demand for the surrender of the two accused through the United Nations.

Water Authorities

Mr. Tom Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland who will appoint the members of the public water authorities which he proposes to establish; which bodies he intends to consult in making such appointments; and what are the precise criteria he will adopt in making such appointments.

Mr. Lang: Appointments will be made after consultation as appropriate. Appointees will include persons knowledgeable about the water and sewerage industry and persons with proven business skills.

Water and Sewerage Services

Mr. Tom Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what sum he has allocated within his budget for further consultation with interested bodies on his proposals for the water and sewerage services.

Mr. Lang: Costs will be met from the sum allocated for expenditure on water and sewerage restructuring, and given in my hon. Friend's reply to the hon. Member for Fife, Central (Mr. McLeish) on 5 May, *Official Report*, columns *38-39*.

Mr. Tom Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland with which interested bodies he proposes to consult before bringing forward detailed proposals for the water and sewerage services.

Mr. Lang: We propose to discuss technical and other aspects of the new structure with the current providers of the services. We also expect to consult representatives of consumers about the new customer organisation.

Mr. Tom Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he intends to undertake further consultation on his proposals for the water and sewerage services; and when he expects to complete this further consultation.

Mr. Lang: Discussions will be initiated and completed as soon as possible.

Mr. Tom Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will specify the basis on which he intends the private sector to play a major role in financing the capital investment programme of the water and sewerage services over the next 10 years.

Mr. Lang: Water and sewerage authorities will be expected to encourage private sector investment as part of the initiative to introduce private finance into public services. General guidance on the objectives of this initiative has already been issued; further guidance will be issued as appropriate.

Homelessness

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to visit a representative selection of hotels providing bed-and-breakfast accommodation for the homeless.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 5 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend has no such plans. However, as the Scottish housing Minister, I have undertaken various engagements relating to the homeless in the relatively recent past, including visits to the Alloa-supported accommodation project in Clackmannan, the Lower Bridge street homeless persons hostel in Stirling, the Randolph Crescent hostel in Edinburgh, the Blue Triangle housing association in Uddingston, the Hamish Allan centre in Glasgow, and the commencement ceremony for Thenew housing association stopover in Alexandria.

Salmon Farms

Mr. Nigel Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what guidelines are in place to ensure that United Kingdom salmon farms operate in an environmentally conscious fashion; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 13 July 1993]:* Salmon farming is subject to a framework of controls covering the establishment and operation of farms, disease and movement controls, planning, water discharge and navigation. The Scottish Office has also issued draft guidance on the location of marine fish farms, which was widely welcomed. I hope that the final guidance will be issued later this year.

Mr. Nigel Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many tonnes of farmed salmon have been produced in the United Kingdom in each year since 1983.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 13 July 1993]:* The information is as follows:

	Tonnes
1983	2,536
1984	3,912
1985	6,921
1986	10,337
1987	12,721
1988	17,951
1989	28,553
1990	32,412
1991	40,656
1992	36,312

Depleted Uranium Shells

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent representations he has received in regard to the test firing of depleted uranium shells at the Dundrennan test range at Kirkcudbright; and from what organisations they have come.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 14 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend has received one letter, in which a member of the public expressed concern that the test firing of depleted uranium shells may pose a threat to health.

Midwives

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many midwives were employed *(a)* full time and (b) part time in each health board area in each year since 1988.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Midwives by health board at 30 September[1]

	Whole time					Part time				
	1988	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*
Scotland	2,320	2,394	2,419	2,478	2,403	1,258	1,165	1,247	1,481	1,581
Argyll and Clyde	199	180	184	200	198	163	134	140	174	194
Ayrshire and Arran	[2]9	74	109	161	144	[2]8	27	47	117	119
Borders	77	86	79	79	79	20	21	22	14	19
Dumfries and Galloway	85	90	95	89	81	46	39	53	63	67
Fife	91	99	90	99	94	88	80	89	96	109
Forth Valley	142	130	128	116	117	67	58	67	75	102
Grampian	248	252	258	244	240	138	141	150	167	182
Greater Glasgow	487	511	510	495	488	192	168	163	237	199
Highland	171	176	167	187	180	121	124	122	124	132
Lanarkshire	195	188	192	195	186	129	129	133	137	143
Lothian	313	319	313	317	309	112	100	99	112	134
Orkney	22	23	24	23	23	4	3	3	4	2
Shetland	23	22	24	25	24	5	5	5	6	5
Tayside	222	205	211	220	213	132	101	120	123	143
Western Isles	36	39	35	28	27	33	35	34	32	31

[1] Includes qualified staff working in hospitals and in the community. Community staff whose combined duties include midwifery are also included.
[2] The specialty figures for Ayrshire and Arran were misclassified in the September 1988 census.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many midwifery staff are employed in each health board area *(a)* full time and *(b)* part time (i) on an agency basis and (ii) on bank contracts.

Mr. Stewart: *[holding answer 15 July 1993:]* The available information is shown in the table. The number of bank nurses working in midwifery is not held centrally.

Midwifery staff by health board at 30 September 1992[1]

	Qualified	*W-T*	*P-T*	*In training*[2]	*W-T*	*P-T*	*Unqualified*	*W-T*	*P-T*	*Agency Midwives*[3]	*Students*
Scotland	4,313	2,508	1,805	516	515	1	1,210	328	882	0·7	121
Argyll and Clyde	420	208	212	31	31	0	133	29	104	0	14
Ayrshire and Arran	272	147	125	51	50	1	75	11	64	0	14
Borders	101	80	21	0	0	0	21	7	14	0	0
Dumfries and Galloway	157	82	75	25	25	0	26	3	23	0	0
Fife	220	96	124	26	26	0	66	3	63	0	11
Forth Valley	299	132	167	29	29	0	70	13	57	0	20
Grampian	452	247	205	66	66	0	114	22	92	0	0
Greater Glasgow	732	511	221	63	63	0	350	149	201	0	18
Highland	313	181	132	25	25	0	38	8	30	0	0
Lanarkshire	345	189	156	31	31	0	73	23	50	0	20
Lothian	463	317	146	124	124	0	149	38	111	0·73	9
Orkney	27	23	4	0	0	0	4	0	4	0	0
Shetland	33	25	8	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0
Tayside	420	243	177	45	45	0	87	19	63	0	15
Western Isles	59	27	32	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0

[1] Includes staff working in hospitals and in the community. Community staff whose combined duties include midwifery are also included.
[2] Student midwife data are as at 31 October 1992; some students are not funded directly by health boards and all are shown by geographical location of their College.
[3] Average whole time equivalent for 6 months ending 30 September.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many practising midwives that are in each grade in each health board area, including those in senior nurse/senior midwife grades, senior nurse grades and education and clinical grades, excluding agency midwives; how many are employed *(a)* full time and *(b)* part time; and how many student midwives there are in each area.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* The available information requested is shown in the table. Midwives or senior nurse or teaching grades cannot be identified by specialty and are therefore not included.

Midwifery staff by health board at 30 September 1992[1]

	Total qualified			Grade I			Grade H			Grade G			Grade F			Grade E			Student/ Trainee Mid-wives[2]
	Total	W-T	P-T	Total	W-T	P-T	Total	W-T	P-T	Total	W-T	P-T	Total	W-T	P-T	Total	W-T	P-T	
Scotland	3,984	2,403	1,581	42	40	2	142	135	7	1,307	1,015	292	976	405	571	1,517	808	709	637
Argyll & Clyde	392	198	194	4	4	0	44	42	2	115	85	30	121	30	91	108	37	71	45
Ayrshire & Arran	263	144	119	0	0	0	2	2	0	65	53	12	91	34	57	105	55	50	65
Borders	98	79	19	1	1	0	6	6	0	62	49	13	11	7	4	18	16	2	0
Dumfries & Galloway	148	81	67	0	0	0	5	5	0	51	46	5	22	10	12	70	20	50	25
Fife	203	94	109	6	6	0	1	1	0	55	35	20	64	14	50	77	38	39	37
Forth Valley	219	117	102	2	2	0	7	7	0	64	50	14	34	14	20	112	44	68	49
Grampian	422	240	182	4	4	0	6	4	2	142	109	33	103	42	61	167	81	86	66
Greater Glasgow	687	488	199	12	10	2	8	8	0	198	164	34	93	75	18	376	231	145	81
Highland	312	180	132	2	2	0	37	34	3	136	90	46	78	29	49	59	25	34	25
Lanarkshire	329	186	143	5	5	0	7	7	0	97	74	23	127	42	85	93	58	35	51
Lothian	443	309	134	5	5	0	9	9	0	131	101	30	125	69	56	173	125	48	133
Orkney	25	23	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	19	17	2	4	4	0	0	0	0	0
Shetland	29	24	5	0	0	0	1	1	0	22	20	2	3	0	3	3	3	0	0
Tayside	356	213	143	5	1	0	6	6	0	109	99	10	84	32	52	156	75	81	60
Western Isles	58	27	31	0	0	0	1	1	0	41	23	18	16	13	13	0	0	0	0

Notes:
[1]Includes staff working in hospitals and in the community. Community staff includes combined duty staff.
[2]Student midwife data are as at 31 October 1992; some students are not funded directly by health boards and all are shown by the geographical location of their College.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many whole-time equivalent midwives there are at each increment point of each pay scale.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Midwives by grade and incremental point: at 30 September 1992

Grade	Incremental point	WTE
Grades I-E		3,318·0
Grade I		41·0
	4	32·0
	3	4·5
	2	2·0
	1	1·0
	0	1·5
Grade H		140·7
	4	116·3
	3	7·4
	2	15·0
	1	1·0
	0	1·0
Grade G		1,198·2
	5	1·0
	4	1,051·3
	3	46·7
	2	52·3
	1	25·9
	0	21·1
Grade F		737·7
	5	532·8
	4	63·0
	3	68·7
	2	45·0
	1	12·5
	0	15·8
Grade E		1,200·3
	4	796·3
	3	97·0
	2	100·0
	1	99·7
	0	107·4

Notes:
1. Includes staff working in hospitals and the community and those with combined duties with district nursing and/or health visiting.
2. Data cover clinical grades only. Midwives on senior nurse or teaching grades cannot be identified by specialty and are therefore excluded.

Special Waste

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste production in the waste categories of *(a)* acids and alkalis, *(b)* antimony and antimony compounds, *(c)* arsenic compounds, *(d)* asbestos (all chemical forms), *(e)* barium compounds, *(f)* beryllium and beryllium compounds, *(g)* biocides and phytopharmaceutical substances, *(h)* boron compounds, *(i)* cadmium and cadmium compounds, *(j)* copper compounds, *(k)* heterocyclic organic compounds containing oxygen, nitrogen and/or sulphur and *(l)* hexavalent chromium compounds;

(2) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste production in the waste categories of *(a)* solvents-S halogen/mixed, *(b)* mineral oil sludges, *(c)* contaminated industrial waste, *(d)* empty contaminated drums, *(e)* pressurised cylinders/ aerosols, *(f)* contaminated soil, *(g)* mixed laboratory chemicals, *(h)* biocides-solid, *(i)* biocides-liquid, *(j)* biocides-aqueous diluted, *(k)* resins-organic and *(l)* filter material-organic;

(3) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste production in the waste categories of *(a)* pharmaceutical and veterinary compounds, *(b)* phosphorus and its compounds, *(c)* selenium and selenium compounds, *(d)* silver compounds, *(e)* tarry materials from refining and tar residues from distilling, *(f)* tellurium and tellurium compounds, *(g)* thallium and thallium compounds, *(h)* vanadium compounds and *(i)* zinc compounds;

(4) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste production in the waste categories of *(a)* solid metal bearing, *(b)* solid inorganic, *(c)* solid CN, *(d)* solid organic, *(e)* solid asbestos, *(f)* filter material-inorganic, *(g)* acid metal bearing, *(h)* acid-inorganic, *(i)* acid-organic, *(j)* alkalis metal bearing, *(k)* alkalis-inorganic *(l)* alkalis-organic and *(m)* aqueous cyanide;

(5) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste production in the waste categories of *(a)* hydrocarbons and their oxygen, nitrogen and/or sulphur compounds, *(b)* inorganic cyanides, *(c)* inorganic halogen containing compounds, *(d)* inorganic sulphur containing compounds, *(e)* laboratory chemicals, *(f)* lead compounds, *(g)* mercury compounds, *(h)* nickel and nickel compounds, *(i)* organic halogen compounds, excluding inert polymeric material and *(j)* peroxides, chlorates and azides;

(6) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste production in the waste categories of *(a)* pharmaceutical waste, *(b)* mixed organics in drums, *(c)* metal compounds, *(d)* non-toxic metal compounds, *(e)* metals-elements, *(f)* metal oxides, *(g)* inorganic compounds, *(h)* other non-organic material, *(i)* organic compounds, *(j)* polymeric material and precursors, *(k)* fuels, oils and greases, *(l)* fine chemicals and biocides, *(m)* miscellaneous chemicals waste, *(n)* filter materials and sludges, *(o)* miscellaneous waste and *(q)* construction waste;

(7) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste production in the waste categories of *(a)* neutral metal bearing, *(b)* neutral-inorganic, *(c)* neutral-organic, *(d)* neutral-oily (1-15 per cent.), *(e)* mineral oil and <20 per cent. others, *(f)* mineral oil and >20 per cent. others, *(g)* oil + >20 per cent. water <85 per cent., *(h)* grease/fat/wax/vegetable oil, *(i)* tars/phenols, *(j)* solvents-non halogen, *(k)* solvents-halogenated, *(l)* solvents-mixed (including water) and *(m)* solvents-S non halogen.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* Information on the categories of special waste specified is not available centrally. District and islands councils in Scotland hold special waste consignment notes in respect of waste arising in their area, and may be able to provide some of this information.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste arisings and deposits;

(2) if he will list, by year for the last five years, and by county, the number of tonnes of special waste arising *(a)* within the county and deposited within the county, *(b)* within the county and exported out of the county and *(c)* outside the county and deposited within the county.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* Since 1989 the waste regulatory authorities, the district and islands councils have provided the Scottish Office with information on special waste arisings, disposals, imports, and exports. Details for 1989, 1990 and 1991 are given in the table. Figures for 1992 are not yet available.

1989

Tonnes

District council	*Special waste*			
	Arisings	*Retained for disposal*	*Imports*	*Exports*
Berwickshire	16	0	0	16
Ettrick and Lauderdale	1,823	0	0	1,823
Roxburgh	42	0	0	42
Tweeddale	18	0	0	18
Clackmannan	30	0	0	30
Falkirk	12,414	873	975	12,516
Stirling	134	55	51	130
Annandale and Eskdale	1,035	1,033	0	2
Nithsdale	1	0	0	1
Stewartry	23	10	0	13
Wigtown	48	0	32	80
Dunfermline	3,964	0	0	3,964
Kirkcaldy	2,577	0	0	2,576
North East Fife	427	358	0	70
Aberdeen City	1,647	1,249	922	1,088
Banff and Buchan	6,011	0	0	6,011
Gordon	75	1,138	1,102	39
Kincardine and Deeside	30	0	0	30
Moray	11	10	0	1
Badenoch and Strathspey	1	0	0	1
Caithness	41	1	0	40
Inverness	200	1,024	904	80
Lochaber	601	600	0	1
Nairn	0	0	0	0
Ross and Cromarty	550	50	0	500
Skye and Lochalsh	1	1	0	0
Sutherland	16	5	0	11
East Lothian	959	0	0	959
Edinburgh City	3,032	811	610	2,830
Midlothian	115	0	0	115
West Lothian	1,813	2,600	1,919	1,132
Argyll and Bute	22	0	0	22
Bearsden and Milngavie	1	0	0	1
Clydebank	170	0	0	170
Clydesdale	36	0	0	36
Cumbernauld and Kilsyth	547	0	0	547
Cumnock and Doon Valley	112	0	0	112
Cunninghame	14,033	10,000	0	4,033
Dumbarton	674	0	0	674
East Kilbride	306	0	0	306

District council	Special waste Arisings	Retained for disposal	Imports	Exports
Eastwood	9	0	0	9
Glasgow City	6,101	7,814	6,354	4,641
Hamilton	702	0	0	702
Inverclyde	316	0	0	316
Kilmarnock and Louden	167	2,153	2,040	54
Kyle and Carrick	592	0	0	592
Monklands	941	0	0	941
Motherwell	577	0	26	603
Renfrew	1,871	0	0	1,871
Strathkelvin	909	1,263	855	502
Angus	860	28	0	832
Dundee City	858	2,204	1,346	0
Perth and Kinross	86	1	0	85
Orkney Islands	35	15	0	20
Shetland Islands	3,507	3,507	0	1
Western Islands	1	1	0	0

1990 Special Waste

District council	Arisings Tonnes	Retained for disposal Tonnes	Imports Tonnes	Exports Tonnes
Berwickshire	62	0	0	62
Ettrick and Lauderdale	1,392	0	0	1,392
Roxburgh	16	0	0	16
Tweeddale	30	0	0	30
Clackmannan	124	0	0	124
Falkirk	10,332	801	1,255	10,786
Stirling	70	73	67	64
Annandale and Eskdale	6	1	0	5
Nithsdale	1,791	0	0	1,791
Stewartry	22	20	0	2
Wigtown	28	0	25	52
Dunfermline	3,097	0	0	3,097
Kirkcaldy	2,465	0	0	2,465
North East Fife	112	4	2	111
Aberdeen City	2,809	2,633	1,288	1,463
Banff and Buchan	15,971	0	0	15,971
Gordon	31	16,284	16,284	31
Kincardine and Deeside	12	0	0	12
Moray	440	10	0	430
Badenoch and Strathspey	15	14	0	1
Caithness	61	1	0	60
Inverness	121	102	3	22
Lochaber	600	600	0	0
Nairn	1	0	0	1
Ross and Cromarty	158	144	0	14
Skye and Lochalsh	10	10	0	0
Sutherland	9	1	0	8
East Lothian	775	0	0	775
Edinburgh City	2,572	1,683	1,550	2,438
Midlothian	269	0	0	269
West Lothian	2,735	3,101	1,532	1,166
Argyll and Bute	38	0	0	38
Bearsden and Milngavie	13	0	0	13
Clydebank	145	0	0	145
Clydesdale	86	0	0	86
Cumbernauld and Kilsyth	360	0	0	360
Cumnock and Doon Valley	69	0	0	69
Cunninghame	27,751	24,600	0	3,151
Dumbarton	948	0	0	948
East Kilbride	390	0	0	390
Eastwood	4	0	0	4
Glasgow City	5,610	6,443	5,665	4,832
Hamilton	574	182	182	574
Inverclyde	537	0	0	537
Kilmarnock and Louden	91	1,761	1,718	48
Kyle and Carrick	548	0	0	548
Monklands	452	6	0	446
Motherwell	326	0	42	368
Renfrew	5,105	0	0	5,105
Strathkelvin	534	965	965	534
Angus	1,620	14	0	1,606
Dundee City	554	4,274	3,844	123

District council	Arisings	Retained for disposal	Imports	Exports
	Tonnes	Tonnes	Tonnes	Tonnes
Perth and Kinross	92	0	0	92
Orkney Islands	257	1	0	256
Shetland Islands	11	9	0	2
Western Islands	6	6	0	0

1991

District council	Special waste			
	Arisings	Retained for disposal	Imports	Exports
	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)
Berwickshire	262	0	0	262
Ettrick and Lauderdale	2,023	439	67	1,651
Roxburgh	57	0	0	57
Tweeddale	11	0	0	11
Clackmannan	186	0	0	186
Falkirk	11,703	774	1,390	12,319
Stirling	197	149	437	485
Annandale and Eskdale	894	887	0	6
Nithsdale	3,944	1	0	3,943
Stewartry	6	1	0	5
Wigtown	23	0	267	290
Dunfermline	8,103	0	0	8,103
Kirkcaldy	16,549	0	0	16,549
North East Fife	83	9	0	74
Aberdeen City	3,184	3,213	1,758	1,729
Banff and Buchan	2,174	0	0	2,174
Gordon	47	264	263	47
Kincardine and Deeside	46	0	0	46
Moray	374	17	0	357
Badenoch and Strathspey	39	37	0	2
Caithness	14	0	0	14
Inverness	305	123	7	188
Lochaber	701	701	0	0
Nairn	19	0	0	19
Ross and Cromarty	92	107	17	2
Skye and Lochalsh	10	10	0	0
Sutherland	11	0	0	11
East Lothian	210	0	0	210
Edinburgh City	1,922	2,194	1,898	1,626
Midlothian	418	0	0	418
West Lothian	2,111	2,585	1,469	995
Argyll and Bute	37	0	0	37
Bearsden and Milngavie	0	0	0	0
Clydebank	205	0	0	205
Clydesdale	22	0	0	22
Cumbernauld and Kilsyth	165	0	0	165
Cumnock and Doon Valley	173	0	0	173
Cunninghame	14,655	10,782	0	3,873
Dumbarton	739	0	0	739
East Kilbride	606	0	0	606
Eastwood	29	0	0	29
Glasgow City	4,785	9,364	6,789	2,210
Hamilton	1,041	57	57	1,041
Inverclyde	185	0	1	186
Kilmarnock and Louden	44	1,006	1,021	59
Kyle and Carrick	727	0	0	727
Monklands	656	0	0	656
Motherwell	686	0	0	685
Renfrew	4,809	0	0	4,809
Strathkelvin	610	0	0	610
Angus	2,604	0	0	2,604
Dundee City	1,042	2,475	1,704	272
Perth and Kinross	159	0	0	159
Orkney Islands	215	2	0	213
Shetland Islands	1,754	1,747	0	8
Western Islands	3	3	0	0

Coastal Waters

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what proportion of Scottish coastal waters surveyed in 1990 were of satisfactory quality.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The water quality survey of Scotland 1990 showed that 91 per cent. of Scottish coastal waters were of satisfactory quality. A copy of the report of the survey published by the Scottish Office Environment Department was placed in the House of Commons Library in March 1992.

Patients

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what percentage of patients were treated *(a)* as day patients, *(b)* as in-patients and *(c)* in the community by the NHS in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The information which is available is given in the table. No percentage comparisons are available in the form requested.

	In-patient discharges	*Day patient attendances*	*Day cases*	*Out-patient attendances* *Consultant clinics*	*Other clinics*[1]
1988	871,287	688,200	159,763	5,767,286	9,604,024
1989	882,347	673,931	175,970	5,814,795	9,774,517
1990	895,790	662,855	185,974	5,924,841	10,004,427
1991	912,370	698,891	203,633	5,970,830	10,033,314
1992	920,144	750,895	213,846	6,005,131	10,032,026

[1]Comprises attendances at professions allied to medicine and other technical departments.

Water Quality

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he will repeat the water quality survey which his Department carried out in 1990.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* It is anticipated that the water quality survey of Scotland will be carried out next in 1995.

Obstetric Procedures

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make it his policy to ensure that all trust hospitals which currently undertake obstetric procedures will continue to do so regardless of whether they are successfully sued for compensation in respect of babies who have been damaged.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* It is for health boards, as purchasers, to ensure that there is a safe and effective obstetric service available to meet the needs of the population. Any proposals involving hospital closure or a major change of use must obtain the prior approval of the Secretary of State for Scotland before implementation.

Beaches

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many beaches in 1992 did not achieve the EC directive 76/160/EEC standard; and what action his Department has taken to improve their standards.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The EC directive 76/160/EEC sets standards for bathing waters, not beaches. In 1992, of the 23 Scottish bathing waters identified in terms of the directive, 15 complied with the mandatory coliform standards.

Detailed description of measures being taken to remedy non-compliance in the areas of the eight bathing waters which did not comply are provided in the Scottish Office Environment Department report "Bathing Waters in Scotland, Monitoring in 1992, Summary of Results" a copy of which was placed in the House of Commons Library in May 1993.

Mental Illness

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many mentally ill patients were treated *(a)* in the community and *(b)* as in-patients, for each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* Information on the number of mentally ill patients treated in the community is not collected centrally. The available information about mentally ill patients treated in NHS hospitals in Scotland, excluding the State hospital, Carstairs, is as follows:

	Residents as at 31 December[1]	*Discharges during the year*[2]
1988	13,512	29,811
1989	13,056	29,787
1990	12,851	30,670
1991	12,580	30,537
[3]1992	12,566	28,943

[1] The number of mentally-ill patients being treated in hospital on 31 December in each year.
[2] The number of occasions on which a person was discharged from a hospital after receiving treatment for mental illness. An individual patient may have been discharged on more than one such occasion during the year.
[3] Provisional.

Regional Elections

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to cancel the 1994 regional elections; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart: *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend has no plans to introduce the legislation that would be required to cancel these elections.

Young People

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what was the total number of *(a)* 18-year-olds, *(b)* 17-year-olds and *(c)* 16-year-olds in January (i) 1991, (ii) 1992 and (iii) 1993; and if he will list for each year the number in full-time education in (1) schools including

maintained, independent and special schools and (2) further education, excluding those on youth training schemes in colleges.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The information requested for 1991 is published in table 9.1 of the "Scottish Economic Bulletin" No 46. Comparable figures for 1992 are set out in the table: figures for 1993 are not yet available.

16, 17 and 18 year olds in full-time education in Scotland, 1992

Thousands

	Age at 30 August 1991		
	16	*17*	*18*
Population at 31 December	64·3	65·3	69·0
Full time education in:			
schools	26·6	13·4	0·7
further education[1]	8·5	13·5	19·7

[1] non-advanced and advanced further education, teacher training and higher education.

Forestry

Mr. Morley: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if purchasers of Forestry Commission estates currently for sale will be obliged to accept the forestry enterprise environmental code.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* The environmental code to which the hon. Member refers was drawn up specifically for the Forestry Commission's enterprise arm. Woodland owners who accept grants under the woodland grant scheme are required to follow the environmental guidelines published by the Forestry Commission, which include most of the points in the environmental code. Private woodland owners generally are also encouraged to follow the forestry and woodland code published by Timbers Growers United Kingdom.

After-school Care

Mrs. Ray Michie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will give details of the provision of after-school care by each regional council, the grant assistance offered for after-school care per regional council and the assistance given by his Department for after-school provision per project; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* Details of regional and islands councils' provision of after-school care are now being collected, but the results are not yet available. Their expenditure is not separately identified in the returns.

At present, the Scottish Office, through the urban programme, is funding 14 after-school care projects at a capital cost of some £165,020 and annual running costs for 1992-93 approaching £1 million. Details of the approved costs per project are given in the table.

Project Name	*Capital* £	*Current* £
Shortless Before and After School Care Project	0	4,779
Haldane After School Care Dumbarton	100	62,843
West Dumbarton After School Care Project	100	70,768
Dalmarnock After School Care Glasgow	0	45,646
Strathclyde After School Care	0	38,268
Onthank After School Group	0	717
Out of School Provision Wester Hailes	7,155	65,078
Castlemilk After School Care Mobile Child Care	92,895	155,115
Drumchapel Out of School Care	7,565	0
Barlanark Out of School Care	10,928	29,230
Mid Craigie Out of School Club	42,277	86,362
Priesthill/Nitshill Out Schools Services	0	49,918
After School Club, Nithsdale	0	52,041
Priority Areas Out of School Care, Kirkcaldy	4,000	277,495

In addition, through section 10 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 we have offered revenue grant of £72,000 over three years to the Scottish out-of-school care network as a means of developing after-school and holiday care schemes. As a further boost to increased provision, the Government are providing £45 million on a Great Britain basis to help to create 50,000 additional places in out-of-school schemes. In Scotland, the funding of this initiative is being channelled through local enterprise companies.

Local Government Reform

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish the names of those organisations or individuals who made representations in favour of joining the counties of Berwickshire and East Lothian in the course of the recent consultation exercise on local government reform.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* A total of 33 individuals and organisations commented upon the proposed structure of local government for East Lothian, for Berwickshire or for both of these areas. Of these, six supported the merging of East Lothian and Berwickshire to form a new single-tier local authority. The organisations and individuals who supported the creation of such an authority are as follows:

Eric A Gray
R B Cowe
J Evans
Burnmouth Community Council
Councillor Ludovic Brown Lindsay
Pauline Humphrey

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if any information about his plans for changes in local government areas was conveyed to the Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries Commission before 8 July; and if he will make a statement on the nature of such information.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* No such information was conveyed to the Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries Commission prior to the publication of the White Paper "Shaping the Future—The New Councils".

Prisoners

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the ratio of prisoners to social workers in each of the Scottish prisons.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: Responsibility for this question has been delegated to the Scottish prison service under its chief executive, Mr E. W. Frizzell. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from E. W. Frizzell to Mrs. Maria Fyfe, dated 20 July 1993:

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the ratio of prisoners to social workers in each of the Scottish Prisons.

The ratio is given in the table below.

Establishment	*Ratio*
Aberdeen	1:54
Castle Huntly	1:117
Dumfries	1:136
Edinburgh	1:90
Glenochil	1:91
Inverness	1:79
Low Moss	1:189
Penninghame	1:53
Peterhead	1:59
Shotts/Unit	1:88
Barlinnie/Special Unit	1:93
Cornton Vale	1:57
Dungavel	1:133
Friarton	1:71
Greenock	1:135
Longriggend	1:79
Noranside	1:123
Perth	1:79
Polmont	1:107

Asbestos-related Diseases

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much has been paid out in civil compensation in respect of asbestos-related diseases in each year from 1988 in Scotland; and what was the average payment in each of those years.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: This information is not collected centrally.

Miscarriages of Justice

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many cases of possible miscarriages of justice have been reviewed in each of the past five years; and what decisions were taken in each case.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: In each of the past five years, my right hon. Friend has reviewed petitions alleging miscarriages of justice from or on behalf of the following numbers of persons convicted on indictment:

	Number
1988	46
1989	60
1990	39
1991	54
1992	83

My right hon. Friend referred five of these cases to the High Court of Justiciary under section 263(1) of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1975. The outcome of the subsequent appeals was as follows:

		Appeal
1988	Ernest Barrie	Conviction quashed
1989	Graham Archer Marland	Conviction quashed
1991	William Kilpatrick/ Christopher McEwen	Appeals dismissed
1992	Stewart William Murray Dickson	Conviction for culpable homicide substituted for conviction of murder

Historic Scotland

Mr. Raymond S. Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish the annual report and accounts of Historic Scotland for 1992-93.

Mr. Lang: I have today placed in the Libraries of both Houses copies of Historic Scotland's annual report and accounts for 1992-93.

Register of Scotland Agency

Mr. Raymond S. Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when the annual report of the Register of Scotland executive agency will be published.

Mr. Lang: Copies of the annual report have today been placed in the Library.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Absent Fathers

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what special training in guidance and counselling women who refuse to name the father of their child is being offered to adjudication staff of the Child Support Agency.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Mrs. Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from R. Hepplewhite to Mr. Jim Cousins dated 15 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking what special training in guidance and counselling women who refuse to name the father of their child is being offered to adjudication staff of the Child Support Agency.

All Agency staff involved in interviewing parents with care of children in connection with arranging maintenance receive extensive training in sensitive interviewing. That training, developed and delivered in conjunction with RELATE, draws upon RELATE's considerable counselling experience and is designed to ensure that staff have the skills needed to deal appropriately with clients who may be anxious and concerned.

In addition, parents invited for interview receive a detailed statement—drawn up jointly with the National Council for One Parent Families—setting out their rights at the interview and explaining what subsequent action may be taken.

Interviewing staff are not involved in the adjudication process. Child Support Officers at the Agency's regional centres decide on applications for child support maintenance; and decisions which may involve reduction in benefit are reserved for senior nominated officers at the regional centres. Those decisions carry a right of appeal to an independent tribunal.

I hope you will find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many women have been asked to name an absent father at the Newcastle benefit offices; how many have refused; and how many have been recalled for subsequent interviews.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Mrs. Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from R. Hepplewhite to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 19 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many women have been asked to name an absent father at the Newcastle benefit offices, how many have refused and how many have been called for subsequent interviews.

All maintenance application forms (MAFs) issued to parents with care who approach the Agency ask for the name of the absent parent and the great on the form. There are three CSA local offices in the Newcastle area but we do not hold separate information on the number of MAFs issued locally. A total of 49 parents with care of children were interviewed in the Newcastle area in connection with their Child Support maintenance applications during the period 5 April 9 13 July 1993. Only one parent declined without good cause to co-operate with the Agency in arranging maintenance. None of the parents concerned have been recalled for subsequent interviews.

Interviews are not a routine part of the process of arranging child maintenance and most of the Agency's clients choose to deal with us by post and by telephone without the need for face-to-face contact. However, where necessary, perhaps because a client is unable to complete the Maintenance Assessment Form or is reluctant to do so, arrangements will be made to discuss matters with them at their local office or at their home.

I wish to stress how carefully we consider such cases and hope that you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Pensioners' Income

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the latest information held about pensioners' income; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lilley: I have just published figures that show that since 1979, on average, pensioners' total incomes grew faster than that of the population as a whole.

The figures in the tables are based on the 1990-91 pensioners' income series. They show that since 1979 pensioners' average incomes have increased by 42 per cent. and by 54 per cent after deducting housing costs. In particular, more pensioners are now benefiting from occupational pensions. In 1979 only 43 per cent. of pensioners had an income from a company pension. By 1990-91, this proportion had increased to 61 per cent, receiving an average of £60.80 a week.

Copies of this reply will be placed in the Library.

Pensioner Income results 1979-1990/91

Table 1: The average incomes of pensioner units by source, 1979 to 1990-91

(a) pensioner couples[a]

Income source	*Average income (£ per week, January 1991 prices)*			*Growth since 1979*	
	1979	1990	1990-91	1990	1990-91
Earnings	24.20	17.90	20.00	-26	-17
Benefit income	81.20	92.70	94.40	14	14
Investment income	16.20	41.90	45.10	159	179
Occupational pension	30.20	48.90	54.40	62	80
Other income	0.80	0.70	0.90	-9	19
Total gross income	152.50	202.10	214.80	33	41
Deductions	22.00	33.00	33.60	50	53
Total net income[1]	130.50	169.20	181.20	30	39
Total net income (after housing costs)[2]	111.60	159.60	170.90	43	53

[1] Median net income, at 1991 prices, was £106.50 in 1979, £127.90 in 1989, £133.50 in 1990 and £138.60 in 1990-91.
[2] Median net income after housing costs, at 1991 prices, was £89.40 in 1979, £115.50 in 1989, £124.20 in 1990 and £123.20 in 1990-91.

(b) Single pensioners

Income source	*Average income (£ per week, January 1991 prices)*			*Growth since 1979*	
	1979	*1990*	*1990-91*	*1990*	*1990-91*
Earnings	5·50	3·80	5·40	−31	−1
Benefit income	53·70	61·50	62·30	15	16
Investment income	8·60	21·20	21·60	147	151
Occupational pension	9·40	19·50	20·20	108	115
Other income	0·50	1·00	0·80	90	50
Total gross income	77·70	107·10	110·20	38	42
Deductions	9·50	15·60	15·40	64	61
Total net income[1]	68·10	91·50	94·80	34	39
Total net income (after housing costs[2]	55·40	79·60	82·50	44	49

[1] Median net income, at 1991 prices, was £61·80 in 1979, £72·30 in 1989, £73·70 in 1990 and £75·20 in 1990-91.
[2] Median net income after housing costs, at 1991 prices, was £47·60 in 1979, £51·90 in 1989, £54·90 in 1990 and £54·40 in 1990-91.

(c) All pensioner units

Income source	Average income (£ per week, January 1991 prices)			Percentage growth since 1979	
	1979	1990	1990-91	1990	1990-91
Earnings	11·90	9·10	10·90	−24	−9
Benefit income	63·20	73·10	74·20	16	17
Investment income	11·20	28·90	30·30	158	171
Occupational pension	16·60	30·40	32·90	84	98
Other income	0·60	0·90	0·90	45	37
Total gross income	103·50	142·40	149·10	38	44
Deductions	13·80	22·00	22·20	59	60
Total net income[1]	89·70	120·30	127·00	34	42
Total net income (after housing costs)[2]	74·80	109·30	115·40	46	54

[1] Median net income at 1991 prices, was £63.30 in 1979, £75.20 in 1989, £77.00 in 1990, and £79.50 in 1990-91.
[2] Median net income after housing costs, at 1991 prices, was £56.60 in 1979, £57.50 in 1989, £63.00 in 1990 and £62.80 in 1990-91.
(1) Components may not sum to totals owing to rounding.
(2) * denotes a figure of less than 0·5 per cent.
(3) All average amounts are means unless otherwise stated.
(4) All figures are before housing costs unless otherwise stated.
(5) Pensioner units are defined as single people over state pension age and couples in which the husband is over state pension age.
(6) 1990-91 denotes estimates from the combined sample for 1990 and 1991. One quarter of the 1991 family expenditure survey sample has been omitted because of problems in the collection of information on community charge payments following the delayed issue of bills in April 1991. As a result, the sample size in that year is too small to provide reliable estimates of pensioners' incomes. For this reason, the remaining data for 1991 have been combined with that for 1990.

Table 2: The proportion of pensioner units with investment income, and the average amount for those in receipt
(a) All pensioner units

	Percentage of units with investment income			Average amount for those in receipt (£ per week, 1991 prices)			Per cent growth in average amount since 1979	
	1979	1990	1990-91	1979	1990	1990-91	1990	1990-91
Pensioner couples	71	83	83	22·70	50·40	54·10	122	138
Single pensioners	57	70	71	15·20	30·20	30·30	99	100
All pensioner units	62	75	76	18·20	38·60	40·10	112	120

(b) Recently-retired pensioner units

	Percentage of units with investment income			Average amount for those in receipt (£ per week, 1991 prices)			Per cent growth of average amount since 1979	
	1979	1990	1990-91	1979	1990	1990-91	1990	199-91
Pensioner couples	73	83	83	24·10	61·50	56·80	155	135
Single pensionsers	60	65	72	14·10	41·80	39·00	197	177
All pensioner units	68	75	78	20·40	54·40	49·90	167	145

Notes:
(1) Recently-retired pensioner units are defined as: single women aged 60-64; single men aged 65-69; and couples in which the husband is aged 65-69.
(2) All average amounts are means.
(3) '1990-91' denotes estimates from the combined sample for 1990 and 1991. One quarter of the 1991 family expenditure survey sample has been omitted because of problems in the collection of information on community charge payments following the delayed issue of bills in April 1991. As a result the sample size in that year is too small to provide reliable estimates of pensioners' incomes. For this reason, the remaining data for 1991 have been combined with that for 1990.

Table 3: The proportion of pensioner units with income from occupational pensions, and the average amount for those in receipt
(a) All pensioner units

	Percentage of units with occupational pension income			Average amount for those in receipt (£ per week, 1991 prices)			Percentage growth of average amount since 1979	
	1979	1990	1990-91	1979	1990	1990-91	1990	1990-91
Pensioner couples	65	71	71	48·90	73·30	79·40	50	62
Single pensioners	32	54	56	32·40	44·20	44·30	36	37
All pensioner units	43	60	61	41·10	57·90	60·80	41	48

(b) Recently-retired pensioner units

	Percentage of units with occupational pension income			Average amount for those in receipt (£ per week, 1991 prices)			Percentage growth of average amount since 1979	
	1979	1990	1990-91	1979	1990	1990-91	1990	1990-91
Pensioner couples	68	78	74	57·50	86·30	82·20	50	43
Single pensioners	37	62	61	34·90	50·30	51·00	44	46
All pensioner units	55	71	69	51·20	73·90	71·60	44	40

(1) Estimates of the percentage of pensioner units in receipt of occupational pension income are based upon data from the family expenditure survey and the GAD survey of occupational pension schemes. Due to this use of additional information, it is not possible to derive the overall average occupational receipt from the estimates in table 3.
(2) Recently-retired pensioner units are defined as: single women aged 60-64; single men aged 65-69; and couples in which the husband is aged 65-69.
(3) All average amounts are means.
(4) "1990-91" denotes estimates from the combined sample for 1990 and 1991. One quarter of the 1991 family expenditure survey sample has been omitted because of problems in the collection of information on community charge payments following the delayed issue of bills in April 1991. As a result, the sample size in that year is too small to provide reliable estimates of pensioners' incomes. For this reason, the remaining data for 1991 have been combined with that for 1990.

Pensions

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security when he expects to make available new versions of the forms all new old-age pensioners are to receive informing them of their pension rights and the methods by which they can have their pension rights paid to them; and if he will notify hon. Members and place a copy in the Library when a new version is available.

Mr. Hague: The administration of retirement pension is a matter for Mr Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from M. Bichard to Mr. Calum Macdonald, dated the 19 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking when he expects to make available new versions of the forms all new old age pensioners are to receive informing them of their pension rights and the method by which they can have their pensions paid to them; and if he will notify honourable Members and place a copy in the Library when a new version is available.

Possible amendments to the Retirement Pension claim form are currently under consideration. Decisions on the new format of this form will be taken in the near future and a copy of the revised form will be placed in the Library.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what percentage of national average earnings the basic state pension comprised in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991.

Mr. Hague: The information requested is in the table.

Date	Standard rate basic retirement pension: Rate £	Standard rate basic retirement pension: As a percentage of average earnings (all adults)[1]
November 1979	22·30	23·2
April 1991	52·00	18·3

Note:
[1] *Source:* Department of Employment's new earnings survey estimates of all adult earnings.

Severe Hardship Payments

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will give figures for the number of *(a)* referrals and *(b)* awards given by month from May 1989 to March 1991 for severe hardship payments by the Department of Social Security branch office in Bishop Auckland.

Mr. Burt: The administration of income support is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from M. Bichard to Mr. Alan Milburn, dated 19 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking if he will give figures for the number of *(a)* referrals and *(b)* awards given by month from May 1989 to March 1991 for severe hardship payments by the Department of Social Security branch office in Bishop Auckland.

I have detailed below the total applications under the severe hardship provisions and the number in which payment was awarded.

Details of the total number of claims to severe hardship payments do not equate with the number of customers. This is because the statistics cover the number of applications, rather than the number of individuals who have claimed. Some customers may have made more than one application.

Severe Hardship Referrals—Bishop Auckland Branch Office

Month	Referrals	Awards
May 1989	5	3
June 1989	6	5
July 1989	6	5
August 1989	3	3
September 1989	5	1
October 1989	3	1
November 1989	6	6
December 1989	5	4
January 1990	8	7
February 1990	8	5
March 1990	5	2
April 1990	2	2
May 1990	3	3
June 1990	6	6
July 1990	9	4
August 1990	7	7
September 1990	7	5
October 1990	1	0
November 1990	3	2

Month	Referrals	Awards
December 1990	5	1
January 1991	8	4
February 1991	7	5
March 1991	7	4

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Expenditure

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the level of all social security benefits paid to people *(a)* aged 16 and 17 years, *(b)* aged 18 to 24 years and *(c)* aged 25 years and over as a percentage of gross domestic product in each year from 1980-81 to 1992-93.

Mr. Burt: Information is not available in the form requested. Table 4 in "The Growth of Social Security" shows such information as is available.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the total amount in cash terms and in real terms of social security benefits paid to people *(a)* aged 16 and 17 years, *(b)* aged 18 to 24 years and *(c)* aged 25 years and over for each year from 1980-81 to 1992-93.

Mr. Burt: Information is not available in the form requested. For such information as is available, I refer the hon. Member to the reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Ribble Valley (Mr. Evans) on 7 June, at columns *144-45*.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) what was the total amount in cash terms and in real terms of social security benefits paid to unemployed people *(a)* aged 16 and 17 years, *(b)* aged 18 to 24 years and *(c)* aged 25 years and over for each year from 1980-81 to 1992-93;

(2) what was the level of all social security benefits paid to unemployed people *(a)* aged 16 and 17 years, *(b)* aged 18 to 24 years and *(c)* aged 25 years and over, as a percentage of gross domestic product in each year from 1980-81 to 1992-93.

Mr. Burt: Information about the total amount of social security benefit paid to unemployed people by age group is not held.

Invalidity Benefit

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if any recent changes have been made in the guidance given to doctors on assessment for invalidity benefit.

Mr. Scott: In February, the report form completed by the Benefits Agency's examining doctors was revised to provide fuller information about the medical condition and its effect on capacity for work for each claimant who is examined. Guidance notes for its completion were also issued and, in June, alterations were made to the "Standing Instructions on Reference Work" issued to the Department's examining doctors. Changes to the medical control procedures which apply to all claims for incapacity benefits, including invalidity benefit, were brought into full effect from 1 April 1993.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the total sum paid out in invalidity benefit in each of the past five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Scott: The information is in the table.

Year	Expenditure (£ million)
1988-89	3,359
1989-90	3,837
1990-91	4,431
1991-92	5,347
[1]1992-93	6,100

Source: The Social Security departmental report 1993.
[1] Estimated outturn.

Terminal Illness

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) how many terminally ill people obtained financial assistance from the independent living fund, for each year from 1980 to 1990; and how much money was paid out in respect of such persons in each year;

(2) what proportion of people receiving financial assistance form the independent living fund for each year since 1980 were terminally ill.

Mr. Scott: The independent living fund was established in 1988. The information requested is not available.

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what estimates have been made by his Department to establish how many people will be denied financial assistance by the independent living (1993) fund over the next two years because they are terminally ill; and how much money will be saved over the next two years resulting from the exclusion of terminally ill people.

Mr. Scott: The independent living (1993) fund is an independent and discretionary trust. Questions of policy and case load forecasting are a matter for the trustees of the fund.

No financial savings will arise as a result of the trustees' recent decision because the 1993 fund is cash limited.

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Stratford upon Avon, *Official Report*, 21 June 1993, column *61*, if he will list the statutory agencies which support people who are terminally ill.

Mr. Scott: Health authorities and local social services departments provide care for terminally ill people where appropriate.

Lone Parents

Miss Lestor: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is his estimate of the number of lone parents who have been disadvantaged by increased maintenance payments from absentee fathers because of a resultant ineligibility for income support and related benefits.

Mr. Burt: It is estimated that, by April 1997, 30,000 lone parents will have ceased to be eligible for income support, due to increased maintenance payments. The majority of these lone parents will be better off than they were when receiving income support.

It is possible that some may lose entitlement to passported benefits such as free prescriptions or access to some provisions of the social fund. The low-income scheme operated by the Department of Health means that people on low income may still remain exempt for some or all NHS charges. However, it is not possible to determine how many will have incomes that will not qualify for social security income-related benefits or help under the low-income scheme.

Child Benefit

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish a table showing the distribution of child benefit expenditure among families with children, broken down into equivalised income bands before and after housing costs.

Mr. Burt *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* The information is in the tables.

Distribution of child benefit expenditure[1] among families with children by equivalised[2] income bands, 1990-91[3]

Net equivalised income of benefit unit[4]	*Percentage of child benefit expenditure among benefit units in receipt of child benefit* *Percent*
Before housing costs	
Less than £50	3
£50-£100	16
£100-£200	45
£200-£300	23
£300-£400	8
£400-£500	3
£500 or more	3
After housing costs	
Less than £50	6
£50-£100	27
£100-£200	42
£200-£300	17
£300-£400	4
£400-£500	2
£500 or more	2

Source: Family Expenditure Survey

[1] Includes one parent benefit which can not readily be separated from child benefit in the Family Expenditure Survey data.

[2] Income has been equivalised within benefit units using the McClements scales.

[3] This represents the latest information available and combines the data for the years 1990 and 1991.

[4] Income is in £s per week expressed in January 1991 prices.

Disability Living Allowance

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many of the reviews of awards of disability living allowance which have been varied up to the most recent available date resulted in *(a)* a lengthening and *(b)* a shortening of the period of the award.

Mr. Scott: I understand from Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency, that the information is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Households Below Average Income

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list research projects sponsored by his Department to relate changes in social security, other than upratings in conformity with inflation, to trends in low incomes reported in the latest households below average income report.

Mr. Burt: Research is regularly conducted into the role of social security and its impact on those with low incomes. A list of research projects sponsored by the Department is published in the social security research yearbooks, copies of which are in the Library.

Social Fund

Ms. Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list the titles of research evidence about the effects of the introduction of the social fund which have been examined by his Department in reviewing the fund.

Mr. Scott: All research we are aware of is examined by officials, as part of our continuing evaluation of the operation of the social fund. The titles of the main pieces of research which we have noted are:

Department of Social Security research reports Nos. 8 and 9 "Working the Social Fund" and "Evaluating the Social Fund"—Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU) York university (8 July 1992), published by HMSO.

"The Social Fund—A New Structure"—Social Security Advisory Committee (3 March 1992), published by HMSO;"Challenging Discretion: The Social Fund Review Procedure"—Gillian Dalley and Richard Berthoud (15 July 1992), published by Policy Studies Institute.

Benefits

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what were the total aggregate payments of *(a)* family income support, *(b)* income support and *(c)* community charge benefit for each benefit office in Yorkshire and Humberside during the two most recent financial years for which figures are available.

Mr. Burt: I understand from Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency, that the information is not available and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Stephen: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how much money, in the last financial year for which figures are available, was *(a)* received from national insurance contributions and *(b)* spent on (i) unemployment benefit, (ii) sickness benefit, (iii) child benefit, (iv) housing benefit, (v) other social security benefits, (vi) the national health service and (vii) the state pension.

Mr. Scott: *(a)* £32,474 million[1] was received from national insurance contributions in 1991-92.

(b) Spending in 1991-92 was as follows[2]:

	(£ million)
Unemployment benefit	1,604
Sickness benefit	273
Child benefit	5,189
Housing benefit	6,058
Retirement pension	25,625
Other social security benefits	26,587

Spending on the national health service is the responsibility of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health.

Sources:

[1] National insurance fund accounts 1991-92.

[2] 1993 departmental report.

Income Support

Mr. Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security whether his Department treats as income, for the purposes of assessing income support entitlement, the fees paid by an estranged partner to a person for nursery costs who is claiming income support.

Mr. Burt: Regulations 54 and 55 of the Income Support (General) Regulations require that, with certain specified exceptions, any periodic payments made by a liable relative to their estranged partner are treated as income. These exceptions do not include payments for the purpose of meeting nursery fees.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) if he will make it his policy to establish a clear food element within income support payments;

(2) if he will make it his policy to introduce a boarders' premium for income support claimants to cover the additional costs of living in accommodation without cooking facilities.

Mr. Burt: There are no plans to introduce such a policy.

Pneumoconiosis

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) what was the total cost of the operation of the independent tribunal service pneumoconiosis panel in England and Wales in each year since 1988;

(2) what was the total cost incurred by the independent tribunal service in reassessing the percentage of disability experienced by people with asbestos-related illnesses, pneumoconiosis panel, in England and Wales in each year since 1988;

(3) what was the total cost of the operation of the independent tribunal service pneumoconiosis panel in Scotland in each year since 1988;

(4) what was the total cost incurred by the independent tribunal service in reassessing the percentage of disability experienced by people with asbestos-related illnesses, pneumoconiosis panel, in Scotland in each year since 1988.

Mr. Scott: The information is not available.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 21 July 1993

Home Department

Immigration (Medical Examinations)

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passengers arriving at United Kingdom ports of entry during 1992 and the first quarter of 1993 were referred to port medical inspectors for examination; what are the most common diagnoses made; and how many people have been *(a)* refused entry (i) wholly or (ii) partly on medical grounds and for what medical reason or *(b)* required to report for further medical treatment after entry, for what medical reason.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Nine passengers were refused entry principally on medical grounds in 1992 and none during the first quarter of 1993. The other information requested is not available centrally.

Immigration Offences

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons were recommended for deportation with no custodial sentence during *(a)* 1992 and *(b)* 1993 to the latest convenient date; and in how many such cases the courts directed release (i) subject to conditions and (ii) without conditions.

Mr. Charles Wardle: During 1992, 27 people were recommended for deportation by the courts with no custodial sentence and seven during the first half of 1993. The other information requested is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many decisions to make a deportation order, by nationality of the potential deportee, where there is only a right of appeal as provided under section 5 of the Immigration Act 1988, have been made in each quarter since 1 August 1988; and on what basis these decisions have been made.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The total numbers of decisions to deport affected by the provisions of section 5 of the Immigration Act 1988 in each of the quarters since 1 August 1988 are shown in the table. All these decisions were made under section 3(5)(a) of the Immigration Act 1971, which provides that a person who is not a British citizen is liable to deportation if, having only a limited leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom, he does not observe a condition attached to the leave or remains beyond the time limited by the leave. Information about the nationality of those affected could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

	1988	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*
1 January to 31 March	—	856	688	735	[2]960	995
1 April to 30 June	—	658	644	759	[2]793	[3]946
1 July to 30 September	[1]285	829	634	781	761	—
1 October to 31 December	692	729	744	778	710	—

[1] From 1 August.
[2] Revised figure.
[3] Provisional figure.

EUROPOL

Mr. Robert Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what further progress has been made recently towards bringing the European Community joint criminal intelligence office, EUROPOL, on to an effective basis and towards establishing a joint anti-drugs squad.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Ministers of the Interior and Justice of the member states signed a ministerial agreement on the establishment of the EUROPOL drugs unit on 2 June 1993, in Copenhagen. The agreement will come into force as soon as a decision has been made on a site for EUROPOL by the European Council.

Work is continuing under the Belgium presidency on the draft convention establishing EUROPOL. EUROPOL will exchange and analyse intelligence relating to serious crime, focusing initially on drug trafficking, but there is no intention that its officers should have any operational powers.

Immigration

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many outstanding immigration applications there are at Lunar house from *(a)* students, *(b)* family members in the United Kingdom applying for variation of stay, *(c)* settlement entry clearance applications referred from overseas posts and *(d)* asylum seekers; and what are the average times applicants in each category might expect to wait before a decision.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information is that at the end of June 1993 there were in total about 16,700 cases in the general immigration caseworking groups—including referred entry clearance applications—the majority of which were under consideration or the subject of further inquiries, and about 46,300 cases in the asylum and special cases division.

The estimated average length of time between the receipt of an application and the decision, for cases decided in caseworking groups and the public inquiry offices, in the first quarter of 1993, was one and a half months for students and 20 months for asylum applications. The latter figure reflects the increase in staffing in the asylum and special cases division which has

enabled work to proceed on the resolution of older and more complex cases. Information on average waiting times for family members in the United Kingdom for variation of leave and for settlement entry clearance applications referred from overseas posts is not available.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* British nationals and *(b)* holders of certificates of identity from Hong Kong have been admitted to the United Kingdom in each quarter since January 1992 as (i) persons of independent means, (ii) self-employed persons, (iii) business people, (iv) visitors, (v) students, (vi) husbands and fiancés, (vii) wives and fiancées and (viii) other dependent relatives.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information for British dependent territories citizens and British nationals (overseas) from Hong Kong is given in the table. Data on admissions of holders of certificates of identity from Hong Kong are not available.

Admissions to the United Kingdom of BDTCs and BN(O)s from Hong Kong

Admission category	*1992*					*1993*[1]
	1st quarter	*2nd quarter*	*3rd quarter*	*4th quarter*	*Year*	*January, February*
Visitors:						
Ordinary	7,700	12,300	22,000	7,030	49,100	5,220
Business	1,590	1,470	1,610	1,450	6,120	1,090
Students	490	500	7,290	940	9,230	470
Husbands and fiancés[2]	10	10	20	10	60	..
Wives and fiancées[2]	30	40	50	30	140	20
Parents and grandparents[2]	..	10	..	—	10	—
Children[2]	20	30	100	10	170	10

.. 5 or fewer.
[1] Provisional figures.
[2] Seeking, or accepted for, settlement in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for *(a)* single entry and *(b)* multiple entry visit visas were (i) received, (ii) granted and (iii) refused at each post in the Indian sub-continent, Ghana, Nigeria, the Philippines and Jamaica in each quarter of 1992 and the first quarter of 1993; and what was the delay between application and interview for those whose applications were felt to need a second or long interview at each of the above posts in (1) June 1992, (2) January 1993 and (3) June 1993 or the nearest available date.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Only annual data are available centrally for single visit and multiple entry visit visas and the only information available on the delay between application and interview is of the number of people not interviewed on the day of application.

The available information for 1992 is given in the table.

Applications received for single entry and multiple entry visit visas and the numbers granted, refused and those interviewed on a date subsequent to the date of application in specified posts in 1992

	Applications			*Number not interviewed on day of application*
	Received[1]	*Granted*	*Refused*	
Islamabad				
single entry	30,036	19,099	8,393	1,389
multiple entry	8,192	6,295	43	
Karachi				
single entry	14,736	11,244	2,256	1,951
multiple entry	8,082	7,516	308	
New Delhi				
single entry	25,879	19,852	2,938	0
multiple entry	11,326	10,764	43	
Bombay				
single entry	17,943	14,661	3,291	0
multiple entry	16,488	15,890	363	
Calcutta				
single entry	3,574	3,346	175	109
multiple entry	3,304	2,950	24	
Madras				
single entry	4,709	4,499	207	0
multiple entry	4,485	4,443	25	
Colombo				
single entry	6,382	4,734	1,054	0
multiple entry	2,037	1,995	15	
Dhaka				
single entry	10,207	7,606	2,751	0
multiple entry	2,985	2,985	0	

	Applications			
	Received[1]	Granted	Refused	Number not interviewed on day of application
Accra				
single entry	11,664	6,901	4,844	0
multiple entry	4,464	4,135	49	
Lagos				
single entry	27,717	15,632	9,959	0
multiple entry	17,715	14,447	724	
Kaduna				
single entry	4,878	3,194	1,509	0
multiple entry	1,913	1,827	42	
Manila				
single entry	10,066	8,970	994	0
multiple entry	2,509	2,314	80	
Kingston				
single entry	2,527	1,897	652	0
multiple entry	103	103	0	

[1] These will include cases dealt with in a later period and also those subsequently withdrawn.

Tyre Dump Fires

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what instructions are issued to fire service authorities in dealing with fires at tyre dumps; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The Home Office has issued detailed guidance to chief fire officers on, among other things, the need to use the most effective available techniques for dealing with fires at tyre dumps. Revised guidance on the storage of used tyres in the open air is also being prepared.

Registration and Naturalisation

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the average length of time taken to process applications for *(a)* registration and *(b)* naturalisation; and how long those applying in both of those categories in June 1993 can expect to wait.

Mr. Charles Wardle: In June 1993 the average waiting time for certificates granted under the British Nationality Act 1981 was 19 months for naturalisation and 13 months for registration applications. It is expected that most applications made in June 1993 for naturalisation will be decided within 12 months and for registration within six to nine months.

Operation Boxer

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* immigration officers, *(b)* police officers and *(c)* police dogs were involved in Operation Boxer; how the officers had obtained the allegations and information on which they were acting; how many of the people detained on 24 June were found to be (i) legally in the United Kingdom, (ii) in breach of immigration conditions, (iii) alleged illegal entrants and (iv) British citizens; how many requested and were granted legal advice before interview; how many were detained for (x) one day or less, (y) between a day and a week and (z) over a week; and how many have left the United Kingdom.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Forty-nine immigration service staff, assisted by about 80 police officers, were involved in Operator Boxer on 24 June. No police dogs were used.

The information on which the officers were acting was received from a number of sources. Of those people interviewed on 24 June, five were found to be legally in the United Kingdom, of whom two were British citizens. Seventeen were dealt with as illegal entrants. Thirteen were found to be in breach of their conditions of entry to this country. Of these, 10 were overstayers and three were working without permission. One person was found to be the subject of an extant deportation order.

All those arrested were given the opportunity to receive legal advice and representation in accordance with the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

Of those detained, 31 were detained for one day or less, five were detained for between one day and one week, and one was detained for over one week.

Thirteen people have so far left the United Kingdom as a result of this operation.

Birmingham Pub Bombings

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to receive the report of the West Midlands police on the Birmingham pub bombings.

Mr. Howard: The investigation of these serious offences is being conducted under the auspices of the Director of Public Prosecutions to whom a report will be sent at its conclusion. It is not possible to say when the report will be ready.

Charities

Mr. McKelvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will implement part II of the Charities Act 1992 to tackle fraudulent charity fund-raisers.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: As indicated in the answer to a question from my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster, North (Sir J. Wheeler) on 23 March, column *532*, I intend to implement part II—control of fund-raising—by the end of March 1994. To that end I have recently

issued a document on part II which includes draft regulations and guidance; a copy is being placed in the Library of the House.

Parking Tickets

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prosecutions and *(b)* fixed penalty parking tickets were issued to motorists in (i) Westminster and (ii) the remaining London boroughs during each of the past five years for illegal parking on (1) a single yellow line and (2) a parking meter; what was the average penalty levied in the case of *(a)* fines and *(b)* prosecutions; what considerations underlie the choice of penalty for such offences; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: Information is not available in the detailed form requested. A total of 7,696 non-endorsable obstruction, waiting and parking offences were dealt with by prosecution in the Metropolitan police district in 1991 and 1,844,595 by fixed penalty notice. The average fine imposed following prosecution was £31 and the standard amount imposed after a fixed penalty was £16.

Fixed penalty levels are set by the Home Secretary and are reviewed periodically. They are intended to provide a penalty which is proportionate to the offence.

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Murder Trials

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what records are kept of the witnesses called at a murder trial; and for how long they are retained.

Mr. John M. Taylor: All records of a murder trial in which a life sentence is imposed are preserved permanently.

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what arrangements are made for the preservation of a judge's notes made during a trial for murder.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Judge's notes are retained for five years from the date of the last entry in each volume. No special arrangements exist for the preservation of judge's notes made during a trial for murder after the five-year period. Verbatim transcripts made for the appeal are kept indefinitely by arrangement with the Public Record Office.

Magistrates' Training

Mr. Michael: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what was the result of the review announced in February 1992 of magistrates' training in the criteria contained in the Bail Act 1976.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The Judicial Studies Board has reviewed the training given to magistrates on bail matters and on 31 August 1992 the chairman of the magisterial committee of the board wrote to all training officers giving advice on best practice. A copy of this letter has been placed in the Library.

Legal Education and Conduct

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department when the Lord Chancellors' advisory committee on legal education and conduct intends to publish its second annual report.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The Lord Chancellor's advisory committee on legal education and conduct has today published its second annual report, and copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

HEALTH

Nurses and Midwives

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many practising midwives there are in each grade in each region, including those in senior nurse/senior midwife grades, senior nurse grades and education and clinical grades, excluding agency midwives; how many are employed *(a)* full time and *(b)* part time; and how many student midwives there are in each region.

Mr. Sackville: The information will be placed in the Library.

Emergency Admissions (North-West)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what were the number of emergency admissions to *(a)* Burnley health care trust and *(b)* the North West regional health authority for 1991-92.

Mr. Sackville: In 1991-92 purchasers in the North Western region bought 331,000 non-elective admissions to hospitals. In the same year the predecessors of the Burnley health care trust provided 17,292 such admissions.

Voluntary Organisations

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, further to his answer to the hon. Member for Dover (Mr. Shaw) of 21 June, *Official Report*, column *34*, if he will list the grants so far made to voluntary organisations under the section 64 general scheme of the Health Services and Public Health Act 1968 in the financial year beginning 1 April.

Mr. Bowis: Section 64 general scheme grants continuing into 1993-94 from previous years and new grants for which approval had been notified by 15 July 1993 total over £16·5 million. Details will be placed in the Library. The budget for 1993-94 is £19·2 million, an increase of £0·9 million over 1992-93.

Elective Surgery Treatment Centres

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to establish treatment centres for elective surgery in England for *(a)* cataract surgery, *(b)* major joint surgery and *(c)* hernias and varicose vein surgery.

Mr. Sackville: We have no plans to do so. It is for health authorities to decide whether the establishment of treatment centres providing certain surgical procedures would be in the best interests of the populations they serve.

Psychiatric Care

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many mother and baby beds there are in psychiatric units in the country;

(2) how many women-only psychiatric wards there are in England.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female psychiatrists are currently practising.

Mr. Sackville: The available information is shown in the table. Information relating to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are matters for my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Wales and for Scotland and my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Numbers of psychiatrists in national health service hospital sector by sex England—30 September 1991

	Consultants	*All staff*[1]
Male	1,490	3,760
Female	535	2,097
Total	2,025	5,857

Note:

Specialties included are mental illness, child and adolescent psychiatry, forensic psychiatry, mental handicap, old age psychiatry and psychotherapy.

[1] Grades included: consultants, associate specialists, staff grades, senior registrars, registrars and senior house officers, house officers, hospital practitioners and clinical assistants working in the specialty.

Accident and Emergency Units

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what figures she has on the percentage of women of reproductive age who visit accident and emergency units because of domestic violence.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Secure Accommodation

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is her Department's policy on the provision of secure accommodation for 15 and 16-year-old offenders by social service authorities.

Mr. Bowis: Secure accommodation provided in community homes is for any child being looked after by a local authority who meets the statutory criteria for restriction of liberty, whether as an offender or as a non-offender.

We are working closely with local authorities to ensure that sufficient additional secure accommodation is made available to ensure that the practice of remanding 15 and 16-year-old alleged offenders to penal establishments can be abolished as quickly as practicable.

NHS Reforms

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what is her estimate of the total cost of administering the internal market in the health service in each of the last two years;

(2) what assessment she has made of the cost-effectiveness of the NHS reforms.

Mr. Sackville: The national health service reforms are now firmly in place. It is impossible to put a figure on the relative cost of services under this system compared with any particular alternative, such as the previously directly managed arrangements, but there is no doubt that the NHS is now more effective in identifying local health needs and providing more efficient health care services.

Paracetamol Overdoses

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people died from paracetamol in each of the last five years; how many recorded overdoses of paracetamol there were in each of the last five years; and what plans she has to decrease morbidity and mortality from paracetamol overdose.

Mr. Bowis: The table shows the number of deaths from poisoning where paracetamol is mentioned in the deaths' records. Information on the number of recorded overdoses of paracetamol is not available centrally.

"The Health of the Nation" mental illness key area handbook gives guidance to professionals on how to meet the specific suicide reduction targets. The advice covers the labelling of paracetamol bottles to warn of toxicity and reviewing the storage and availability of poisonous over-the-counter medicines.

Deaths from poisoning where paracetamol is mentioned in the deaths' records, England and Wales, 1986-90

	Paracetamol without mention of other drugs		*Paracetamol with mention of other drugs*	
1986	208	(15)	299	(69)
1987	212	(19)	301	(58)
1988	184	(21)	312	(77)
1989	163	(16)	295	(59)
1990	223	(16)	288	(60)

Figures in brackets are deaths where there was no mention of alcohol.

Note: This table is compiled using the information available in table 10 of the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) publication "Mortality statistics: injury and poisoning" series DH4 Nos. 12-16, which lists all substances mentioned in the records of deaths assigned to accidental and other poisoning by solid or liquid substances. The inclusion of a substance in this list does not, however, imply that it is necessarily toxic. Where two or more substances are mentioned togther the contribution, if any, of each to the death is unknown; even where one substance is listed alone there may well be other factors with an important bearing on the death. Copies of the OPCS DH4 series are avaiable in the Library.

Paediatric Nurses

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses trained as specialists in paediatrics in each of the last five years.

Mr. Sackville: The figures give the numbers starting paediatric nurse training and the numbers completing paediatric nurse training in England at year ending 31 March.

	1988	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*
Intakes to training	710	810	850	1,090	1,180
Completing training	780	700	770	850	890

Note: The number completing training in 1988 is greater than the number of intakes to training in the same year because those completing refer to intakes in previous years.

Electro-convulsive Therapy

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will estimate the number of *(a)* women and *(b)* men receiving ECT each year; and what is the ratio between them.

Mr. Bowis: The number of electro-convulsive therapy (ECT) treatments in 1990-91 was 105,466 but a patient could receive more than one treatment during the year. It is estimated that five women receive ECT for every two men.

Mid-Staffordshire Health Authority

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action she proposes to take following the Peat Marwick report on the financial management of Mid-Staffordshire health authority.

Mr. Sackville: This a matter for the health authority concerned who are working in close conjuction with West Midlands regional health authority to resolve their financial position. The hon. Member may wish to contact Mr. B. Liss, the chairman of Mid-Staffordshire health authority, for details.

Elderly People (Abuse)

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to place a legal duty on social workers to investigate cases of suspected abuse against those elderly and disabled people who are unable to take decisions for themselves.

Mr. Bowis: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Pembroke (Mr. Ainger) on 12 July at col. *385*.

HELIOS II Proposals

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement outlining the progress made by her Department to date in determining an official response to the HELIOS II proposals.

Mr. Bowis: The European Community's HELIOS II programme was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 25 February this year. The Department is currently consulting in the United Kingdom with other interested Government Departments and with a United Kingdom forum of voluntary bodies representing a wide range of disabilities on the content of the programme.

Patient Waiting Times

Mr. Soley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she will publish the provider waiting lists and waiting times for each Thames region of the NHS.

Mr. Sackville: Provider based information on waiting lists and waiting times by trust, district health authority, special health authority and regional health authority is given in "Hospital Waiting List Statistics: England". This is published twice a year and copies are available in the Library.

Home Helps

Mr. Thurnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received about the level of charges for home helps; whether she will carry out an inquiry into the differences in charges between local authorities; when she plans to issue guidelines to local authorities on levels of charges; and if she will make a statement, with particular reference to the role that voluntary groups and the private sector can play in providing home helps in the Bolton area.

Mr. Bowis: A number of representations have been received. Local authorities have a discretionary power to make charges for non-residential services. We have no current plans to carry out an inquiry. It is the Government's view that a full economic charge should be recovered where this can be done without causing hardship to the service user. Advice on detailed aspects will be disseminated where appropriate.

One of the main objectives of the community care reforms is to encourage the development of a flourishing independent sector in the provision of domiciliary servics. It is for each local authority to identify local needs and opportunities, and their progress will be monitored. We understand that independent sector involvement in the provision of domiciliary services in Bolton is currently minimal. It is our view that such involvement should be encouraged.

Ambulance Service

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued to NHS trusts with regard to the specifications of contracts for ambulance and patient transport services and the minimum levels of training required for ambulance personnel.

Mr. Sackville: Guidance on contracts was included in "Health Service Guidelines (HSG(91)29): Ambulance and other patient transport services—Operation, use and performance standards". Subsequent circulars FDL(92)82 and FDL(93)07 set out the finance arrangements recommended to those contracting for non-emergency patient transport services. Further guidance on these matters is to be issued very shortly. Copies of guidelines and circulars are available in the Library.

The level of training given to ambulance personnel will depend on the nature of their duties. For example, ambulance paramedics must, as a minimum, achieve the standards currently set by the national health service training directorate.

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the policy of her Department with regard to the maximum geographical area which can appropriately be covered by one ambulance service.

Mr. Sackville: There is no restriction on the area for which an ambulance service may tender for service contracts.

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations have been received by her Department from groups representing private ambulance operators, with regard to the need for increased regulation or self-regulation of such operators.

Mr. Sackville: Representations have been received from a number of organisations representing private ambulance

services. A representative of one organisation had discussions with the Department of Health's ambulance policy advisory group earlier this year. The advisory group has agreed a code of practice for prospective purchasers and providers setting out minimum standards for non-national health service patient transport services.

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS trusts in each regional health authority in England and Wales presently have one or more contracts with private operators for ambulance or patient transport services.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Midwives

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwives were employed *(a)* full time and *(b)* part time in each region in each year since 1988.

Mr. Sackville: The information is given in the table.

National Health Service qualified midwives employed full-time and part-time by region—September 1988 to 1991

Whole-time equivalents	*1988*			*1989*		
	Full-time	*Part-time*	*Total*	*Full-time*	*Part-time*	*Total*
Northern	960	370	1,320	920	370	1,290
Yorkshire	1,240	360	1,610	1,240	380	1,630
Trent	1,380	440	1,820	1,410	440	1,850
East Anglia	670	160	830	630	180	820
North West Thames	960	220	1,180	970	230	1,200
North East Thames	1,300	270	1,580	1,300	270	1,570
South East Thames	880	160	1,040	660	120	780
South West Thames	780	240	1,030	780	270	1,040
Wessex	880	270	1,150	860	300	1,150
Oxford	720	240	960	750	230	980
South Western	810	210	1,020	940	260	1,200
West Midlands	1,670	540	2,210	1,700	550	2,250
Mersey	750	270	1,020	780	310	1,090
North Western	1,690	480	2,170	1,580	530	2,110
Special Health Authority	140	10	150	140	10	150
Total	14,840	4,250	19,080	14,660	4,460	19,110

Whole-time equivalents	*1990*			*1991*		
	Full-time	*Part-time*	*Total*	*Full-time*	*Part-time*	*Total*
Northern	920	370	1,280	910	400	1,310
Yorkshire	1,270	370	1,640	1,210	410	1,620
Trent	1,410	470	1,880	1,390	490	1,880
East Anglia	640	170	810	610	180	780
North West Thames	980	230	1,210	880	250	1,130
North East Thames	1,340	270	1,610	1,280	310	1,600
South East Thames	1,150	250	1,400	990	320	1,310
South West Thames	740	240	980	780	260	1,040
Wessex	820	310	1,130	790	350	1,140
Oxford	760	250	1,010	730	300	1,030
South Western	950	280	1,230	10	1,180	1,180
West Midlands	1,750	570	2,320	1,650	570	2,220
Mersey	800	320	1,120	770	340	1,110
North Western	1,580	570	2,150	1,580	620	2,190
Special Health Authority	80	0	80	90	0	90
Total	15,200	4,660	19,860	13,670	5,980	19,640

Source: HAP(STATS)B Non-Medical Workforce Census.
Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. Figures exclude student and pupil midwives.
3. Figures exclude Senior Midwives (Midwives in administration).
4. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

EDUCATION

Examinations

Ms Gordon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his answer of 13 July, *Official Report*, column 824, when he expects to be in a position to give the cost of examiners used to invigilate and/or mark tests for English and technical studies in spring 1993 to replace teaching staff who refused to administer the tests; and whether he will list those costs by authority which incurred them.

Mr. Robin Squire: This information is not collected by the Department.

Speech Therapy

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is the ratio of schoolchildren aged between three and 19 years old to speech therapists in each local education authority in England.

Mr. Forth: The figures requested are not held centrally.

Grant-maintained Schools

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list those schools by local education authority that have achieved grant-maintained status.

Mr. Robin Squire: The schools which have been approved for self-governing status as of 20 July, or which my right hon. Friend is minded to approve, are as follows.

Avon
Oldfield School
Beechen Cliff School

Barnet
Queen Elizabeth's GM School For Boys
Mill Hill Grant-Maintained High School
St. Mary's CE High School
Hendon School

Bedfordshire
Lea Manor High School and Community College
Crawley Green Grant Maintained Infant School
Holywell School
Thomas Whitehead CE School
Ashcroft High School
Quensbury School
Ashton St. Peters (VA) Lower School
Sharnbrook Upper School
Icknield High School
Manshead School
Stopsley High School and Community College
Wootton Upper School
Lincroft Middle School (Grant Maintained)

Berkshire
Herschel Grammar School
Slough Grammar School (Formerly Upton Grammar)
The Downs School
Denefield School
Priory School
Cippenham Middle School (Grant Maintained)
Reading School
Whitelocke Infant and Nursery School
Langley Grammar School
Desborough Comprehensive School
Holy Family RC School
Castleview Combined School
St. Bartholomew's School
Westgate School
Southlands School

Bexley
St. Columba's RC Boys School
St. Catherine's RC School for Girls
Bexley Erith Technical High School for Boys
St. Mary and St. Joseph's Grant-Maintained School
Barnehurst Infant Grant-Maintained School
Barnehurst Junior Grant-Maintained School

Birmingham
Handsworth Grammar School for Boys
King Edward VI Handsworth School
Ninestiles School
King Edward VI Aston School
Hall Green School
Baverstock Grant-Maintained School
King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls
Small Heath School
Great Barr Grant-Maintained School
The Fairfax School
Deanery Junior School
Deanery Infant School
King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Boys
King Edward VI Five Ways School

Bolton
George Tomlinson School
St. James' CE School
Canon Slade School
Crompton Fold Primary School

Bradford
Oakbank School
Bingley Grammar School
Laisterdyke Grant-Maintained Middle School
Thornton School
Hanson Grant-Maintained School
Killinghall School

Brent
Claremont High School (Grant-Maintained)
Kingsbury High School
Convent of Jesus and Mary GM High School
Queens Park Community School (GM)
Copland Community School and Technology Centre

Bromley
Beaverwood School for Girls
Crofton Junior School
Holy Innocents Roman Catholic Primary School
Newstead Wood School for Girls (GM)
Bullers Wood School for Girls
Hayes School
Charles Darwin School
St. John Rigby School
Ravens Wood School for Boys
Langley Park School for Boys
Coopers School
Kelsey Park School
St. Olave's and St. Saviour's Grammar School

Buckinghamshire
Castlefield Combined School
Hamilton Combined School
Bridgewater Hall School, Stantonbury Campus
Beaconsfield High School
Overstone Grant-Maintained Combined School
Brindley Hall School
Wycombe Royal Grammar School
Lord Grey School
Wing School
Beechview Middle School (Grant-Maintained)
The Chalfonts Community College (GM)
The Radcliffe School
Brookmead School
Brushwood Middle School

Bury
Peel Brow County Primary School

Calderdale
Rastrick High School
Salterlee Primary School
The North Halifax Grammar School
Holy Trinity CE Senior School (GM)
The Crossley Heath School

Cambridgeshire
Jack Hunt School, Peterborough
Deacon's School
The King's School (Peterborough Cathedral Sc)
Sawston Village College
Sawtry Village College GM School
St. John Fisher RC Comprehensive School
St. Peter's School
Longsands Community College
The Village College, Comberton
Gamlingay (Grant-Maintained) Village College
Bassingbourn GM Village College
Stanground College (Grant-Maintained)
Orton Wistow Primary School
Wheatfields Junior School
The Queen's School
St. Helen's Primary School
Crosshall Junior School
Ailwyn Community School
The Park Lane Primary School
Crosshall Infant School

Cheshire
Henbury County High School
Fallibroome High School
Bankfield High School (GM)
Mottram St. Andrew Primary School
Kettleshulme St. James CE GM Primary School

Croydon
St. Joseph's College
Thomas More Grant-Maintained School
Riddlesdown Grant-Maintained School
Edenham School

Cumbria
Hayton CE Grant-Maintained School
Appleby Grammar School
Warwick Bridge (GM) Primary School
Dallam School
Scotby CE Grant-Maintained Primary School
Harraby School
Kirkby Stephen Grammar Schol
Parkview School
Queen Elizabeth Grammar School
Kirkbie Kendal School
Cartmel Priory CE School
The Queen Katherine School
Brampton Junior School
St. Aidan's County High School
Trinity School, Carlisle

Derbyshire
Murray Park Community School
The Pingle School
Chellaston School
Belper Grant-Maintained School
Heanor Gate School
Linton Primary School
Noel-Baker Community School (GM)
Repton Primary School
Netherthorpe School
West Park Community School
Lady Manners School
The Merrill Community School
Friesland School
Belmont Primary School
John Port School
The Ecclesbourne School
Chellaston Junior School
Borrow Wood Junior School

Devon
St. Boniface's College
Teign School
Knowles Hill School
Colyton Grammar School
Torquay Boys' Grammar School (GM)

Dorset
St. Peter's RC School
The Woodroffe School
Highcliffe Comprehensive School
Parkstone Grammar School
Budmouth School
St. Walburga's RC Primary School
Poole Technical High School (Ex Henry Harbin)
Bournemouth School
Bournemouth School for Girls
Avonbourne School

Dudley
Alder Coppice Primary School
Old Swinford Hospital
The Ellowes Hall School
The High Arcal School
The Kingswinford Grant-Maintained School

Ealing
Wood End Middle School
Wood End First School
Greenford High School
Drayton Manor High School
Brentside High School
Northholt High School
The Ellen Wilkinson School for Girls

Enfield
The Latymer School
Albany School
Broomfield School

Essex
The Rickstones School
Beauchamps Grant-Maintained School
Colbayns High Grant-Maintained School
Katherines Primary School
The King John School
Bromfords School, Wickford
King Harold Grant-Maintained School
The Greensward School
Rodings Central Primary School
St. Martin's Grant-Maintained School
Tendring High School
Torells Grant-Maintained School
St. Katherine's CE VA Primary School
Holland Haven Grant-Maintained Primary School
Rolph CE VA Primary School
Chelmsford County High School for Girls
Chelmer Valley High School (Grant-Maintained)
St. Clare's RC Primary School
St. Helena School
Southend High School for Boys
Southend Girls High School
St. Clere's School
South Benfleet Primary School
Thurstable School
Hassenbrook School
Sir Charles Lucas School
Chalvedon School
Newlands Spring Grant-Maintained School
Takeley Grant-Maintained Primary School
Cecil Jones High School
The Gilberd School
Newport Free Grammar School
Saffron Walden County High School
Westcliff High School for Girls
Holland Park County Primary School
Castle View School
The Grays School (Grant-Maintained)
Great Totham Primary School, Essex
St. Osyth CE Aided Primary School
Colchester Royal Grammar School
Rainsford School
Gable Hall Grant-Maintained Comprehensive School
Anglo European School (Ingatestone)
Furtherwick Park School
Millfields County Primary School
The Plume School
St. Thomas More High School for Boys
Elmstead County Primary School
Davenant Foundation School
Belfairs Community College
Eastwood County High School and 6th Form Centre
Northwick Park Grant-Maintained Junior School
Northwick Park Grant-Maintained Infant School
Northlands Grant-Maintained Junior School
North Crescent Primary School
King Edward VI Grammar School (GM)
The Bramston School
The Appleton School
William Edwards School
William De Ferrers School
Westcliff High School for Boys
Westborough County Primary School
West Hatch High School
St. Thomas More RC Primary School
Thorpedene Infant School
The Boswells School
Clacton County High School
The Thorpe Bay School
The Philip Morant School

All Saints Church of England Primary School
The King Edmund School
Woodville County Primary School
St. Andrew's Grant-Maintained CE Primary School
Jotmans Hall Primary School
The Fitzwimarc School, Rayleigh
The Elmwood Primary School
The Deanes School
The Cornelius Vermuyden School
The Hedley Walter High School (GM)
Coppins Green Grant-Maintained Primary School
The Harwich School
Kingswood Junior School
Kingswood Infant School

Gloucestershire
Katharine Lady Berkeley's School
Stroud High School
Balcarras School
Churchdown Grant-Maintained School
Chosen Hill School, Gloucester
Chipping Campden School
Cheltenham Bournside School and 6th form Centre
Tewkesbury Grant-Maintained School
Saintbridge GM Technology School
St. Benedict's RC School
Robinswood Primary School
The Cotswold School
Ribston Hall High School
Picklenash Junior School
Pate's Grant-Maintained Grammar School
Andoversford Primary School
Wyedean School, Grant-Maintained Status
Winchcombe Community School
Newent Community School
Marling School
The Rednock School
The Crypt School
Blue Coat CE Grant-Maintained Primary School
The Catholic School of St. Gregory the Great

Hammersmith
London Oratory School

Hampshire
The Arnewood School
Bohunt Community School
Testwood School
Testbourne Community School
All Hallows RC School
Hordle CE (C) Grant-Maintained Primary School
St. Joseph's RC Primary School
St. Edmund's Catholic School
Hardley School (Grant-Maintained)
Applemore Technology School
Ringwood School (GM Comprehensive)
Blackfield Middle School (Grant-Maintained)
Calmore Grant-Maintained Middle School
Front Lawn Middle School
Bay House Grant-Maintained School
Oaklands RC Comprehensive School
Burgate School
Abbotswood Grant-Maintained Middle School
The Priory School
Crofton School, Fareham
The City of Portsmouth Boys' School

Havering
Abbs Cross School
The Frances Bardsley School for Girls
The Coopers' Company and Coborn (GM School)

Hereford and Worcester
Blessed Edward Oldcorne RC High School
St. Bede's Catholic Grant-Maintained School
St. Augustine's Catholic GM School
Prince Henry's Grant-Maintained High School
Bromsgrove CE Middle School

Hertfordshire
The Bishop's Stortford High School
Ashlyns Grant-Maintained School
Christ Church CE School
St. Mary's Catholic Primary School
Hertingfordbury Cowper JMI School
Watford Grammar School for Girls
Rickmansworth School
Goffs School
Queens' School
Francis Bacon School
Parmiters School
Parkside First School
Bushy Meads Grant-Maintained School
Bushey Hall School
Nicholas Breakspear Roman Catholic GM School
Mount Grace (GM) School
Watford Grammar School for Boys
Dame Alice Owen's School
Marlborough School
The Leventhorpe School
The John Henry Newman School

Hillingdon
Swakeleys School
Mellow Lane School
Bishopshalt School
Abbotsfield School
Haydon School
Grange Park Junior School
Grange Park infant School
Queensmead School
Oak Farm Junior Mixed School (G.M.)
Oak Farm Infant School (Grant-Maintained)
Northwood School
Uxbridge High School
The Hayes Manor School
The Douay Martyrs School
Vyners School
Hillside Infant School

Hounslow
Gunnersbury Catholic School for Boys
Gumley House Convent School

Humberside
Wold Newton Grant-Maintained Primary School

Kensington
Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School

Kent
The Canterbury High School
The Bradbourne School
Borough Green Primary School
The Archbishop's CE Grant-Maintained School
Thamesview School
Allington County Primary School
Sutton-at-Hone CE GM Primary School
Homewood School
St. Simon Stock School
Holy Trinity CE Primary School
Holy Family RC Grant-Maintained Primary School
The Skinners' School, Tunbridge Wells
The Malling School
St. John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School
Hillview School for Girls
Cheyne Middle School
St. George's Church of England School
St. George's CE High School
St. Francis' RC Primary School
St. Edmund's RC Comprehensive School
St. Botolph's CE Primary School
Herne Bay Junior School (Grant-Maintained)
Herne Bay High School
St. Anselm's RC School
Southlands Comprehensive School
Chatham Grammar School for Girls
Southfields School

Snodland CE Primary School
Sir Roger Manwood's School
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys
Senacre Technology School
Sandown Court Community College
Roseacre Junior School
Rochester Grammar School for Girls
Rainham Mark Grammar School
Queen Elizabeth's School
Fulston Manor School
Angley School
Oldborough Manor Community College
Oakwood Park Grammar School
Barton Court Grammar School
Wrotham School
Ditton CE Primary School
Dartford Grammar School
Wilmington Grammar School For Boys

Westlands High School
St. Gregory's Catholic Comprehensive School
Minster College
Dartford Grammar School for Girls
Meopham Grant-Maintained School
Tonbridge Grammar School for Girls
Mascalls School
The Wildernesse School
The Thomas Aveling School
The Robert Napier Grant-Maintained School
The Maplesden Noakes School
Aylesford School
The Hugh Christie School
Cranbrook School
The Grammar School for Girls Wilmington
The Frank Montgomery School
The Folkestone School for Girls
The Cornwallis School
The Charles Dickens School
Chaucer Technology School

Kingston-upon-Thames
Holy Cross Convent School
Beverley School
Richard Challoner School
Tiffin School

Kirklees
Heckmondwike Grammar School
Castle Hall Grant-Maintained School

Knowsley
The St. Thomas Becket School

Lambeth
Bishop Thomas Grant School
St. Bernadette RC Junior Mixed School
Archbishop Tenison's School
Dunraven Grant-Maintained School
La Retraite R. C. Girls, (GM) School
St. Martin-in-the-Fields High School

Lancashire
Clitheroe Royal Grammar School
Archbishop Temple School (Ex William Temple)
Newton Bluecoat C of E GM Primary School
Baines School
Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School
Lancaster Royal Grammar School
Lancaster Girls Grammar School

Leicestershire
South Wigston High School
Abington High School
Bushloe High School, Grant-Maintained
Uppingham Community College
Long Field GM High School

Lewisham
Turnham Primary with Nursery GM School

Lincolnshire
The Ancaster High School, Lincoln
Huttoft County Primary School
Washingborough School
St. George's Grant-Maintained School
St. Andrews CE Primary School
Spalding County Primary School
Skegness Grammar School
Chapel St. Leonards County Primary School
The Malcolm Sargent Grant-Maintained School
Robert Pattinson Grant-Maintained School
Carre's Grammar School
Rauceby School CE GM
Gleed Girls Grant-Maintained School
Queen Elizabeth's GM Grammar School
Queen Elizabeth's GM Grammar School
Caistor Grammar School
Ermine Junior Grant-Maintained School
North Kesteven Grant-Maintained School
William Farr CE Comprehensive School
William Alvey CE Junior School
Monks' Dyke High School
The Magdalen School
Branston School and Community College
Yarborough High School
The Kings School Grantham
Lincoln Christ's Hospital School
Cranwell County Primary School
The Gartree Grant-Maintained School
Lacey Gardens Junior School
Bourne Abbey Primary School
King Edward VI School
The Castle Hills GM School, Gainsborough

Liverpool
St. Francis Xavier's College

Newham
Stratford School

Norfolk
Cliff Park High School (Grant-Maintained)
St. Clement's High School
Heacham Middle School (GM)
South Wootton Grant-Maintained Junior School
Sheringham High School
Gresham Village School (Grant-Maintained)
Robert Kett Grant-Maintained Middle School
Great Yarmouth High School
Redgate Grant-Maintained Middle School
Flegg High School
Norwich Road School
Wymondham College (GMS)
Downham Market High School Grant-Maintained
Dereham Church CE Grant-Maintained School
West Flegg Middle School (GM)
Marshland High School
Lynn Grove VC High School
Cromer High School – Grant-Maintained
Acle High School
Loddon Middle Grant-Maintained School
Costessey High School, Grant-Maintained
Barnham Broom Primary School

Northamptonshire
Collingtree CE Primary School
Southfield School for Girls
Sir Christopher Hatton Grant-Maintained School
Beanfield Junior School (GM)
Queen Elizabeth (Grant-Maintained) School
Northampton (GM) School for Boys
Wrenn School
Woodnewton Way Junior School
Moulton Primary School (Grant-Maintained)
Weavers School
Montagu School
Millbrook Infant School
Danesholme Junior School
The Windmill County GM Primary School
Manor School, Northamptonshire

Lodge Park School
The King John School
Kingswood School
Kingsley Park Middle School

Nottinghamshire
Greenwood Dale School
Ravensdale Grant-Maintained Middle School
The George Spencer School

Oxfordshire
Shenington CE Primary School

Redbridge
Chadwell Heath High School

Rochdale
St. James CE Primary School
Smithy Bridge Primary School
Wardle High School
Crossgates Primary School

Sandwell
Manor High School, Sandwell

Sheffield
Clifford CE Grant-Maintained School
St. John Fisher RC (VA) Primary School
Notre Dame School
All Saints RC Secondary School

Shropshire
Abraham Darby School
Holy Cross CE Junior School
Charlton School
Ercall Wood School
Adams' Grammar School
The Corbet Grant-Maintained School

Solihull
Hatchford Grant-Maintained Primary School

Somerset
Sexey's School
Bruton Primary School

Southwark
St. Michael's School
St. Francesca Cabrini Grant-Maintained School
Notre Dame High School
The St. Thomas the Apostle GM College
London Nautical School

Staffordshire
St. Thomas More RC High School
Hollinsclough CE Primary School
Chasetown High School
Rising Brook Grant-Maintained School
Cardinal Griffin RC Comprehensive
Cannock Chase High School (GM)

Surrey
The Beacon School
Thamesmead School
Stoneleigh First School (Grant-Maintained)
St. Paul's Catholic School
Holy Trinity CE Middle School
St. John the Baptist School
Heathside Secondary School
Hawkedale First School
Send C of E First School (Grant-Maintained)
Guildford County School
Rosebery School
Gordon's Grant-Maintained School
Glyn School
Pewley Down County First School
Park Mead County First School
Epsom and Ewell High School
de Stafford School
The Manor County First School
Collingwood Grant-Maintained School

Sutton
Sutton Grammar School for Boys
St. Philomena's Catholic High School for Girls
Cheam High School
Nonsuch High School for Girls
Wilsons School
Wallington High School for Girls
Wallington High School for Boys
The John Fisher School
All Saints CE Primary School

Tameside
Fairfield High School
West Hill School
Audenshaw High School

Tower Hamlets
Raines Foundation School

Trafford
Ashton on Mersey School
Sale Moor School
New Wellington School
Blessed Thomas Holford School

Walsall
Streetly School
St. Thomas More RC Comprehensive GM School
Aldridge School
Shire Oak Grant-Maintained Community School
Queen Mary's High School
Queen Mary's Grammar School

Waltham Forest
Chingford School
Highams Park School

Wandsworth
John Paul II RC School
Hillbrook Primary School (Grant-Maintained)
Southfields School (GM)
Salesian College
Graveney School
Ethelburga Primary School (Grant-Maintained)
Elliott School (GM)
Burntwood School

Warwickshire
The Avon Valley Grant-Maintained School
Studley High School
Ash Green Grant-Maintained School
Hartshill Grant-Maintained School
Alcester Grammar School
Rugby High School for Girls
Queen Elizabeth School, Atherstone
Myton School

Wiltshire
Highbury Secondary Boys' School
St. Augustine RC (GM) Comprehensive School
Sheldon School
Pewsey Vale School (Grant-Maintained)
Downton CE (VC) Primary School
Aloeric Grant-Maintained School
Lowbourne Grant-Maintained Infants' School
Lavington Comprehensive School

Wirral
Calday Grange Grammar School, West Kirby
Wirral Grammar School for Boys

Wolverhampton
Wolverhampton Girls High School
Moseley Park GM School

Mr. Robert Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education (1) what measures he is taking to ensure that the

timetable for organising grant-maintained status ballots is sufficient for consultation purposes; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if he will take measures to ensure that the distribution of ballot papers on grant-maintained status occurs at the end of the consultation period rather than the middle;

(3) if he will draw up a code of conduct to cover all those involved in the organisation of ballots and consultations on grant-maintained status.

Mr. Robin Squire: The Education Bill will streamline the procedures for acquiring grant-maintained status. Both the existing and prospective statutory provisions offer scope for local consultation and debate before a ballot on grant-maintained status is initiated, in the period prior to a ballot and during the ballot period itself. Individual governing bodies are best placed to determine the most appropriate timing for a ballot in their school's circumstances, within the statutory time scale.

The Department provides detailed guidance on the conduct of ballots and any significant deviation from that may lead to the Secretary of State declaring the ballot void. We are currently discussing with local authority interests the promulgation of a common code of conduct on the provision of information about grant-maintained status; this would cover the activities of the Department, local authorities and the grant-maintained schools centre.

Unqualified Teachers

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many teachers are teaching subjects they have no qualifications to teach; and what progress has been made and measures taken to reduce the numbers.

Mr. Robin Squire: The latest information is provided by the 1992 secondary school staffing survey. The table shows the percentage of full-time secondary teachers in England who gave some tuition in a subject in which they held no post-A level qualification, and the percentage of tuition this represented. About half of this tuition was by teachers with five or more years' experience of teaching the subject.

Subject	*Percentage of teachers without a qualification*	*Tuition by these teachers as a percentage of all tuition in subject*
Mathematics	22	10
Biology	14	11
Chemistry	5	3
Physics	6	4
General Science	16	9
CDT	50	34
English	27	14
French	18	9
German	24	13
Other Languages	34	19
History	28	11
Geography	29	10
Music	19	5
Art	24	7
Physical Education	32	9
Religious Education	54	25

Compared with the results of the 1988 secondary school staffing survey, these figures show a slight improvement.

The Department has funded a range of measures which have enhanced the skills of existing teachers and improved the supply of secondary subject specialists. These include £170 million currently being spent on in-service training, and specific support for upgrading non-specialist teachers of physics, chemistry and French. There has been a 44 per cent. increase in recruitment to secondary teacher training since 1990.

Teachers (Early Retirement)

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many teachers took early retirement, and for what reason, during each of the last five years.

Mr. Forth: The number of teachers from England and Wales who took early retirement and claimed retirement benefits during each of the last five years is shown in the table.

The figures include teachers in FE and PCFC colleges and the independent sector as well as maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools.

Retirements on grounds of efficiency or redundancy include those teachers who were over the normal retirement age of 60 when benefits were paid.

	Reason for retirement		
Financial year	*Interest of efficiency*	*Redundancy*	*Ill-health*
1988-89	8,971	3,389	3,412
1989-90	9,633	2,675	4,123
1990-91	8,981	2,691	4,938
1991-92	7,357	2,932	4,656
[1]1992-93	8,360	3,833	4,775

[1] Provisional.

Higher Education, London

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what resources are being made available in 1993-94 to the Higher Education Funding Council to cover the additional costs of providing higher education in London; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Boswell: The Government do not separately identify London costs in its grant to the Higher Education Funding Council for England. It is for the funding council to determine allocations for London and other institutions within its overall grant.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT

Regional Development Funds

Mr. Keith Hill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of the British contribution to the European development fund is *(a)* being used for projects that directly benefit the poorest people in developing countries and *(b)* helps meet the goals established at the world summit for children.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The European Commission does not produce statistics in the form requested. The Commission and member states are currently working on a common approach to poverty alleviation, which will be presented to the Council of Development Ministers in December.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 6 July, *Official Report*, column *85*, why United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees cash grants for host families accommodating refugees do not apply to displaced persons or refugees accommodated in Serbia; what access these families have to additional support; what efforts are made to ensure that displaced Bosnians remain with host families in Serbia rather than seeking asylum overseas; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The UNHCR finds it impractical at present to operate a system of cash grants for host families who accommodate displaced people in Serbia. Instead it provides food and other essential humanitarian supplies to displaced people through the Serbian Red Cross and the EC family parcel programme.

UNHCR provided over 35,000 tonnes of humanitarian supplies for displaced people in Serbia in the first six months of 1993. These measures are designed to help to meet the basic humanitarian needs of displaced people so as to enable them to remain in Serbia, as close as possible to their homes in Bosnia-Herzegovina, until such time as they are able to return.

Aid

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make it her policy to publish before the end of the year criteria by which Her Majesty's Government will judge their performance on targeting aid at the reduction of poverty and meeting basic needs.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The overall aim of our aid programme is to promote sustainable economic and social development, in order to improve the quality of life and reduce poverty, suffering and deprivation, in developing countries. Our six priority objectives for the aid programme support this overall aim. They are:

to promote economic reform and longer term economic growth;
to promote good government;
to help developing countries to define and carry out poverty reduction strategies;
to promote human development, including better education and health, and children by choice;
to promote the social, economic, legal and political status of women in developing countries; and
to help developing countries tackle national environmental problems.

We are currently developing a new policy information markers system, as part of a further improvement to our monitoring systems, which will enable us to provide reports on progress against each of these objectives. If the trials are successful, we hope to have produced the first reports by the end of 1994.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to secure a balance of bilateral and multilateral expenditure on oveseas development aid.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Our aid allocations through both bilateral and multilateral channels are kept under regular review. Most of our multilateral aid commitments result from negotiated agreements covering several years ahead.

Angola

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what has been Her Majesty's Government's response to the United Nations appeal for US $226 million to fund relief and emergency work in Angola.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* We have allocated 3,000 tonnes of food aid and up to £2 million of humanitarian assistance. The food aid is now being shipped to Angola through the world food programme, and some £800,000 of humanitarian assistance has already been committed to support proposals by Save the Children Fund and CARE.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Yugoslavia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the number of prison camps currently understood to be operated by *(a)* Bosnian-Croats, *(b)* Bosnian-Muslims and *(c)* Bosnian-Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina; and if he will indicate the size of each and publish the names of those prisons where the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or other international agencies have been unable to gain access.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The International Committee of the Red Cross—ICRC—regularly visits 2,200 people held by Bosnian Croats in six places of detention, 1,023 held by Bosnian Muslims in 15 places of detention and 1,023 prisoners held by Bosnian Serbs in eight places of detention. The ICRC suspects that further places of detention in unknown locations may exist.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made of the economic and diplomatic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro on the infant mortality rate in those republics; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: None. Supplies of essential humanitarian relief, including medical supplies and foodstuffs distributed by the international humanitarian aid agencies are exempted from United Nations sanctions imposed on Serbia and Montenegro under United Nations Security Council resolution 820 of 17 April.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 14

July, *Official Report*, column *455*, if he will place a copy of Dr. Karadzic's letter to the Prime Minister of 31 March in the Library together with the Prime Minister's reply.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I refer the hon. Member to the reply that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave to the hon. Member for Liverpool, West Derby (Mr. Wareing) on 14 April at column *542* about Dr. Karadzic's letter. I do not plan to elaborate further; it is important to maintain the confidentiality of such correspondence.

Mr. Booth: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contributions the United Kingdom has made to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for its activities in former Yugoslavia since the beginning of the year; and what contributions have been made by other major donors.

Mr. Hurd: Since January 1993 the United Kingdom has given £27·8 million in cash and kind to UNHCR for its work in former Yugoslavia. On 12 July we announced a further £12·5 million for projects directly in support of UNHCR plus £6 million in kind for the world food programme. This makes Britain the leading bilateral donor to UNHCR's programmes in the former republics this year. We are aware that, as winter approaches, there must be a major effort by the international community to meet the needs of the people of Bosnia. Contributions by major donors for 1993 are:

UNHCR figures, as of 6 July 1993, in US dollars

Country	*US$*
European Community	16,447,538
Denmark	3,542,673
France	12,074,030
Germany	3,680,981
Italy	857,143
Netherlands	5,586,592
Switzerland	10,489,510
United Kingdom	[1]63,814,433
United States	23,000,000
Japan	10,000,000

[1] Sterling equivalent approximately £42·5 million. This is higher than the £27 million in United Kingdom records because some "in kind" contributions, made at the end of 1992, were not logged by UNHCR until 1993.

Mostar (Ethnic Cleansing)

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has on new ethnic cleansing of Muslim women and children by Croats in Mostar; what is the effect of these developments on his policy towards Croatia's exemption from economic and diplomatic sanctions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: There are continuing reports of ethnic cleansing by all sides. European Community Foreign Ministers agreed to consider withdrawing Croatia's preferential trading benefits with the European Community, in view of continued Croatian involvement in the conflict in Bosnia.

Fundacion Collegio de Inglaterra, Colombia

Mr. Worthington: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much British Government finance has been given to the Fundacion Collegio de Inglaterra in Bogota, Colombia, in the past five years; for what purpose; and from what budget heading.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: None directly.

The British Council has provided books and equipment to the school over the past five years to a total value of £30,000.

Research Projects

Mr. Livingstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 1 December 1992, *Official Report*, column *86*, if the university scientists working on the research projects mentioned have been able to publish the results of these projects in open scientific literature.

Mr. Hurd: As made clear in the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to the hon. Member on 1 December 1992, at column *86*, the research commissioned is confined to unclassified subjects. We retain proprietary rights over the research, but the results may be published by the relevant academic institution, if it wishes.

Armenia

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has about the prevailing economic situation in Armenia; and what recent discussions he has had to resolve matters.

Mr. Goodlad: The Armenian economy continues to suffer from the disruption of links with the other republics of the former Soviet Union, and from the economic blockade resulting from the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The United Kingdom has contributed over £1 million bilaterally, and the EC over £3 million, to alleviate suffering in Armenia in the last year. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs met the Armenian Prime Minister, Hrant Bagratian, during his visit to London in May and urged him to seek a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict so that the process can begin of rebuilding the Armenian economy.

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how United Kingdom diplomatic links with Armenia are organised; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Goodlad: We are in full diplomatic relations with Armenia, which we recognised on 31 December 1991. Sir Brian Fall, who resides at Moscow, is accredited as Her Majesty's ambassador to the Republic of Armenia. He has presented his credentials in Yerevan and both he and his staff visit Armenia frequently. We are keeping the possibility of opening an embassy in Yerevan under review. The Republic of Armenia opened an embassy in London last year. The Armenian ambassador, Dr. Armen Sarkissian, presented his credentials to Her Majesty the Queen in March.

Angola

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if the United Kingdom supported the removal of the UNAVEM II mandate in Angola when it was debated by the Security Council; and if he will make a statement;

(2) when Her Majesty's Government last held talks on the Angolan war with other members of the Security Council.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* The Security Council discussed Angola and adopted Security Council resolution 851 on 15 July. The resolution, which the United Kingdom helped to prepare, extends the mandate of UNAVEM II until 15 September. The Security Council will consider appropriate action against UNITA if an effective ceasefire is not in force in Angola by that date. Meanwhile, we shall continue to support efforts by the United Nations to persuade UNITA to agree with the Government a peaceful negotiated settlement to the tragic conflict in Angola.

We shall also continue to support humanitarian relief operations. In response to the most recent United Nations appeal we have pledged up to £2 million of emergency assistance and, through the world food programme, 3,000 tonnes of food aid.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of state for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress is being made towards peace in Angola; and what initiatives Her Majesty's Government have taken in this area.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd *[holding answers 20 July 1993]:* The new United Nations Secretary-General's special representative, Mr. Beye, who replaced Miss Margaret Anstee last month, met President dos Santos on 5 July and the UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi on 8 July to discuss the resumption of peace talks under United Nations auspices.

We took an active part in preparing Security Council resolution 851, which the Security Council adopted on 15 July. This extends the mandate of UNAVEM II and provides for the Council to consider taking action against UNITA if an effective cease-fire is not established by 15 September.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Research Councils

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster when the report on the detailed allocation of responsibilities between the new research councils will be completed; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Waldegrave: I asked Sir David Phillips to conduct this study acting as if he were fulfilling the role of the new director general for the research councils. He has now submitted his report and copies have been placed in the Library. I have accepted all of Sir David's recommendations and I have invited him to continue to oversee the further work of the Office of Science and Technology designed to effect a smooth transition to the new research council system by 1 April 1994.

Sir Giles Shaw: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster who is to be the new director general of research councils.

Mr. Waldegrave *[pursuant to the reply, 19 July 1993, c. 42]:* In the recent White Paper "Realising our Potential" I announced my intention to appoint a new director general of research councils to support me in the exercise of my statutory functions in so far as they relate to the research councils.

I am pleased to announce that this new post is to be advertised in journals and newspapers over the next week or so. The open recruitment competition, which will be supplemented by executive search, will be run by the recruitment and assessment services. My aim is to announce an appointment, to take effect from 1 January 1994, at the end of October.

In the meantime, I am most grateful to Sir David Phillips, chairman of the Advisory Board for the Research Councils, for the excellent support which he is giving me as acting director general of research councils.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Bank of England

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proposals he has for separating the banking regulation and supervisory roles of the Bank of England from its banking functions.

Mr. Nelson: I have no such proposals at this time.

Earnings Statistics

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list for *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland the (i) highest, (ii) lowest and (iii) average weekly and annual income of (1) per household, (2) per wage or salary earner and (3) per capita and indicate for each country the percentage of each category below the official poverty line.

Mr. Nelson: The figures are derived from the 1991 family expenditure survey. The information is available only on a weekly basis. The average weekly income (1) per household, (2) per wage or salary earner and (3) per capita for each country is given in the table. There is no officially defined poverty line in the United Kingdom.

	Average weekly income (£)		
	per household	*per wage or salary earner*	*per capita*
England	373·20	250·90	153·30
Scotland	316·20	259·70	140·70
Wales	297·40	221·70	123·80
Northern Ireland	296·50	211·70	107·20

The figures are rounded to the nearest 10p.

Incomes

Ms Corston: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his answer of 30 April, *Official Report*, column 572, what was the average equivalised disposable income at *(a)* current and *(b)* April 1993 prices for 1979, 1987, 1990 and 1991 of (i) single-parent households, (ii) two-parent households with (1) one child, (2) two children and (3) three or more children and *(c)* other households with children by quintile groups of households.

Mr. Nelson: The figures are available only at current prices and are as follows:

Average equivalised disposable income by household type and by quintile groups

£ per year

Household type	*Quintile groups of all households ranked by equivalised disposable income*					
	Bottom	*2nd*	*3rd*	*4th*	*Top*	*All households*
1979						
One adult with children	1,772	2,713	3,625	4,713	7,705	3,151
Two adults with one child	1,882	2,812	3,664	4,696	7,206	4,281
Two adults with two children	2,000	2,794	3,656	4,744	7,649	4, 081
Two adults with three or more children	1,898	2,800	3,579	4,715	7,278	3,308
Other households with children	2,032	2,811	3,666	4,739	6,841	4,080
1987						
One adult with children	3,751	5,268	7,168	9,981	17,605	5,386
Two adults with one child	3,600	5,516	7,465	10,178	17,318	9,627
Two adults with two children	3,644	5,562	7,446	10,138	18,607	8,996
Two adults with three or more children	3,610	5,440	7,452	10,007	16,886	7,041
Other households with children	3,556	5,432	7,542	10,122	16,125	7,900
1990						
One adult with children	4,466	6,651	9,817	14,835	22,630	7,086
Two adults with one child	4,126	7,044	9,921	14,578	26,635	14,215
Two adults with two children	4,302	7,113	10,080	14,206	23,712	12,022
Two adults with three or more children	4,138	6,948	9,713	13,943	31,631	10,157
Other households with children	4,302	6,953	9,870	14,419	24,198	11,708
1991						
One adult with children	5,105	7,477	10,830	15,434	23,108	7,867
Two adults with one child	4,469	7,688	11,088	15,488	26,878	14,841
Two adults with two children	4,759	7,830	11,046	15,379	26,645	12,993
Two adults with three or more children	4,571	7,809	11,026	15,347	26,471	11,223
Other households with children	4,743	7,774	10,990	15,423	26,276	12,572

The quintile groups are based on all households ranked by equivalised disposable income. Thus any difference between the average equivalised disposable income of household types within each quintile group is likely to result from sampling errors.

These figures are not strictly comparable over time because of changes in classification of both income and taxation and because of changes in the family expenditure survey.

Ms Corston: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his answer of 28 April, *Official Report*, columns *402-4*, what was the average equivalised disposable income of *(a)* the top and the bottom quintile groups and *(b)* the top and the bottom decile groups at current prices, and at April 1993 prices in 1979 and 1991.

Mr. Nelson: The figures are available only at current prices.

The figures for 1979 were given in the answer of 28 April 1993, *Official Report*, columns *402-4*.

The figures for 1991 are as follows:

Average equivalised disposable income for all households ranked by equivalised disposable income
Using the McClements equivalence scale with a household of a married couple = 1

£ per year	*Quintile groups*		*Decile groups*	
	Bottom	*Top*	*Bottom*	*Top*
1991	4,877	28,472	4,044	35,689

These figures are not strictly comparable with those for earlier years because of changes in classification of both income and taxation and because of changes in the family expenditure survey.

European Community

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the purpose of the agreement made at the ECOFIN meetings of June and July 1992 in relation to zero rates for VAT; and if the agreement is legally binding.

Sir John Cope: No agreement was made at the ECOFIN meetings of June and July 1992 in relation to zero rates for VAT. The ability to retain our zero rates was agreed at the ECOFIN meeting on 24 June 1991. This subsequently formed part of Council directive 92/77/EEC of 19 October 1992 supplementing the common system of value added tax and amending directive 77/388/EEC on approximation of VAT rates. This agreement is legally binding.

Yorkshire and Humberside

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what information he has for the gross domestic product for Yorkshire and Humberside and for each constituent area for the most recent financial years for which figures are available.

Mr. Nelson: Regional estimates of GDP are compiled only on a calendar year basis, not financial year. The latest available estimates for the Yorkshire and Humberside region are for 1991 and were published in the December 1992 issue of "Economic Trends". The latest figures available for the constituent counties are for 1989, which were published in the November 1991 issue of "Economic Trends". These articles contain a breakdown of GDP in £ millions and £ per head of population and economic trends and are available in the House Library.

Securities and Investments Board

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has received a report from the Securities and Investments Board on the exercise of its functions under the Financial Services Act 1986.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: The board's report for 1992-93, made in accordance with section 117 of the Act, was laid before Parliament today. Copies are being placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

Government Stock Purchases

Mr. Denzil Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his estimate, for the latest available financial year, of the proportion of the public sector borrowing requirement which was funded with purchases of Government stock by the pension funds and life assurance companies.

Mr. Nelson *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* The PSBR was £36·5 billion in 1992-93. Data for 1992 in the financial statistics table 3·5 of the Central Statistical Office's database show that net purchases of gilts by British pension funds and life assurance companies were £15·5 billion. Gilt sales to pension funds and life assurance companies were therefore 42 per cent. of the PSBR.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Public Interest

Mr. John Morris: To ask the Attorney-General if he will now publish the definition of the public interest used by the Crown Prosecution Service.

The Attorney-General: The general principles applied by the Crown Prosecution Service in respect of the public interest are set out in the code for Crown prosecutors. The code is published and laid before Parliament each year in the annual report of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The annual report for 1992-93 was published on 13 July 1993.

Mr. John Morris: To ask the Attorney-General what is the lowest grade of officer in the Crown Prosecution Service authorised to discontinue cases on the grounds of public interest.

The Attorney-General: The power under section 23 of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 to discontinue proceedings may, by virtue of section 1(6) of the Act, be exercised by any Crown prosecutor subject to any directions given by the director. Those with management responsibilities in the service are responsible for ensuring that cases are assigned to lawyers having both the experience and authority necessary to take decisions to continue or terminate proceedings. The level of authority will depend upon the nature, seriousness or complexity of the case.

Mr. John Morris: To ask the Attorney-General what percentage of cases the Crown Prosecution Service discontinued on grounds of public interest in the latest year for which figures are available; and how many defendants were neither very elderly, frail nor suffering from some injury.

The Attorney-General: The Crown Prosecution Service does not record centrally the proportion of cases that are discontinued on public interest grounds as opposed to evidential grounds, nor therefore is any information available about whether the defendants were very elderly, frail or suffering from injury. Such information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

International Investments Ltd., Gibraltar

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Attorney-General if he will make a statement on the progress of the judicial hearing which was scheduled to take place on 12 July in Gibraltar in response to the letter of request for evidence in relation to the affairs of International Investments Ltd., Gibraltar —in liquidation—first submitted to the Gibraltar authorities on 5 November 1990 from Belfast magistrates court of 15 November 1990.

The Solicitor-General: As a result of the letter of request for evidence in relation to the affairs of International Investments Ltd.—in liquidation—issued by Belfast magistrates' court on 1 November 1990, the Supreme court of Gibraltar made an order on 16 June 1993 requiring witnesses named in the letter of request to attend before a special examiner on 12 July 1993 to give evidence on oath and produce documents.

A hearing took place on 12 and 13 July 1993. A number of witnesses were examined and their depositions recorded. The hearing has been adjourned to allow consideration to be given to certain documents which have now become available. It is anticipated that the hearing will recommence in October 1993.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Common Fisheries Policy

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Hastings and Rye (Mrs. Lait) of 7 July, *Official Report*, column *163*, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of (i) the existing enforcement of the common fisheries policy and (ii) the European Commission's present powers to ensure that Community rules are properly implemented; what is her estimate of the scale of cheating and overcatching: and what analysis she

has made of the effect on the effectiveness of fisheries policy enforcement of the new regulations coming into effect on 1 January 1994.

Mr. Jack: The Commission's report on monitoring implementation of the common fisheries policy published in March 1992 identified various weaknesses in the present enforcement of fisheries policy in the EC. I agree with much of the Commission's assessment, and many of our concerns are being addressed by the proposed new control regulation expected to take effect from 1 January 1994. EC catch returns for 1992 show that there were 48 recorded instances of member states overfishing their individual quotas in Community waters but these do not refer to individual breaches of regulations by fishermen.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, pursuant to her answer to the hon. Member for Hastings and Rye (Mrs. Lait) of 7 July, *Official Report*, column *163*, what proportion of surface waters in north European waters are British territorial waters under the Fishery Limits Act 1976; which are the seven main species caught in those British waters; what estimate she has made of the annual British catch in Icelandic waters; and what provision has been made under the common fisheries policy as compensation for the loss of Icelandic fishing by the British fishing industry.

Mr. Jack: The United Kingdom fishery limits established by the Fishery Limits Act 1976 account for about 20 per cent. of the north Atlantic fishery limits of the 12 EC member states. The seven main species used in 1983 in the calculation of member states' shares—"relative stability"—were cod, haddock, plaice, whiting, saithe, mackerel and redfish or, for some purposes, herring. The United Kingdom secured 37 per cent. of the EC quotas for these species, a figure higher than our historical level of catches. Part of the calculation involved assessing the losses for each member state arising from the extension of fisheries jurisdiction by third countries in the 1970s and calculating compensation in fish stocks still available to the Community. The United Kingdom's losses at Iceland were calculated for this purpose at 133,927 tonnes cod equivalent.

Animal Welfare

Mr. Morley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what assessment has been made of the extent to which *(a)* Dutch firms transporting live animals through the United Kingdom and *(b)* Dutch slaughter-houses dealing with British animals comply with relevant required EC and United Kingdom standards.

Mr. Soames: Spot checks on transport standards are carried out by local authority and Ministry inspectors. These have revealed some deficiencies which we have taken up with the member states concerned.

As regards slaughter, all member states are required to have implemented Council directive 74/577/EEC on the stunning of animals before slaughter. It is the responsibility of the EC Commission to ensure that member states fulfil their legal obligations; if we became aware of any failure to comply by another member state we would notify this to the Commission and, if necessary, take the matter up with the other country. We are satisfied that the Netherlands has implemented the requirements of directive 74/577/EEC in its national laws.

Fishing Nets

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many United Kingdom vessels have been engaged in *(a)* gill net fisheries and *(b)* tangle net fisheries in United Kingdom waters in each year since 1988.

Mr. Jack: Available information relates only to vessels with an overalll length exceeding 10 m. In 1992, 18 United Kingdom fishing vessels reported using tangle nets and 352 vessels reported using gill nets at least once. Corresponding figures for 1988 are 26 and 226 respectively. Information for all the years requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) what length of *(a)* monofilament netting and *(b)* other fishing gear has been lost or discarded by United Kingdom fishermen in United Kingdom waters in each year since 1988;

(2) what measures her Department has adopted to monitor and regulate the loss and discard of fishing nets in United Kingdom waters.

Mr. Jack: No information is available about the quantities of netting or fishing gear lost or discarded. Discard of all types of fishing gear at sea is an offence unless undertaken in accordance with a licence under part II of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) what measures her Department has adopted to monitor the impact of fisheries using set monofilament gill nets and tangle nets in United Kingdom waters on *(a)* target species and *(b)* non-target species including marine mammals;

(2) what measures her Department has taken to monitor the distribution and effect of monofilament gill net and tangle net fisheries in the United Kingdom in order to qualify the risk of by-catches of marine mammals.

Mr. Jack: Fishing practice varies in the waters around the United Kingdom but monofilament gill nets and tangle nets are widely used. These fisheries are monitored for catch and effort by the fisheries departmentss and the results are included in the relevant stock assessments. MAFF has commissioned work to examine the distribution, character, catch and effort in gill and tangle net fisheries for both target and non-target species. On 1 January 1992, the fisheries departments introduced a voluntary scheme for fishermen to report incidental catches of marine mammals including the location of the incident and the type of fishing activity involved.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

National Asthma Campaign

Sir Peter Emery: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if he has considered an application for an exhibition relating to the national asthma campaign to be displayed in the Upper Waiting Hall.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: I understand that, under procedures agreed by the Administration Committee, arrangements have been made for the exhibition to be held in the Upper Waiting Hall from 8 to 12 November.

Exploring Parenthood

Mr. Scott: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if he has considered an application for an exhibition relating to exploring parenthood to be displayed in the Upper Waiting Hall.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: I understand that, under procedures agreed by the Administration Committee, arrangements have been made for the exhibition to be held in the Upper Waiting Hall from 13 to 17 December.

WALES

Derelict Commercial Properties

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures are being taken to encourage the conversion of derelict commercial properties; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Redwood: Assistance is available through the urban programme, urban investment grant and the rural initiative capital grant scheme for building conversion schemes.

All local authorities in Wales are eligible to apply for urban programme—strategic development scheme from 1 April 1994—assistance for areas which have been declared by the local authority as commercial or industrial improvement or renewal areas under the enabling legislation. The grants are intended to help stimulate economic regeneration and create or safeguard jobs. Grants are approved through local authorities to a maximum of 50 per cent. of eligible costs, with the private sector applicant meeting the balance. Urban programme allocations to Welsh authorities from 1990-91 to 1992-93 amount to nearly £9 million; assisting the improvement of 912 premises. Urban investment grant is a property grant designed to promote the redevelopment of derelict sites in urban areas throughout Wales. It is available only to the private sector and is designed to bridge the gap between the gross development costs of a project and its end value. Since the scheme's introduction in April 1989 there have been 44 approvals, totalling some £16·3 million grant.

Since 1991, assistance under the rural initiative capital grant scheme has been available to fund a series of social, environmental and economic projects to help create a self-sustaining market economy in rural Wales. Under this scheme in 1991-92 and 1992-93, 11 conversion schemes have been funded.

The Welsh Development Agency and the Development Board for Rural Wales also operate schemes to bring redundant buildings in rural areas back into beneficial business use. To date 473 projects have been assisted by the two agencies, at a total grant cost of approximately £4 million. In 1993-94, the two agencies plan to spend £700,000 on conversion schemes.

Steel Industry

Mr. Barry Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures he is taking to enhance the prospects of the steel industry in Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Redwood: The Government are committed to creating an economic framework in which the steel industry in Wales can prosper. To this end, we support the EC restructuring initiative which aims to reduce overcapacity elsewhere in Europe, much of it supported by state subsidies. It is for the Welsh steel industry to continue to reduce costs and improve efficiency.

Agri-Environmental Plan

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he expects to publish copies of the agri-environment regulations zonal plan for Wales.

Mr. Redwood: My proposals for the implementation of the agri-environment regulations will be submitted, as part of the United Kingdom plan, to the EC Commission in Brussels by 30 July and I shall make an announcement at that time.

J.P.M. (Automatic Machines) Ltd.

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what financial assistance has been given to J.P.M. (Automatic Machines) Ltd. in each of the last five years by *(a)* the Industry Department of the Welsh Office and *(b)* the Welsh Development Agency.

Mr. Redwood: To comment on the Department's relationship with this, or any other individual company, would be a breach of commercial confidentiality.

Working Women

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many women in Wales worked 16 hours or more per week in paid employment at the last available count.

Mr. Redwood: It is estimated from the 1991 census that 390,500 female residents of Wales aged 16 or over worked 16 hours or more per week in paid employment.

Employees (Sickness)

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) what estimates he has on the average number of working days (1) lost per employee through sickness annually *(a)* by local authority area, *(b)* according to employment sector and *(c)* according to category of employee in each year in Wales since 1985;

(2) what has been the total number of days lost per year in Wales and the estimated annual cost to the Welsh economy of working days lost through sickness in each year since 1985.

Mr. Redwood: The information requested is not available centrally.

Nursery Education

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to place a statutory duty upon all local education authorities and future funding agencies in Wales to provide nursery education.

Sir Wyn Roberts: No.

Bus Deregulation

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement outlining the main outcomes of his Department's consultation on bus deregulation guidelines

indicating the main findings on *(a)* timetabling, *(b)* bunching of services, *(c)* travel card schemes, *(d)* parking at bus stops and *(e)* registration of services.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The consultation document on the operation of local bus services outside London was issued by the Department of Transport. Responses from Wales were routed through the Department. All comments are being considered but it is too early to predict any conclusions.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

Items in Lieu of Tax

Sir Dudley Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what offers in lieu of tax have been accepted or allocated since his last announcement of 25 May, *Official Report*, column *482*.

Mr. Brooke: Since my last announcement on 25 May 1993 at column 482, I am pleased to inform the House that two paintings, "Le Dejeuner" and "Femme assise, tasse de cafe" by Edouard Vuillard, have been accepted in lieu of tax. Also, I have pleasure in announcing that a Charles I silver gilt standing cup and cover, accepted in lieu of tax, will be allocated to the Victoria and Albert museum.

DEFENCE

Depleted Uranium

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the sites *(a)* in the United Kingdom and *(b)* abroad where his Department stores depleted uranium; and if he will make a statement on the safety precautions taken in storing depleted uranium.

Mr. Aitken: Depleted uranium is stored in a variety of forms at several Ministry of Defence sites in the United Kingdom. The main sites include those of the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston, Burghfield and Cardiff; the test and evaluation ranges at Eskmeals and Kirkcudbright; and the Defence Research Agency site at Fort Halstead, together with a few minor holdings at other DRA sites. In addition it is held at a small number of military munitions stores and depots both in the United Kingdom and abroad. All materials are held in safe and secure facilities in accordance with the requirements for radioactive materials.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what methods of transport are used to move depleted uranium in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Aitken: Movement of non-military uranium within the United Kingdom is a matter for the Department of Transport. My Department for this purpose uses containers which are designed, manufactured and tested in conformity with the appropriate International Atomic Energy Authority (IAEA) transport regulations.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what documents are published by his Department containing information on quantities, locations and uses of depleted uranium owned or used by his Department *(a)* in the United Kingdom and *(b)* abroad.

Mr. Aitken: Two documents have been published which refer to depleted uranium. The first is the memorandum on anti-armour ammunition, which was placed in the Library of the House in March 1979; the second is a publicity document produced by the then Royal Armament Research and Development Establishment at Chertsey—now part of the Defence Research Agency—entitled "Kirkcudbright Range Facilities", published in January 1986.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 9 July, *Official Report*, column *317*, what steps his Department plans to take to recover the additional costs incurred as a result of United Nations Security Council resolution 816; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Member for Epsom and Ewell (Mr. Hamilton) gave to the hon. Member for East Lothian (Mr. Home Robertson) on 21 May, *Official Report*, column *348*.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contingency plans have been made to ensure the safety of British forces in the event of the continuing use of noxious gas by Muslim forces in central Bosnia; how far British forces were from the villages of Busovaca and Prosje when last week's alleged attacks by Muslims against Croats took place; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: Protective equipment and clothing are available to all British Army personnel wherever they deploy worldwide. The threats in a specific deployment area are kept under constant review and plans made accordingly. Busovaca and Prosje are within the British battalion's operating area and are often transited by United Nations personnel. We are not aware of any incident involving the use of noxious gas, although we are aware of an incident where a Bosnian-Croat soldier was treated, at a hospital in Novi Bila, for suspected gas poisoning. Following investigation at the alleged scene by the 1st Battalion, Prince of Wales Own Regiment, however, no trace of use of noxious gas was found.

Cruise Missiles

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what consideration he is giving to equipping Royal Navy warships with cruise missile-type weapons; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: I refer the hon. Member to the answer my hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Procurement gave the hon. Member for Leyton (Mr. Cohen) on 2 July at column *639*.

Search and Rescue

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what has been the outcome of the review announced on 21 October 1992, *Official Report*, columns 307-8, into arrangements for the co-ordination of the military response to search-and-rescue incidents; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Rifkind: On 21 October 1992, my right hon. Friend the then Minister of State for the Armed Forces announced our plans, following a review carried out in consultation with the Department of Transport, for the

future deployment of the Royal Air Force search and rescue (SAR) helicopter service, employing a highly capable all-Sea King fleet. Under the terms of an agreement with the Department of Transport, RAF and Royal Navy SAR helicopters assist in the civil SAR task.

Following a detailed review of arrangements for SAR co-ordination, I have concluded that these aircraft, and all military SAR operations, should be controlled from a single centre in the United Kingdom, to be located at RAF Pitreavie Castle in Fife. This national military rescue co-ordination centre (RCC) will be equipped with a comprehensive mission support system (MSS), comprising the most modern communications and computer equipment. The MSS will provide an intergrated communications and search planning capability, relieving RCC controllers of numerous routine tasks, and enabling the RCC to discharge its role in the most effective way possible.

We intend that the new single RCC will be operational by the end of 1994. Once this RCC is fully proven, which should be during the first half of 1995, the existing second RCC, which is manned by service personnel at the maritime headquarters at Mount Wise in Plymouth, will close, releasing those personnel for other duties.

SCOTLAND

Optical Services

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many references from general practitioners and optometrists to hospital ophthalmology out-patient clinics have been made since 1985.

Mr. Stewart: Information is available only for new out-patient referrals from general practitioners to ophthalmology out-patient clinics for the years ended March 1992 and 1993. The information for these two years is as follows:

	Number
March 1992	67,143
March 1993	65,831

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what guidelines are issued to health boards for record keeping and collating statistics in hospital ophthalmic departments; and what data health boards are required to collate from hospital ophthalmology departments.

Mr. Stewart: Information about hospital activities in Scotland, including information about the ophthalmology specialty, is published annually in sections 4 and 6 of the Scottish Health Statistics. A copy of the 1992 volume is in the Library. No special guidelines about record keeping are issued to health boards in respect of ophthalmology departments, which are expected to maintain the same standard as any other hospital department.

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what information he has regarding the incidence in Scotland of eye disease leading to blindness or NHS hospital treatment.

Mr. Stewart: Information is not held centrally on the incidence in the general population of eye disease which leads to blindness. The following table shows the main disorders responsible for admission to ophthalmology units in Scotland in 1992.

All discharges of in-patients and day cases from the specialty ophthalmology for the year 1992 by diagnosis group

Diagnosis	*Discharges*
Eye cancer	243
Diabetic eye disease	268
Retinal disorders	992
Glaucoma	2,125
Cataract	13,084
Corneal disorders	648
Disorders of conjunctiva	273
Disorders of eyelid	3,070
Strabismus	2,461
Other disorders of eye and lacrimal system	1,702
Injury to eye	788
Other disorders associated with eye disease	2,925
Total eye disorders	27,579

Salmon and Grilse

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many *(a)* salmon and *(b)* grilse were taken by each type of net in Scottish fisheries in each of the last 10 years; and how many fish were taken by anglers in the same years.

Sir Hector Monro: The numbers of fish caught by the methods indicated are as follows:

	Net and Coble		*Fixed Engine*		*Rod and Line*	
	Salmon	*Grilse*	*Salmon*	*Grilse*	*Salmon*	*Grilse*
1983	54,275	82,029	39,725	113,479	51,961	14,109
1984	33,006	68,412	31,077	129,124	43,130	15,543
1985	26,685	55,348	29,522	85,015	58,441	17,649
1986	51,154	68,284	37,801	118,835	59,443	15,742
1987	27,136	56,880	23,792	89,845	53,066	18,060
1988	27,569	52,199	15,914	69,090	68,679	27,809
1989	29,409	63,857	16,139	81,415	58,338	29,669
1990	21,542	28,013	14,102	33,715	52,280	19,366
1991	9,528	21,208	10,529	35,086	45,136	17,314
1992	16,005	28,942	11,810	44,863	55,026	27,871

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many *(a)* salmon and *(b)* grilse were taken by each drift net fishery in Scotland in each of the last 10 years; and what was the average weight of each category of such fish.

Sir Hector Monro: None. Drift netting for salmon anywhere in Scotland has been illegal since 1962.

Nursing Homes

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what requirements are laid down on nursing homes with respect to *(a)* the provision of at least one sitting room for use by all residents and *(b)* the extent to which patients may be sedated.

Mr. Stewart: Regulation 13(2)(b) of The Nursing Homes Registration (Scotland) Regulations 1990 requires the provision, to an adequate standard, of

"accommodation and space for each patient in the home including, where appropriate, day-room facilities separate from sleeping accommodation".

The amount of any sedation prescribed is a matter for the clinical judgment of the resident's general practitioner.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he intends to oblige Scottish Power and Hydro-Electric to obtain more electricity from renewables sources; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lang: Following publication of my Department's discussion document about a Scottish renewables obligation, the report of the Renewable Energy Advisory Group and the recent "Coal Review" White Paper (Cm 2235), I have now reached a conclusion on how to encourage further the exploitation of energy from renewable sources in Scotland.

Government policy is to stimulate development of new and renewable energy technologies where they have prospects of being economically attractive and environmentally acceptable in order to contribute to diverse, secure and sustainable energy supplies, the reduction in the emission of pollutants, and the encouragement of the renewable energy industry.

There is already overcapacity in electricity supply in Scotland. Over 10 per cent. of Scottish demand for electricity is already derived from renewable sources. A number of interests have, however, drawn attention to the potential to develop renewables to a greater extent in the light of certain aspects of Scotland's geography and climate. The extent of that potential is being studied. In the meantime, I have decided that I should introduce a Scottish renewables obligation (SRO) in respect of Scottish Power and Hydro-Electric.

I currently expect the first order under the SRO to be for some 30-40 MW of new capacity. I will review that figure in the light of the quality and cost of the proposals received. I expect the order to comprise a number of technology bands and I am currently considering including wind power, hydro, landfill gas from existing sites, municipal and industrial waste, and energy crops and agriculture and forestry waste.

My current intention is that the first order would, subject to satisfactory discussions with the European Commission, run for 15 to 20 years with effect from November 1994. This should enable Scottish Power and Hydro-Electric to offer successful generators contracts for a similar period. I am considering the mechanism for passing on to electricity consumers the additional costs falling on Scottish Power and Hydro-Electric as a result of the order.

I am discussing certain aspects of my proposals with the Director General of Electricity Supply and with Scottish Power and Hydro-Electric, to which I shall in due course provide further guidance about my initial policy proposals in respect of the first order under the SRO. It is likely that bids for contracts from renewable energy electricity suppliers in Scotland will be called for in the late summer.

To enable interested parties to plan ahead, I am announcing now that I hope that it will be possible to announce two further orders under the SRO, in 1995 and 1997 respectively. These orders are likely to come into effect in 1996 and 1998. Future orders will not necessarily cover the same technology bands as the first one, but are likely to be somewhat larger.

The purpose of the SRO is to create an initial market. I expect all bids to be on a competitive basis. The intention is that in the not-too-distant future the most promising renewables technologies will be able to compete without the need for special arrangements.

Howie Report

Mr. Raymond S. Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement about the report of the Howie committee on curriculum and examinations in upper secondary education in Scotland.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The issues raised in the report of the Howie committee are important and complex. They affect the education and employment opportunities of all young people in Scotland and the operation of a significant part of the Scottish education system. The committee's proposals would make radical changes to arrangements which have been in place in some form for over 100 years. There was a healthy response to consultation on the report and over 300 responses were received. We have made good progress in evaluating the proposals in the light of that response and will announce decisions later this year.

Careers in the Arts

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to widen opportunities for young people to make careers in the arts.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 5 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend is always concerned to encourage young people to enter careers which make a useful and productive contribution to, and match the demands of, society. It is chiefly for the arts organisations themselves, however, to consider what part they can play, in conjunction with other training providers, in providing career opportunities in that area. Where appropriate, young people may undertake training for careers in the arts through the Government's youth training programme, which in Scotland is delivered by Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and their networks of local enterprise companies. The enterprise bodies have also provided a range of financial and other assistance to support the business objectives of a number of organisations involved in the arts.

Fluoridation

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will publish details of total health board expenditure on the promotion of the recent campaign for water fluoridation in the Strathclyde regional council area; if he will break this figure down by health board; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if he will publish details of the level of annual health board expenditure on promoting the case for the fluoridation of water in each of the last 15 years; if he will break these figures down for each of the Strathclyde region health board areas; and if he will make a statement;

(3) what was the cost to health boards in the Strathclyde regional council area of the publicity and lobbying campaign in favour of the fluoridation of water which was undertaken on their behalf by Michael Kelly Associates; if he will break this information down by health board; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 9 July 1993]:* Total health board expenditure, exclusive of VAT, on the promotion of

the recent campaign for water fluoridation in the Strathclyde regional council area was some £108,000. Expenditure by individual health boards was as follows:

	£
Argyll and Clyde	18,000
Ayrshire and Arran	17,000
Greater Glasgow	50,000
Lanarkshire	23,000

The total expenditure included £26,900 paid to Michael Kelly Associates; the breakdown of this expenditure by health board is as follows:

	£
Argyll and Clyde	2,600
Ayrshire and Arran	2,200
Greater Glasgow	18,900
Lanarkshire	3,200

No other significant expenditure was incurred by the health boards on promoting the case for the fluoridation of water in Strathclyde during the last 15 years.

It is for health boards to decide their own priorities for health promotion within the resources they receive. Expenditure on the promotion of water fluoridation should be viewed in the context of the potential improvements in dental health and the consequent savings in the cost to the NHS and patients of dental treatment.

Lorries

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will identify, for each road authority area in Scotland, the bridges which would require treatment if the proposal to increase lorry loading from 38 to 44 tonnes is implemented.

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* Local authorities are still undertaking assessments of the bridges in their area for the higher gross vehicle weight limits of 40 tonnes which come into effect on 1 January 1999. This bridge strengthening programme will take account of the proposed 44 tonne limit.

It is not yet possible to identify, for each roads authority in Scotland, the bridges which would require treatment for the proposed limits.

On trunk roads 10 structures have been strengthened out of the 50 identified requiring treatment. One bridge has been superseded by a road scheme. The remaining 39 bridges are being reassessed and those requiring strengthening will be strengthened by the end of 1998.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will estimate the cost to each roads authority in Scotland for road and bridge improvements if the proposal to increase lorry loading from 38 tonnes to 44 tonnes is implemented.

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* Local authorities are still undertaking assessments of the bridges in their areas for the higher gross vehicle weight limits which come into effect on 1 January 1999. Consequently, it is not yet possible to estimate the cost to each roads authority in Scotland for road and bridge improvements.

Thirty-nine trunk road bridges are being reassessed and until this work is completed it is not possible to estimate the cost of strengthening measures.

Record of Need

Mr. Maclennan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the appeals lodged with his Department against the decision of Highland regional council not to open a record of need, the dates on which the appeals were received by his Department and when he expects to give his decisions.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The Scottish Office Education Department has before it one such appeal, about which I wrote to the hon. Member on 17 June. This was referred to the Secretary of State by Highland regional council appeals committee on 3 November 1992. The considerations involved in the appeals process are invariably complex but I expect the decision of the Secretary of State in this case will be issued soon.

Islands Shipping Services

Mr. McLeish: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Aberdeen, South (Mr. Robertson) of 26 May, *Official Report*, column *589*, what is the overall percentage level of tariff reduction available to P and O Scottish Ferries Ltd.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* The percentage rates by which P and O may abate its commercial tariffs are set out in the table. The percentage rates applicable to the carriage of freight also apply to other bulk shipping companies that provide services to the Northern isles.

Orkney and Shetland Services	*Subvention rate Percentage*
Island residents	
Cars and passengers	49·0
Students/disabled/pensioners	58·0
Mainland originating traffic	
Cars and passengers	19·5
Freight	
Southbound freight	47·5
Northbound freight	10·5

Asbestos-related Diseases

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many recorded cases there were of the diseases mesothelioma, asbestosis and bilateral diffuse pleural thickening in each year since 1988 *(a)* in the Greater Glasgow health board area and *(b)* in Scotland as a whole; and of the above totals, what percentage was female.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* Data on the incidence of mesothelioma are collected through the Scottish cancer registration scheme. Information derived from this is in the table. Data on the incidence of asbestosis and bilateral diffuse pleural thickening are not available centrally.

	1988		1989		1990		1991		Total	
	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.
Glasgow										
Males	39	86·7	52	94·5	46	86·8	42	85·7	179	88·6
Females	6	13·3	3	5·5	7	13·2	7	14·3	23	11·4
Males + Females	45	100·0	55	100·0	53	100·0	49	100·0	202	100·0
Scotland										
Males	103	88·0	119	90·2	112	86·2	104	86·0	438	87·6
Females	14	12·0	13	9·8	18	13·8	17	14·0	62	12·4
Male + Female	117	100·0	132	100·0	130	100·0	121	100·0	500	100·0

Inverclyde Enterprise Zone

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent representations he has received concerning the proposed economic development of the Parklea site in the Inverclyde enterprise zone.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend has received two representations regarding the proposed economic development of the Parklea site in Inverclyde enterprise zone, one of which is from the hon. Member.

Listed Industrial Buildings

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what was the total amount of public moneys given towards the cost of renovation and conservation of listed industrial buildings in each of the past 10 years; what was the average amount of financial assistance given in such cases; of these, how many were owned by private parties; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* The total amount of money given by the Secretary of State for Scotland for the repair of listed industrial buildings—including those converted for other uses—under the historic buildings grant scheme in each of the past 10 years is set out in the table. This represents assistance to 29 buildings, of which 28 were privately owned, the majority by charitable bodies. The average amount of financial assistance given in such cases under the grant scheme was £109,716.

Total amount of historic buildings repair grant

Year	£
1982-83	88,500
1983-84	70,000
1984-85	128,600
1985-86	134,455
1986-87	13,500
1987-88	124,582
1988-89	790,147
1989-90	400,259
1990-91	473,605
1991-92	561,980
1992-93	396,150

Housing Associations

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the proportion of tenants in the public housing sector who live in housing association apartments and houses *(a)* in Strathclyde and *(b)* Scotland; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* The information requested is published in the 1991 census report for Scotland, part 1, a copy of which is available in the Library.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what were the average levels of income of housing association tenants in each year since 1987.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* This information is not generaly collected centrally, but the socio-economic study carried out as part of the Scottish house condition survey showed that, in 1991, the mean income of housing association tenants was £6,300. This information is contained in table 4.11 of the survey report, which was published on 20 July and a copy is available in the Library.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what proposals he has to create a post of housing association ombudsman.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* I have asked Scottish Homes to prepare proposals for a housing association ombudsman service and it is currently undertaking a consultation exercise on this matter.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is his estimate of the proportion of private sector loan funding which will be required to maintain housing association new construction programmes and renovation progammes in 1993-94 and 1995-96; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* In the current year, Scottish Homes is confident of achieving the target set by my right hon. Friend of a private: public leverage rate of 1:2 for its programme as a whole. It is too early to say what the target will be for the future years.

Sewage Sludge

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what guidance he has given to regional councils concerning the proposed abolition of the dumping at sea of sewage sludge under EC rules.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* Regional councils were advised in March 1990 of the Government's decision to terminate the sea disposal of sewage sludge by the end of 1998. At the same time Lothian and Strathclyde regional councils were also advised of changes in the arrangements relating to their annual applications for licences under the provisions of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 which would prevail in the period to 1998.

Since then my officials have been in routine contact with the regional councils as they have developed their sludge strategies for post-1998.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Coal

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what protection he intends to introduce for the domestic coal consumer in Northern Ireland after the proposed privatisation of British Coal; and what proportion of homes in Northern Ireland depend on coal as a main source of heat;

(2) what safeguards he will introduce to ensure that the households in Northern Ireland which use coal as their main source of heat are not exploited by monopolies following the proposed privatisation of British Coal; and how many households in Northern Ireland use coal as their main source of heat.

Mr. Atkins: Suppliers of coal to households in Northern Ireland are subject to the provisions of the Fair Trading Act 1973 and will continue to be so. Approximately 321,000 households in Northern Ireland —61 per cent. of the total—use coal as their main source of heat.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he proposes to take to ensure that elderly people with coal as their primary source of heat are not disadvantaged under the proposed privatisation of British Coal.

Mr. Atkins: The Government's proposals to help secure the future of the coal industry should lead to a more efficient industry producing coal at reduced costs, thus benefiting all coal users.

Tourism

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many tourists from the Republic of Ireland visited the north during 1991 and 1992; what plans his Department has to increase the numbers of tourists from both Britain and the Republic of Ireland; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: A total of 380,000 tourists from the Republic of Ireland visited Northern Ireland in 1991 and 352,000 in 1992. A major drive to increase visitors from Britain and the Republic of Ireland was launched in March with the Northern Ireland tourist board's biggest ever television advertising campaign, "The Northern Ireland you'll never know unless you go", at a cost of £1 million. This has been very well received and is backed up strongly by other marketing activity.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effect of the numbers of tourists from the United States of America visiting Northern Ireland since the new operation of a direct, scheduled service between New York and Belfast; what steps his Department is now taking to market Northern Ireland in the United States of America; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: The new direct scheduled air service between Belfast and New York came into operation on 3 June 1993 and it is too early for meaningful statistical information to have been collected on its effect on the number of tourists visiting Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland tourist board continues, through its New York office, to participate in a wide range of marketing activities aimed at attracting American visitors, including selective advertising campaigns, participation in consumer and trade exhibitions, development of special interest tour operators and joint marketing initiatives in liaison with Bord Failte, the tourist authority for the Republic of Ireland.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what applications his Department has received from companies wishing to operate a direct scheduled air service between Northern Ireland and Germany; what studies his Department has made of the benefits to the north's tourist industry which the operation of this and other direct scheduled services might have; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: No application has been brought to my attention for a direct scheduled air service between Northern Ireland and Germany. Tourism would undoubtedly benefit from a direct scheduled service link with a key tourism market like Germany.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proportion of tourism in Northern Ireland in 1992-93 came from *(a)* domestic and *(b)* overseas sources; and how many of that total were categorised as (i) short stay and (ii) long stay.

Mr. Atkins: In the calendar year 1992, domestic sources formed 32 per cent. of total tourism in Northern Ireland of which 63 per cent. were categorised as short stay and 37 per cent. as long stay. Overseas sources for 1992 formed 68 per cent. of the visitor total, of which 48 per cent. were categorised as short stay and 52 per cent. as long stay visitors.

Salmon and Grilse

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* salmon and *(b)* grilse were taken by drift nets in (i) the Foyle fisheries area and (ii) the fisheries conservancy area in each of the last 10 years; what was the average weight of each category of fish; and how many fish in each category were taken by fishermen resident in Northern Ireland and in the Irish Republic.

Mr. Ancram: Commercial salmon catch returns do not differentiate between salmon and grilse. The total drift net catch, and average weight of fish, for the areas within the jurisdiction of the Foyle Fisheries Commission and the Fisheries Conservancy Board for Northern Ireland respectively are as follows:

	Foyle Fisheries Commission		*Fisheries Conservancy Board for Northern Ireland*	
	Number	*Average weight (kgs)*	*Number*	*Average weight (kgs)*
1983	65,654	3·44	1,231	3·27
1984	18,299	2·94	662	3·12
1985	24,528	3·39	1,010	3·33
1986	32,280	3·34	479	3·15
1987	12,587	2·91	248	3·18
1988	17,321	3·21	675	3·09

	Foyle Fisheries Commission		Fisheries Conservancy Board for Northern Ireland	
	Number	Average weight (kgs)	Number	Average weight (kgs)
1989	55,108	3·14	812	3·17
1990	33,850	3·14	252	3·03
1991	20,379	3·02	838	3·10
1992	33,321	2·98	2,267	3·08

Information on the number of fish taken by fishermen resident in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland respectively is not available but for statistical purposes it is established practice to include 50 per cent. of the catch in the Foyle area, in addition to all of the Fisheries Conservancy Board catch, when computing the total Northern Ireland catch.

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* salmon and *(b)* grilse were taken by each type of net in Northern Ireland fisheries in each of the last 10 years; and how many such fish were taken by anglers in the same years; and what sums were paid in licence fees in each of those years by (i) netsmen and (ii) anglers.

Mr. Ancram: Salmon catch returns do not differentiate between salmon and grilse. Total commercial catches—inclusive of 50 per cent. of the catches in the Foyle area—by type of net, were as follows:

	Drift nets	Draft nets	Fixed engines
1983	34,058	8,260	14,425
1984	9,812	5,695	13,077
1985	13,274	7,433	8,908
1986	16,619	6,381	12,064
1987	6,541	2,786	10,808
1988	9,335	8,202	13,389
1989	28,366	15,619	17,529
1990	17,177	5,112	10,135
1991	11,028	2,720	6,673
1992	18,927	4,515	7,696

Accurate information on angling catches is not available. Anglers are not required to make returns in the Fisheries Conservancy Board's area, but such information as is available is published in the board's annual reports. A very low percentage of anglers make the required returns in the Foyle Fisheries Commission area, with reported angling catches and the percentage of licensed anglers who made the following returns.

Year	Angling catches	Percentage return
1983	831	7
1984	379	15
1985	1,814	10
1986	1,172	8
1987	390	4
1988	960	5
1989	975	6
1990	927	4
1991	482	9
1992	523	6

Licence fees paid by commercial salmon fishermen and anglers respectively to the Foyle Fisheries Commission and the Fisheries Conservancy Board were as follows:

Year	Foyle Fisheries Commission[1]		Fisheries Conservancy Board	
	Angling licences	Commercial fishing licences	Angling licences	Commercial fishing licences
	£	£	£	£
1983	29,800	32,763	98,477	10,188
1984	29,454	35,488	108,656	9,140
1985	38,942	36,314	117,687	10,873
1986	44,113	37,307	134,450	11,520
1987	47,907	35,470	146,941	10,839
1988	57,658	35,982	159,166	12,050
1989	56,147	38,226	164,607	11,818
1990	58,893	40,328	174,545	10,473
1991	61,994	43,351	188,146	12,116
1992	62,622	42,410	192,003	13,658

[1] Full licence revenue included.

Rate Collection

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many ratepayers have been threatened with prosecution as a result of the Rate Collection Agency computer at Newtownabbey, County Antrim being unable correctly to record more than one direct debit from an individual bank account; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: Rate collection operational matters are the responsibility of Mr. David Gallagher, chief executive of the Rate Collection Agency. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. D. Gallagher to Mr. Roy Beggs, dated 20 July 1993:

I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about the number of ratepayers threatened with prosecution as a result of the Rate Collection Agency computer being unable to record more than one direct debit from an individual bank account.

This is the only occasion on which any indication of a relationship between the unavailability of the direct debit payment facility and the threat of prosecution has come to my attention.

It is indeed correct that the Agency's existing computer system limits offering the use of the direct debit payment method to those ratepayers who pay rates for one property from one bank account. The structure of the computer system meant that it was not cost effective to avoid this limitation when introducing the direct debit payment facility in 1989 and it has been our practice to identify this fact in all Agency promotional material for direct debit. I enclose for your information a copy of our 1993-94 leaflet where you will find the relevant reference at the bottom of page 4.

The existing computer system is rapidly approaching the end of its useful life and the Agency at present is developing a replacement system which when operational in 1995 will facilitate the widest use of direct debit.

There is no reason however, why any ratepayer should be threatened with prosecution for non-payment because direct debit is not available to them. Such ratepayers are offered the Bank Standing Order facility or another payment method suitable to them.

I hope this will clarify the situation but should you wish me to investigate an individual case please let me know.

EC Structural Funds

Rev. Ian Paisley: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the persons and bodies to whom he sent his proposals for the EC structural funds.

Sir John Wheeler: The list of bodies and individuals who have been sent the consultation draft of the key

sections of the Northern Ireland structural funds plan to date are set out in the table. It includes Members of the European Parliament and the main Northern Ireland party leaders, the district councils, the Confederation of British Industry, the voluntary sector and other representative bodies as well as a number of organisations and individuals who have expressed an interest in the EC structural funds after 1993. I am arranging for all Northern Ireland Members of Parliament to receive a copy of the plan because of the interest which has been shown in it and in addition for copies of the plan to be placed in the parliamentary Library. Copies of the plan are also made available to any organisation or individual who requests it.

Action for Women's Employment (Derry)
Dr. J. Alderdice
Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union
Ardboe Development Association
Ards Small Business Centre
Armagh Planetarium
Mr. J. Armstrong
Arts Council
Association of Local Authorities
Ballymoney Regeneration Company Ltd.
Ballylumford Power Ltd.
Belfast Centre for the Unemployed
Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce
Belfast Charitable Trust for Integrated Education
Belfast City Airport
Ms E. Collins
Belfast Common Purpose
Belfast Freight Ferries Ltd.
Belfast Harbour Commissioners
Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education
Belfast Law Centre
Professor W. Black
Professor V. Borooah
British Airways
British Midlands
British Telecom
Brownlow Community Trust
Brownlow Ltd.
Bryson House
Buddy Bear Trust
Building Design Partnership
Burn Development Association
Carlingford Lough Commissioners
Centre for Creative Communication
Charities Evaluation Services
Chinese Welfare Association
Civil Aviation Authority
Coleraine Harbour Commissioners
Community Development Review Group
Community Relations Council
Community Technical Aid
Confederation of British Industry
Confederation of Community Groups
Construction Employers Federation
Construction Industry Training Board
Lord Cook
Coolkeeragh Power Ltd.
Co-operation North
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside
Cardinal Daly
Mr. A. Daley
Mr. J. B. Davidson (Transportation Monitoring Committee)
Development Fund for IFI in Omagh and Fermanagh
Disability Action
District Councils (26)
Donaghadee Community Workforce
Down County Museum
Du Pont (UK) Ltd.
East Border Region Committee
Edco Ltd.
Education and Library Boards (5)
Enniskillen Community Development Project
Equal Opportunities Commission
Professor W. Ewart
Extern
Fair Employment Commission
Mr. S. Farron
Fire Authority for NI
Ford Motor Ltd.
Mr. A. Frew, Green Party
Freight Transport Association
General Consumer Council for NI
Gingerbread NI
Mr. J. Girvan
Mr. J. Goodman
Mr. A. Gichuke
Mr. E. Graham
The Governing Bodies Association
Health Promotion Agency
Health and Social Services Boards (4)
Help the Aged
Mr. J. Herlihy (Tourism Monitoring Committee)
Historic Buildings Council
Historic Monuments Council
Holywell Trust
Mr. J. Hume
Industrial Therapy Organisation
Institute of Directors
Inner City Trust, Derry
Institute of Exports (NI)
Irish Congress of Trade Unions (Northern Ireland Committee)
Ivex Pharmaceuticals Ltd.
Kainos Software Ltd.
Dr. D. Kennedy
KPMG Consultants
Labour Relations Agency
Laganside Development Company
Larne Harbour Ltd.
Law society
Lisburn Enterprise Centre
Livestock Marketing Commission
Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland
Londonderry Chamber of Commerce
Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners
Lower Ormeau Residents' Action Group
Lurgan Voluntary Sector Forum
Mr. S. Macgrianna
Mr. P. McErlean, Cambridge University
Dr. A. Masson
Manx Airlines
MARI (UK) Ltd.
Milk Marketing Board for Northern Ireland
Mr. J. Molyneaux
Professor F. Monds
Mr. E. Montgomery
Ms J. Morrice, EC
Dr. J. Moss
Professor P. Newbould
Multi-cultural Resource Centre
National Trust
Newry and Mourne Carers Association
Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency
Mr. J. Nicholson
NIGEN Ltd.
Northern Ireland Advanced Learning Systems
Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association
Northern Ireland Airports Ltd.
Northern Ireland Association of Citizens's Advice Bureaux
Northern Ireland Association of Community-Based Training Organisations
NI Bankers Association (contributed to CBI Submission)
NI Centre in Europe
NI Chamber of Commerce
NI Co-operative Development Agency
NI Council for Integrated Education
NI Council for Voluntary Action (Umbrella group covering approximately 250 affiliated organisations)
NI Curriculum Council
NI Dairy Trade Association
NI Economic Council
NI Economic Research Centre

NI Electricity plc
NI Environment Link
NI Federation of Housing Associations
NI Fish Producers Organisation Ltd.
NI Housing Executive
NI Meat Exporters Association
NI Museums Advisory Committee
NI Railways Ltd.
NI Schools Examinations and Assessment Council
NI Small Business Institute
NI Tourist Board
NI Tenants' Action Project
NI Transport Holding Company
NI Voluntary Trust
Norse Irish Ferries Ltd.
Northern Telecom
Northlands Institute
North West Councils' Grouping
Orchardville Society
Mr. B. O'Hara
Mr. J. O'Hara
Reverend I. Paisley
Pandoro Ltd.
P & O Ferries
Pig Production Development Committee
Premier Transco Ltd.
Mr. E. Poulson, EC
Queen's University of Belfast
Queen's University (Department of Agriculture and Food Economy)
Rank Hovis Ltd.
River Bann and Lough Neagh Association
Road Haulage Association
Rosa
Rotary International
Royal Society of Ulster Architects
RSPCB
Rural Community Network
Rural Development Council
Mr. N. Sanders
Sea Containers Scotland
Short Brothers plc
Simon Community
Mr. J. Simpson
Professor T. Smith
Sister Genevieve
Professor A. Smyth
Society of Local Authorities Chief Executives (SOLACE)
Software Industry Federation
Sports Council
Springvale Training Ltd.
Stena Sealink
Strathroy Milk Marketing Board
Mr. P. Storey, University of Liverpool
Mr. C. Stutt
Suffolk Community Services Group
Sir John Swinson
TechEcon
Textile Allied Products Training Council
Tidy NI
Tony Brunskill Associates
Tourism and Hospitality Training Council
Trans Global Freight Ltd.
Transport Advisory Committee
Transport Studies Research Group—University of Ulster
TR Shipping Services
Tyrone Economic Development Initiative
Ulster Business School—University of Ulster
Ulsterbus/Citybus
Ulster American Folk Park
Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
Ulster Development Capital Ltd.
Ulster Farmers Union
Ulster Folk and Transport Museum
Ulster Museum
Ulster Sheltered Employment Ltd.
Ultach Trust
University of Ulster
Verbal Arts Centre
Voluntary Service Belfast
Reverend Wallace, St. Peter's Cathedral
Mr. C. Ward, CBE (Physical and Social Environment Monitoring Committee)
Warrenpoint Harbour Authority
West Belfast Enterprise Board Ltd.
W. H. Stephens and Sons
William Fitch and Co.
Women's Educational Project
Women's European Platform (NICVA)
Workers' Educational Association
Youth Council
Youth Link
Zwecker International Transport

Terrorism

Mr. Nigel Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many terrorist attacks have been carried out in Northern Ireland in each year since 1969; and what percentage of these attacks were carried out by the Republican paramilitaries and Loyalist paramilitaries.

Sir John Wheeler *[holding answer 13 July 1993]:* The available information on the number of terrorist attacks is published in the chief constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary's annual report 1992, a copy of which is in the Library. This gives details of the number of terrorist incidents involving shootings, bombs and incendiaries. Information on how many of these were attributed to Republican and Loyalist terrorist groups is not available.

Mr. John D. Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what is the total cost of the film for television screening which is part of the new campaign against terrorism; how long the film lasts; how many firms were invited to tender for the preparations of this film; and what is the budget allocated for the television screening of this film.

Sir John Wheeler *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* The total production cost of the three television commercial films launched on Wednesday 7 July was £438,000. The three films last 150, 80 and 40 seconds respectively. Seven advertising agencies were invited to submit proposals for this advertising campaign. The projected expenditure for screening the films in the 1993-94 financial year is £280,000.

ENVIRONMENT

Council Tax

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what figures are available for the impact of the introduction of the council tax on pensioners, in particular in London.

Mr. Baldry: It is estimated that, after allowing for council tax benefit, about 65 per cent. of pensioner households are better off under the council tax in 1993-94 than they were under the community charge in 1992-93. The corresponding figure for London is 50 per cent. Figures for the other regions are shown in the table.

Pensioner households: Percentage gaining from the council tax

Region	*Percentage of pensioner households gaining*
North	75
Yorks and Humberside	70
North-West	70

Region	Percentage of pensioner households gaining
East Midlands	75
West Midlands	75
East Anglia	70
Greater London	50
Rest of South-East	55
South-West	60
England	65

Notes:
1. Figures estimated from the Family Expenditure Survey.
2. Figures include the effect of council tax benefit.
3. Figures are subject to sampling error and have been rounded to the nearest. 5 per cent.
4. A pensioner household is defined as a household including a man aged 65+ or a woman aged 60+.

Drinking Water

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) what proportion of drinking water inspectorate reports have been released to the public during the last three years;

(2) pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Oxford, East (Mr. Smith) of 12 July, *Official Report*, column *325*, if he will indicate the criteria which are used to establish whether a drinking water inspectorate report reveals issues of general interest or provides lessons to be learnt.

Mr. Yeo: Since the drinking water inspectorate was established on 2 January 1990 it has investigated 127 incidents affecting drinking water quality and made public three reports. In all other cases copies of letters addressed to water companies summarising the inspectorate's conclusions and recommendations have been sent to the local authorities, district health authorities and customer services committees concerned, to the Office of Water Services and others who have expressed an interest. Whether or not reports need to be published is decided against the criteria given in my answer to the hon. Member on 12 July at column *325*.

Tyre Dump Fires

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what arrangements are being assessed by his Department to cope with tyre dump fires; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: The responsibility for making provision for fire-fighting rests with fire authorities.

In addition, waste disposal authorities are responsible for licensing the deposit of waste under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. Depositing waste tyres without a licence is an offence. A disposal authority may reject a licence application or revoke a licence on grounds of water pollution or danger to public health. Licences are issued subject to conditions, which may include requirements as to the precautions to be taken at the site. Disposal authorities are responsible for enforcing licences. These powers and duties are to be strengthened and extended when the waste management licensing provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 are brought into force.

Personnel Statistics

Mr. Bates: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the total number of personnel employed in *(a)* the National Rivers Authority, *(b)* the drinking water inspectorate, *(c)* Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution and *(d)* the Office of Water Services.

Mr. Yeo: The current totals of staff in post are as follows:

	Number of staff
National Rivers Authority	8,371
The drinking water inspectorate	28
Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution	358
Ofwat	163

Running Costs

Mr. Michael Bates: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what are the latest annual running costs for which figures are available for *(a)* the National Rivers Authority, *(b)* the drinking water inspectorate, *(c)* Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution and *(d)* Ofwat.

Mr. Yeo: The costs are broadly as follows:

	1992-93 Total revenue costs (£ million)
National Rivers Authority	283·6
The drinking water inspectorate	1·3
Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution	14·5
Ofwat	6·7

Further details can be found in the annual reports and accounts of NRA, HMIP and Ofwat.

Mineral Reviews

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will bring forward proposals to amend section 105 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to ensure five-year reviews of all mineral permissions in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Baldry: I refer the hon. Member to the reply that I gave on 17 June 1993 at column *675*.

Bathing Water

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will set out, in tabular form, how many waters, in each of the EC countries, failed to meet their obligations under the bathing water directive; how many met the mandatory water quality standard; and how many complied with the directive's guideline standards.

Mr. Yeo *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* Drawing from the latest EC report, "Quality of Bathing Water 1992", the details of compliance with the coliform standards for seawater bathing areas are as follows:

Country	Failing mandatory standards	Meeting standards: Mandatory	Meeting standards: Guideline
Belgium	4	35	7
Denmark	60	1,113	1,009
Germany	119	328	257

Country	Failing mandatory standards	Meeting standards Mandatory	Meeting standards Guideline
Greece	38	1,165	1,141
Spain	96	1,239	988
France	413	1,519	1,121
Ireland	5	85	77
Italy	342	3,691	3,428
Netherlands	6	38	32
Portugal	38	188	170
United Kingdom	97	358	163

The Commission accepts that there is a degree of imprecision in the results from the different countries, which arises from differences in analytical methods.

Sea Walls

Mr. Ian Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what work the interdepartmental group on coastal policy has done on the ownership of sea walls; and what plans his Department has to transfer ownership of the Portland harbour wall.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* I have been asked to reply as this Department has overall policy responsibility for coastal defences in England. The ownership of specific lengths of sea wall is a matter for local bodies concerned. In the case of Portland I understand that the Ministry of Defence is reviewing options for the future of the entire base—including the breakwaters—in conjunction with Weymouth and Portland borough council and other interested parties.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Child Labour

16. **Mr. Corbyn:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what action he is taking to restrict the import of goods produced by child labour.

Mr. McLoughlin: None. Open international trade is more likely to put an end to child labour by strengthening the economies of the countries concerned. There would, in any case, be severe practical difficulties in identifying goods which had been produced with child labour.

Manufacturing Industry

17. **Sir David Knox:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he next expects to meet the President of the Confederation of British Industry to discuss manufacturing industry.

Mr. Sainsbury: My right hon. Friend and I maintain close contact with the CBI and discuss with it a wide range of issues including the competitiveness of British manufacturing industry.

36. **Mr. John Evans:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he last met the Trades Union Congress to discuss manufacturing industry.

Mr. McLoughlin: My right hon. Friend discusses matters affecting industry with the TUC as appropriate.

Competitiveness

18. **Mr. Sheerman:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what new plans he has to increase the competitiveness of British industry.

Mr. Sainsbury: The competitiveness of British industry is at the heart of all the Government's policies.

One-stop Shops

19. **Mr. Spring:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many one-stop shops he expects to be running by the end of the year.

Mr. McLoughlin: Nineteen one-stop shops are due to open by the end of this year.

21. **Sir Anthony Durant:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what progress has been made on the one-stop shop initiative; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. McLoughlin: Good progress is being made by the six one-stop shop pilots, and they have now been joined by two more areas, Leicestershire and Shropshire. This will represent some 31 outlets in all.

Further applications will be welcomed from other areas ready to achieve the high standards of the pilots. They will all be known as Business Links.

Defence-related Industries

20. **Mr. Clelland:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what further plans his Department has to assist firms in defence-related industries to diversify into new products; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Sainsbury: My Department will continue to provide advice on diversification through the "Changing Tack" regional seminar programme and associated help manual. In addition, areas which are adversely affected by defence changes may be able to benefit from the EC KONVER initiative, which will be worth some £15 million to the United Kingdom as a whole.

Deregulation

22. **Mrs. Lait:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will ensure that the small business sector is fully involved in consultations on his deregulation initiative.

24. **Mr. Clappison:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what plans he has to ensure that due weight is given to the voice of small businesses during his consultations on the deregulation initiative.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The cumulative burden of regulation bears most heavily on small businesses and ensuring that they are fully consulted is a central objective of the deregulation initiative. The chairmen of the deregulation task forces have taken on the responsibility for giving special consideration to the needs of small businesses and the 14 task force members representing the small company sector have formed a committee to make specific recommendations.

Following the Prime Minister's meeting on deregulation yesterday, Ministers have committed themselves to greater efforts to involve small companies in Government decision making and to analysing the impact of regulatory

proposals on the smallest firms affected. The enforcer's code on helping business comply with regulation, also announced yesterday, will be particularly helpful to small companies.

33. **Mr. Steen:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what estimate he has made as to the number of rules and regulations from *(a)* the United Kingdom and *(b)* Europe which will be amended or abolished by the deregulation unit in the next six months.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: At the Prime Minister's progress meeting on deregulation, held yesterday, Ministers agreed a list of specific deregulatory prospects to reduce the burden on businesss. The deregulation unit is a division within my Department which co-ordinates Government action on deregulation, but has no powers itself to amend or abolish regulations created either in Whitehall or the EC.

Pit Closures

23. **Mr. Hanson:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he last met the chairman of British Coal to discuss the effect of pit closures in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Eggar: My right hon. Friend and I meet the chairman of British Coal as necessary to discuss a range of issues.

Inward Investment

25. **Mr. John Marshall:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many jobs were created or retained as a result of inward investment into the United Kingdom in 1992.

Mr. Sainsbury: My Department's Invest in Britain Bureau's—IBB—recent annual report, a copy of which is in the Library, shows that some 56,471 jobs were created or retained between 1 April 1992 and 31 March 1993. The figures are based on information provided by the companies at the time of the announcement to invest. There is no requirement to notify the Department and so the figures include only those projects where the IBB and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many jobs he estimates have come from inward investment since 1979 and in which main areas; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Sainsbury: Since 1979 it is estimated that 526,000 jobs have been associated with inward investment decisions. The largest number of jobs have been in Scotland, 16·5 per cent.; West Midlands, 14·6 per cent.; and Wales, 14·1 per cent. The figures are based on information provided by the companies at the time of the announcement to invest. There is no requirement to notify the Department and so the figures include only those projects where the IBB and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

Package Holidays

26. **Mr. Graham:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what further steps he is taking to ensure improved safety standards for package holidaymakers using European hotels.

Mr. McLoughlin: As a result of an EC resolution on fire safety in hotels most member states now have standards similar in general terms to those in the United Kingdom. More generally, the International Federation of Tour Operators has issued two substantial guides, one for operators and the other for owners of holiday accommodation, covering every aspect of safety from fire doors to the depth of swimming pools. These, I believe, will be valuable.

31. **Dr. Godman:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what further representations he has had from travel businesses about deficiencies in the package travel regulations; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. McLoughlin: I have received no such representations.

Opencast Mining

27. **Mr. Enright:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what recent discussions he has held with British Coal on opencasting.

Mr. Eggar: My right hon. Friend and I meet regularly with British Coal to discuss a wide range of issues.

Lonrho plc

28. **Mr. Dickens:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what representations he has received calling for an investigation into the affairs of Lonrho plc.

Mr. Sainsbury: I am unable to discuss the affairs of individual companies. However, any representations my hon. Friend cares to make regarding the affairs of Lonrho plc will be considered.

Aerospace Industry

29. **Mr. Dunnachie:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if his Department is now in a position to publish its own assessment of the prospects for the British aerospace industry.

Mr. Sainsbury: My Department maintains a close dialogue with the aerospace industry on its prospects, but I have no present plans to publish any departmental assessment.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

30. **Mr. Bill Michie:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade what are the terms of reference of Sir Peter Levene's inquiry into the ECGD.

Mr. McLoughlin: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the second part of the answer my hon. Friend the Minister for Trade gave on 7 June 1993 at column *160*.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, what criteria are taken into account when assessing staffing requirements at the ECGD.

Mr. Sainsbury: ECGD's staffing levels are periodically reviewed. They are set with the aim of ensuring that the Department has sufficient resources to meet its objectives.

Renewable Energy

34. **Mr. Hoon:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade when his Department plans to publish its renewable energy strategy document.

Mr. Eggar: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given today to my hon. Friend the Member for Cambridgeshire, North-East (Mr. Moss).

Russia (Trade)

35. **Mr. Simon Coombs:** To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on United Kingdom trade with Russia.

Mr. McLoughlin: United Kingdom exports to the countries of the former Soviet Union amounted to £295 million in the first five months of this year, a rise of 93 per cent. over the same period last year—£153 million. About 70 per cent. of these exports are to Russia.

Despite this encouraging news, the Russian market remains primarily suitable for larger companies able to bear the costs and risks involved, and for those companies already established there. Nevertheless, there can be opportunities for traders of all sizes and for medium and smaller companies where a niche exists for them or where they can act as subcontractors.

Inspectors

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer of 5 March, *Official Report*, column *349*, if he will list *(a)* the name and business connections of the inspector, *(b)* the date on which he published the interim and final reports in which the individual was criticised, *(c)* the date on which he referred the criticisms of the accountant inspector criticised in the Ramor report to any of the accountancy bodies and *(d)* the total cost of the Ramor and Gilgate investigations, showing the fees paid to accountant inspectors.

Mr. Neil Hamilton:

(a) Mr. P. L. Ainger, FCA of Messrs. Price Waterhouse.

(b) The interim report dated 23 December 1981 was published on 22 March 1983. The final report dated 11 December 1987 remains unpublished.

(c) 22 March 1983 immediately on publication of the interim report.

(d) The total costs of the Ramor investigation were as follows:

	£
Accountant	568,762
Legal	108,692
Disbursements	82,847
Total	760,301

Figures for Gilgate are not now available.

Supervisory Bodies

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the sections of the Companies Acts which affect the duties of the recognised supervisory bodies to shareholders, creditors, employees and the general public.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The duties of the recognised supervisory bodies are set out in sections 35 to 40 of the Companies Act 1989.

Auditing Practices Board

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the dates of the meetings of the Auditing Practices Board which his representative has attended and the matters which were discussed at each of those meetings.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to his question on 5 March, *Official Report*, column *348*. Since then my Department's representative has attended the meetings of the Auditing Practices Board held on the following dates:

9 March
19 April
11 May
8 June
13 July.

Minutes of the board's meeting may be obtained from the board's secretary.

Criminal Offences

Sir Richard Body: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what criminal offences he has introduced in the last five years under delegated legislation.

Mr. Sainsbury: The information requested can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Radioactive Waste

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what progess has been made on conducting a job study with British Nuclear Fuels plc on the potential for alternative employment on the thermal oxide reprocessing plant site as recommended in the first report of the Environment Committee of Session 1985-86, HC 191, on radioactive waste; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mrs. Campbell) on 7 July 1993, *Official Report*, column *149*.

G7 (Balance of Trade)

Mr. Greenway: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the value of *(a)* imports and *(b)* exports of each of the G7 countries in the past year; what were the comparable figures five, 10 and 15 years ago in real terms; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. McLoughlin: The value of imports and exports for each of the G7 countries for 1992 are shown in table 1. Comparable figures in real terms for five, 10 and 15 years ago are not available. Comparable figures for five, 10 and 15 years ago at current prices are shown in table 2. United Kingdom export performance has been impressive in recent years.

Table 1:
Visible trade of the G7 countries, 1992

(Billion US$)

	Exports	*Imports*	*Balance*
Canada	134	129	5
France[1]	216	231	−15
Germany	422	403	19
Italy	178	188	−10
Japan	340	233	106
United Kingdom	191	222	−31
USA	448	554	−106

[1] 1991 figures given as 1992 data is not available
Source: IMF International Financial Statistics

Table 2: Visible trade of the G7 countries; 1977, 1982, 1987
(Billions US$, current prices)

	1977	1982	1987
Exports			
Canada	44	71	98
France	65	97	148
Germany	118	176	294
Italy	45	74	117
Japan	81	138	231
United Kingdom	56	97	131
United States of America	123	216	254
Imports			
Canada	42	58	93
France	70	116	158
Germany	101	155	228
Italy	48	87	126
Japan	71	131	151
United Kingdom	63	100	154
United States of America	160	255	424
Balance			
Canada	1	13	6
France	−6	−20	−10
Germany	17	21	66
Italy	−3	−13	−9
Japan	9	7	80
United Kingdom	−7	−2	−23
United States of America	−37	−38	−170

Source: IMF International Financial Statistics

Wind Power

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will publish estimates for the energy production levels of individual wind power developments in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Eggar: It is my intention to monitor the performance of windpower projects contracted under the non-fossil fuel obligation and to publish aggregated data.

Nuclear Power

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) if he will list the groups and individuals consulted by his Department to date regarding *(a)* the draft terms of reference of the review of nuclear power, *(b)* the proposed composition of the committee which will undertake the review and its technical advisers and *(c)* the powers of such a committee;

(2) if he will make it his policy to establish an independent committee to undertake the review into nuclear power scheduled for the current year;

(3) when he plans to make a statement outlining the terms of reference and the timetable for his departmental review of nuclear power.

Mr. Eggar: No decisions have yet been taken on the scope, timing and format of the nuclear review. A further announcement will be made in due course.

Warren Spring Laboratory

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he will publish the PA Consultants review on Warren Spring Laboratory.

Mr. McLoughlin: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, Central (Mr. Cousins) on 7 July 1993, *Official Report*, column *153*.

Tyre Imports

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many part-worn tyres have been imported into Great Britain in the last year for which figures are available; which countries they have come from; what checks are made as to their fitness for use; how sub-standard ones are disposed of; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. McLoughlin: In 1992 the United Kingdom imported 10,900 metric tonnes of used tyres, worth £5·4 million. The countries from which they were imported are given in the table. Policy on their fitness for use and disposal are matters for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport.

United Kingdom imports of used pneumatic tyres[1], 1992

	Metric tonnes	Value (£000)
Netherlands	3,674·7	1,934
Germany	4,858·7	1,620
Saudi Arabia	114·7	353
Abu Dhabi	105·6	256
Belgium-Luxembourg	383·2	177
Italy	285·8	170
France	449·4	166
Japan	254·7	150
Irish Republic	249·9	136
Sudan	91·7	56
Switzerland	101·3	40
Brazil	65·1	38
Sweden	2·5	36
Malta	43·2	32
Lebanon	6·0	24
Kenya	3·2	24
Zimbabwe	11·8	22
Denmark	25·3	21
Mauritius	28·6	18
USA	25·5	18
South Korea	9·7	17
Iceland	2·2	14
Mozambique	5·0	12
Yemen	2·8	12
Austria	16·9	9
Bahrain	16·8	9
Taiwan	1·7	8
Soviet Union	15·0	6
Botswana	3·9	6
Spain	1·5	6
Portugal	6·0	5
Turkey	1·0	5
Ghana	7·0	4
Thailand	3·1	4
Cyprus	2·1	4
South Africa	10·1	3
Finland	0·1	3
Malawi	0·8	2
Zambia	0·6	2
Seychelles	0·1	2
Dubai	1·6	1
Kuwait	0·2	1
Canada	0·1	1
Philippines	0·0	1
Total	10,889·2	5,428

[1] Used pneumatic tyres are defined as Heading 625.93 of the Standard International Trade Classification, Revision 3. Retreaded tyres are not included.

Life Insurance (Bonuses)

Mr. French: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, what studies he has made of the way in which life insurance companies are distributing with-profits bonuses; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: There is a growing debate within the life insurance industry about the methodologies for assessing bonus distributions on with-profits policies.

As part of its regulatory responsibility to keep itself informed of developments in the life insurance industry, my Department has asked the Government Actuary's Department to conduct a survey of leading United Kingdom offices which write with-profits business, to obtain more detailed information about companies' bonus philosophies and the actuarial techniques used in assessing bonus payments.

Scott Inquiry

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many hours of evidence have been taken and which witnesses have appeared for his Department before Lord Justice Scott.

Mr. McLoughlin: Only one DTI witness has appeared before Lord Justice Scott. The former Secretary of State, the right hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Channon), gave five hours, 40 minutes of evidence on 19 May.

Shipbuilding Intervention Fund

Mr. Godman: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list *(a)* the number, *(b)* the type and *(c)* the gross registered tonnage of vessels currently under construction in United Kingdom shipyards which have qualified for financial support under the terms of the European Community's seventh directive on the ship-building intervention fund; and what is the amount of such financial assistance in each contract.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* Twelve vessels totalling 137,400gt, which have qualified for support from the shipbuilding intervention fund, are under construction in United Kingdom yards. They are:

Three Chemical Tankers
Three Tugs
Two Ferries
One Bulk Carrier
One Dredger
One LPG Carrier
One Oil Tanker

Details of individual contracts are commercially confidential.

Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant

Mr. Ainger: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what safety and security measures his Department intends to take in connection with the return of high-level waste resulting from the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel to THORP's customers.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 14 July 1993]:* As is the case for other nuclear materials, the carriage of high-level waste is allowed only in special containers which are subject to stringent international safety standards. Appropriate measures are taken to ensure the security of such transport.

EMPLOYMENT

Sheltered Housing

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what considerations underlie the prohibition on local authorities which operate their own sheltered placement schemes from offering further placements where funding is available from other charitable sources.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Mr. Eric Illsley, dated 21 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about local authority Sheltered Placement Schemes (SPS). This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

I understand your question refers to local authorities operating their own sheltered placement schemes, and their role in acting as a host organisation for SPS workers.

Under the rules of SPS voluntary organisations cannot normally sponsor SPS workers into a host which is a local authority with statutory powers to provide sheltered employment. The purpose of this rule is to encourage local authorities to play an active role in developing Sheltered Placement Schemes. However, when a local authority has filled all its own allocation of places and we are unable to allocate additional places to the local authority a voluntary body with unfilled SPS places may then sponsor a place hosted by a local authority.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administrative Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the *Official Report*. I will also place a copy of this letter in the library of the House.

Industrial Deafness

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what steps he is taking to help women who suffer from industrial deafness to claim compensation from their employers.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969 already requires employers to take out insurance to cover claims for compensation from employees who are injured, or who develop an industrial disease, as a result of their employer's negligence. We have no plans to extend this legislation.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what assessment he has made of the extent of change of the prevalence of the problem of industrial deafness in the past 10 years.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The most reliable indicator of the change in the incidence of industrial deafness is best drawn from the numbers of workers claiming industrial injuries disablement benefit, administered by the Department of Social Security, as shown in the following table:

Year	Number of cases
[1]1986-87	1,202
1987-88	1,251
1988-89	1,170
1989-90	1,128
1990-91	1,041
1991-92	[2]972

[1] Figures from before 1986 are not comparable as they were compiled on a different basis.
[2] Provisional.

Asbestos

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what information he has on the number of court actions against companies operating in the United Kingdom for infringements of the existing anti-asbestos legislation in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The Health and Safety Executive is committed to ensuring that all work with asbestos is carried out safely and that other people affected by the work are not put at risk. Inspectors take whatever action is appropriate to ensure that those responsible comply with their duties under the legislation to prevent or reduce exposure to asbestos.

Details of court action taken under asbestos legislation during the past five years follows:

Years from 1 April	Informations laid	Convictions
Asbestos (Licensing) Regulations 1983		
1987-88	32	27
1988-89	14	13
1989-90	14	7
1990-91	7	7
1991-92	8	7
Asbestos Regulations 1969 (Revoked on 1 March 1988)		
1987-88	14	8
1988-89	4	3
Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 1987 (Came into force 1 March 1988)		
1988-89	21	21
1989-90	63	58
1990-91	57	48
1991-92	48	40
Asbestos (Prohibitions) (Amendment) Regulations 1988		
1989-90	1	nil

Notes: No other prosecutions were brought under these Regulations. Figures relate to Great Britain. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is responsible for the Northern Ireland asbestos regulations.

Maastricht Treaty

Mr. Mills: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment, what estimates he made of the cost to business and industry of the various provisions of the social protocol in the Maastricht treaty; what breakdown he made of the costs for each measure; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: No specific proposals have yet been advanced for measures to be introduced under the terms of the social protocol and the agreement of the Eleven. However, the protocol and the agreement of the Eleven extends Community competence and qualified majority voting into a number of new areas for the other 11 member states, including working conditions, information and consultation, and social exclusion. New legislation in these areas could quite clearly impose very substantial additional burdens on business and damage the competitiveness of the entire Community.

Much of the impact of action taken under the social protocol and the agreement of the Eleven would be indirect, through a loss of choice and flexibility, leading to lower competitiveness and lower output. However, some types of action would undoubtedly have direct cost implications for employers.

For the reasons set out, it is not possible to quantify the potential impact of the entire protocol and the agreement of the Eleven if it were to be applied to the United Kingdom. However, in a number of areas, for illustrative purposes, the Department has estimated the potential costs to United Kingdom employers of the type of measures which might result from terms of the social protocol and the agreement of the Eleven.

(i) Access to Training

Legislation could be proposed granting all employees the right to a minimum of 10 days training per year, paid for by their employer, regardless of whether or not this meets the needs of the employee or the business. There is some uncertainty about how many employees in the United Kingdom would currently meet the terms of such a requirement. In addition, the proportion of employees currently without 10 days' training who would take up their entitlement is difficult to predict. Using a plausible range of assumptions on current provision and take-up; the additional costs to employers—in terms of salary and lost output—could be between £2 billion and £9 billion at 1992-93 prices.

(ii) *Paternity Leave*

Legislation might require employers to grant all male employees paid leave on the birth of a child. Using a plausible range of assumptions on current provision and take-up, the additional cost to employers of each week of paid leave could be between £30 million and £100 million at 1992-93 prices.

(iii) *Maximum Working Week*

Restrictions on the working week would also be possible. As an illustration, a compulsory maximum working week—including paid overtime—of, say, 45 hours might be imposed. If this were to apply to all employees, and assuming that half the wage costs involved with the reduction in working time were borne by employers, the additional costs, compared with current arrangements, could be about £5·5 billion at 1992-93 prices.

In all three cases, the cost estimates are subject to margins of error, and, in the absence of specific proposals, should be regarded as purely illustrative. They do, however, provide some idea of the potential scale of the financial burden that could be imposed on United Kingdom employers.

Asbestos-related Diseases

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many recorded cases there were of the diseases mesothelioma, asbestosis and bilateral diffuse

pleural thickening in each year since 1988 in England and Wales; and within each figure, what percentage was female.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* The information is not available in the form requested. Such information as is available from the Department of Social Security is contained in the following table:

	Mesothelioma		*Asbestosis*		*Bilateral diffuse pleural thickening*	
	Total	*Per cent. Female*	*Total*	*Per cent. Female*	*Total*	*Per cent. Female*
1988	406	n/a	160	n/a	109	n/a
1989	386	n/a	193	n/a	104	n/a
1990	409	3	216	3	124	nil
1991	461	4	262	2	127	nil
1992	474	3	258	3	129	2

The information is based on claims for industrial injuries disablement benefit subsequently referred to a medical boarding centre situated in England or Wales.

The percentage figure for females is not available for 1988 and 1989.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Housing Benefit

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what assessment has been made by his Department of the cost to the housing benefit budget of the deregulation of private rents and reduction in housing association grants.

Mr. Burt: None. The impact of the deregulation of private rents and reduction in housing association grants are only two of the many factors which influence the level of housing benefit expenditure. It is therefore not possible to make a reliable estimate of the effect on housing benefit expenditure which could be attributed to these measures alone.

Government Statistical Service

Mr. Barry Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will make a statement on the arrangements for the release of Government statistical service statistics by the Department of Social Security.

Mr. Lilley: I attach great importance to the integrity and validity of official statistics, and to ensuring public confidence in the statistics for which I am responsible. To this end, I have agreed standard practices specifically for the release of Government statistical service publications by my Department. The practices which will govern social security statistics from the Government statistical service are:

(1) Publications are released at the earliest possible date; the date is determined by the director of statistics.

(2) Publication dates are pre-announced in the central statistical office monthly list of social statistics to be released in the month ahead.

(3) The time of publication will be 11.30 am except for households below average income and benefit take-up statistics which will be published at 3.30 pm to coincide with an announcement to Parliament.

(4) Ministerial comment on DSS statistics is issued separately. The contents of statistical press notices and all other documents bearing the Government statistical service logo are the sole responsibility of the director of statistics.

(5) Copies of publications are available to Ministers and officials 48 hours before publication. Ministers have access to work-in-progress between two and four weeks before publication; access before then is limited to the officials responsible for advice on the statistics.

(6) Some DSS statistical series are published only in "Social Security Statistics", an annual publication. In such cases, the data are made immediately available to officials and Ministers for policy purposes—including answering parliamentary questions—and to the general public and others on request. A list of Government statistical service results statistics which have recently become available will be provided in a quarterly press notice.

Disability Benefits

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what are the factors which account for the variation in the numbers of home visits carried out by the disability benefits centres.

Mr. Scott: The administration of disability living allowance is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Ms Jean Corston, dated 20 July 1993:

As chief executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking what are the factors which account for the variation in the numbers of home visits carried out by the disability benefit centres.

The principal reasons for visiting customers, or their representatives, in connection with Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Attendance Allowance (AA) claims, are when there is a need for appointee action to be undertaken and/or the standard of completion of the claim form is poor.

Visits that are required to be undertaken for DLA/AA related matters should be done by District Offices (DOs). The ability of the DOs to undertake visits that would otherwise need to be done by the Disability Benefit Centres (DBCs) is the most significant factor in determining how many visits DBCs eventually have to conduct.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Invalidity Benefit

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many claimants were in receipt of invalidity benefit in *(a)* Dundee, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the United Kingdom in each of the past five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Scott: The administration of invalidity benefit is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Mr. John McAllion, dated 20 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary

Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many claimants were in receipt of Invalidity Benefit in *(a)* Dundee, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the United Kingdom in each of the past five yers for which figures are available.

The information is not available in the exact format requested. This is because the statistics provided are for Great Britain rather than the United Kingdom (the United Kingdom includes Northern Ireland). The national statistics provided which are obtained from a 1 per cent. sample of claimants reflect the number of recipients of Invalidity Benefit at a point in time. The statistics maintained by District/Benefit Offices relate to the number of claimants to Invalidity Benefit.

The statistics for the Dundee District Office are only available from year ending March 1992. This is because the Benefits Agency was not formed until April 1991 and districts were created at the same time.

There were 11,910 people claiming Invalidity Benefit at Dundee District Office at the last working day of March 1992, and 12,995 at the last working day of March 1993. These figures were obtained from a 100 per cent. clerical count of cases in the Office, and include a small number of people who have claimed but are not receiving Invalidity Benefit, eg. because there is underlying entitlement which has been extinguished by the payment of a higher overlapping benefit or where termination action has not been completed. The Dundee District Office deals with areas other than Dundee therefore the figures shown include a small number of people who do not live in Dundee.

The table shows the number of customers in receipt of Invalidity Benefit in Scotland and Great Britain at a point in time for the last five years for which the figures are available. The statistics are based on a 1 per cent. sample of claimants.

Date[1]	*Scotland*	*Great Britain*
4 April 1987	135,000	968,000
2 April 1988	147,000	1,047,000
1 April 1989	158,000	1,126,000
31 March 1990	169,000	1,209,000
30 March 1991	181,000	1,306,000

[1] The table figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Lone Parents

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many women have been asked to name an absent father at benefit officers in *(a)* Strathclyde and *(b)* Scotland as a whole; how many have demurred; and how many have been recalled for further interviews.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Mrs. Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ros Hepplewhite to Dr. Norman A. Godman, dated 20 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibilty to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many women have been asked to name an absent father at benefit offices in Strathclyde and Scotland as a whole; how many have demurred, and how many have been recalled for further interviews.

All maintenance application forms (MAFs) issued to parents with care who approach the Agency ask for the name of the absent parent and the great majority of parents with care name the absent parent on the form. However, we do not hold separate information on the number of MAFs issued locally in Strathclyde, or in Scotland as a whole.

A total of 128 parents with care of children were interviewed in Strathclyde in connection with their maintenance applications during the period 5 April to 30 June 1993. A total of 252 were interviewed in Scotland as a whole. In Strathclyde, 22 parents declined without good cause to co-operate with the Agency in arranging maintenance, while in Scotland as a whole, there were 60. None of the parents concerned have been recalled for subsequent interviews.

Interviews are not a routine part of the process of arranging child maintenance and more than three-quarters of the Agency's clients choose to deal with us by post and by telephone without the need for face-to-face contact. However, where necessary, perhaps because a client is unable to complete the Maintenance Assessment Form or is reluctant to do so, arrangements will be made to discuss matters with them at their local office or at their home.

I wish to stress how carefully we consider such cases and hope that you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Child Support Agency

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women are employed on (i) a full-time basis, (ii) as part-time employees and (iii) on short-term employment contracts by the Child Support Agency in Scotland; and what are the projections for such numbers of employees in 1994, 1995 and 1996.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Mrs. Ross Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ros Hepplewhite to Dr. Norman Godman, dated 19 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women are employed (i) on a full-time basis, (ii) as part-time employees and (iii) on short-term employment contracts by the Child Support Agency in Scotland, and what are the projections for such numbers of employees in 1994, 1995 and 1996.

The numbers of staff currently employed in the Child Support Agency in Scotland are as follows:

	Men	*Women*
Number employed on full-time basis	147	311
Number employed on a part-time basis	0	36
TOTAL	147	347

Of these, two men and six women are employed on short-term contracts of one year.

I cannot say what the projections will be for 1994 to 1996 in relation to numbers of employees broken down by gender but the projection for the total number of staff in Scotland for April 1994 is 700, remaining constant through 1995 and 1996.

I hope you will find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Private Pensions

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish a table showing the number of private pension plans taken out each year since 1988 with the benefit of the national insurance rebate incentive; what was the cost of the incentive rebate in each year; what were the year-end total reserves of the national insurance fund

beginning at 31 March 1988; how many contributors left and joined the state earnings-related pensions scheme in each year; and what was the total number of private pension plans with a rebate outstanding at the end of each year.

Mr. Hague *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* Information is not available in the form requested. Such information as is available is in the tables.

Table 1 United Kingdom

Year	*Numbers entering a private pension scheme*[1]	*Numbers transferring from a private pension to SERPS at year end*[1] [2]
1987-88	—	3,200
1988-89	3,428,300	25,400
1989-90	925,600	22,100
1990-91	650,200	26,400
1991-92	543,100	29,800

[1] *Source:* 1 per cent. sample of National Insurance contribution records.

[2] Figures relate to any Private Pension holder transferring to SERPS at year end, regardless of entry.

Table 2 Great Britain

Year	*Year paid in respect of*	*Amount of rebate (£ million)*	*Amount of incentive (£ million)*	*Year end NI fund reserves (£ million)*
1987-88	—	—	—	7,288
1988-89	—	—	—	10,369
1989-90	1987-88	792	346	10,307
	1988-89	1,074	370	—
1990-91	1989-90	1,455	506	11,792
	[1]1988-89	15	4	—
1991-92	1990-91	1,734	583	8,333
	[1]1989-90	34	10	—
1992-93	1991-92	1,849	616	3,677
	[1]1990-91	45	12	Estimated

[1] And earlier.

Source: Government Actuary's Department.

Note: Because of the different bases on which the estimates are based the information in Table 2 is not comparable with that in Table 1.

State Pension

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what percentage of those in receipt of the state pension have a total income of *(a)* £5,000 and below, *(b)* between £5,000 and £6,000, *(c)* between £6,000 and £7,000 and *(d)* between £7,000 and £8,000.

Mr. Hague *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* The information requested is in the table.

The income distribution of those in receipt of a state pension

Income of:	*Percentage with gross income in range*		
	Singles	*Couples*	*All units*
£5,000 pa or less	68	8	43
£5,000-£6000 pa	9	14	11
£6,000-£7000 pa	6	14	10
£7,000-£8,000 pa	3	10	6
More than £8000 pa	14	54	31

Notes:

(a) Figures may not sum to 100 per cent. due to rounding.

(b) Estimates are based on data from 1990 and 1991 Family Expenditure Surveys.

(c) Amounts are at January 1991 prices.

(d) Couples are included if either the head or the spouse is in receipt of a state pension.

TRANSPORT

Red Star Parcels Ltd.

Mr. Waller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has held with the chairman of British Rail about safeguards to ensure that all potential purchasers of Red Star Parcels Ltd. have a fair opportunity to bid for the company and that their probity is adequately assessed.

Mr. Freeman: The British Railways Board is handling the sale of Red Star. All bids received by the closing date (13 August) will be given equal consideration by the board and its merchant bank advisers. Final terms of sale to the preferred purchaser will require the Secretary of State's approval.

Traffic Forecasts

Ms. Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to his answer of 1 July, *Official Report*, columns *590-92*, giving the actual traffic and forecast traffic levels from 1968, if he will provide the forecast figure on the 1978 base for 1980.

Mr. Key: The published national road traffic forecasts, including the 1988-based forecast, did not include figures for every year of the forecast period. Intermediate year figures can be constructed by interpolation. The 1980 figures for the 1978-based forecast would have been in the range 140-144.

Seafarers

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action is currently being undertaken by his Department to achieve improved standards for the training and certification of seafarers.

Mr. Norris: The Department has undertaken a complete review of the way in which training for seafarers is delivered and the nature of the qualifications issued. A pilot project to test these new methods of assessment is about to commence using the functional approach embraced by national and Scottish vocational qualifications.

Internationally, the United Kingdom attaches great importance to the forthcoming revision of the existing Convention on the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978. The Department will be playing a leading role in this complete review and will be putting forward the vocational qualification aproach as a means of improving the standard.

Taxis (Road Barriers)

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department takes to ensure that London taxi cab drivers are provided with daily information about road barriers in the capital.

Mr. Norris: The Department and local highway authorities have long-established procedures for advising

the media about road closures and restrictions; local radio stations in London have numerous daily bulletins about traffic conditions.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to his answer of 12 July, *Official Report*, column *334*, if he will break down between sea and air transport the percentage of his Department's budget spent on these modes of transport.

Mr. Norris: Air transport accounts for 1·6 per cent. and sea transport 0·5 per cent. of the Department's planned expenditure for the years 1993-94 to 1995-96.

Railway Pensions

Mr. Milligan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has concluded his discussions with the British Railways Board and the British Rail Pension Trustee Co. about safeguarding railway pensions after privatisation.

Mr. Freeman: I am placing copies of the agreement in the Library.

British Rail Maintenance Ltd.

Mr. Milligan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to announce his conclusions on the future of British Rail Maintenance Ltd.; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Freeman: The British Railways Board has now completed its review of options for the future of the British Rail Maintenance Ltd. and Level 5 Group which carries out maintenance of trains. The board has recommended to me that the British Rail Maintenance Ltd. depots at Eastleigh, Doncaster, Wolverton and Glasgow, and the Level 5 Group depots at Chart Leacon and Ilford together with the electronic repair centres at Swindon and Eastleigh should be offered for sale as soon as possible. I share the board's view that selling these businesses will be in the best interest of the railway and the work force, and consistent with the Government's proposals for reform of the railway industry.

The board is considering how best to invite offers for these businesses. The aim is to be ready to invite offers by next spring, and to complete the sale as soon as possible after that.

The British Railways Board and its advisers will develop plans for the sale but they will need the approval of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State.

I commend the progress made by the BRML/Level 5 Group management and work force towards improving on financial targets and on the turn-round times for vehicles to meet customer needs. But I believe that there would be a better future for these maintenance businesses in the private sector. Once in the private sector, the BRML/Level 5 Group will have greater freedom to diversify and compete for work outside the railway supply industry, to the benefit of employees.

We have also considered the future of the maintenance depots which undertake lighter maintenance of passenger trains. These depots will be treated differently. Subject to Royal Assent to the Railways Bill, we propose that the freehold of such depots should rest with Railtrack and that they should be leased to train operating companies, franchisees or independent depot operators. The Railways Bill provides for rights of access to, and regulation of, light maintenance depots.

US Air Transport Commission

Mr. Dunn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what submission the Government have made to the United States commission on the air transport industry; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. MacGregor: Yes. A submission has been transmitted to the commission in Washington. Copies have been placed in the Library.

Night Flights, Gatwick

Mr. Kenneth Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many night flights at Gatwick were made in the past year by aircraft which are at present except from the restrictions but which will in future come within the quota;

(2) how many night flights will be permitted at Gatwick in the winter of 1993-94 and summer 1994 under the new quota system announced on 6 July, excluding aircraft which are at present exempt and assuming that airlines use the same mix of aircraft as in the past year.

Mr. Norris *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* More data on aircraft type, engine fit and maximum certificated landing and take-off weights are required to classify aircraft under the new night restrictions system than under the present regime. Not all these data are available for past movements, particularly for currently exempt aircraft, so only estimates can be given.

The new summer quota of 9,550 for Gatwick would translate into about 6,250 movements by all aircraft which will count against the quota including those previously exempt. As stated in answer to my right hon. Friend on 10 March at column *567*, the assumption that the mix of traffic at night in the winter season will remain unchanged over the five-year period of the new restrictions is unlikely, but no substantial changes are expected in winter 1993-94. It is estimated that the winter quota of 6,820, if fully used, will translate into between 2,800 and 4,450 movements by all aircraft that will count against the quota depending on the build-up between scheduled and charter services. The quota is unlikely to be fully used in the winter 1993-94 season.

Our announcement of new restrictions on 6 July at columns *71-73* recognised the concern of those living around airports by introducing the QC½ category. This limits movements of aircraft outside the quota to those very quiet, smaller aircraft which are already exempt. Many aircraft that were exempt will now count against the quota.

East London River Crossing

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received since his recent announcement on the east London river crossing; and if he will make a further statement on traffic policy in south-east London.

Mr. Norris *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* To date, my right hon. Friend has written and representations from three organisations have been received. I am now considering the options available and will make a statement in due course.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 22 July 1993

NATIONAL HERITAGE

Sports Council (Restructuring)

Mr. Pendry: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage, pursuant to his statement of 9 July, *Official Report*, column 599 (1) at what date and at what time he informed the chairmen-designate of the proposed United Kingdom Sports Commission and Sports Council for England of his decision to discontinue work to put these bodies in place of the current Sports Council for Great Britain from 1 October;

(2) at what date he had consulted the chairmen-designate of the proposed United Kingdom Sports Commission and the Sports Council for England with regard to his decision to proceed no further with work to put those bodies in place of the current Sports Council of Great Britain from 1 October.

Mr. Brooke: I received in November 1992 the Sports Council's proposals for the detailed split of functions and resources between the bodies which the Government had proposed, in their December 1991 sports policy statement "Sport and Active Recreation", should succeed the present Sports Council of Great Britain.

My officials subsequently had extensive discussions with the Sports Council, including the chairmen-designate of the proposed successor bodies, on its proposals for the allocation of resources, notably to staffing. I also consulted my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Scotland and for Wales and my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the Sports Council's proposals.

As a result of these discussions, I informed the chairmen-designate of the proposed successor bodies on 8 July that the Government no longer intended to proceed with their original plans.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Recruitment and Assessment Services Agency

Mr. Robert B. Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster when the annual report of the Recruitment and Assessment Services Agency will be published.

Mr. Waldegrave: The second annual report of the Recruitment and Assessment Servcies Agency was published yesterday and copies have been placed in the Library of the House.

HEALTH

Medical Services, Inner London

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will give the general medical services budgets for each inner London family health services authority for each year since 1988-89 and the amount in real terms from each budget spent on fund-holding.

Mr. Sackville: General medical services (GMS) expenditure for each year from 1988-89 to 1991-92 is shown in table A. Figures for 1992-93 will be available later this year. Expenditure on fund-holding within GMS expenditure is not separately identifiable. However, the total cost of general practitioner fund-holding expenditure for each inner London family health services authority (FHSA) is shown in table B.

Table A
Expenditure on General Medical Services

£000s

FHSA	*1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*
Brent and Harrow	16,382	18,438	23,260	28,990
Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster	11,639	13,492	18,281	19,291
Camden and Islington	12,099	13,674	17,124	19,226
City and East London	18,144	21,019	30,174	33,901
Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham	22,482	25,024	31,906	37,783
Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth	17,420	19,639	22,707	26,916

Source:
Annual accounts of FHSAs and the predecessor bodies.

Table B
GP Fund holders' expenditure for 1991-92

FHSA	*Total expenditure £s*
Brent and Harrow	nil
Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster	789,923
Camden and Islington	1,406,503
City and East London	1,842,910
Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham	4,094,110
Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth	4,585,639

Source: Annual accounts of FHSAs.
Note:
1. The above totals include expenditure for practice staff, hospital purchases, drugs and appliances.
2. GP fund-holding expenditure is available only for 1991-92. Details for 1992-93 will be available later this year.

GP Fund Holders

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the benefits to patients available from GP fund-holding practices relative to non-fund-holding practices.

Mr. Sackville: Fund-holding is one of the major successes of the national health service reforms and the improvements secured by fund-holders are extending widely to benefit patients in non-fund-holding practices. We are delighted at how both general practitioner fund-holders and district health authorities are seizing the opportunities of the new NHS to secure more appropriate, high-quality care for patients.

Among the benefits are shorter waiting times, better liaison between hospitals and community services when patients are discharged and more services provided in GP surgeries.

Minimal Invasive Therapy

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to encourage the development of minimal invasive therapy.

Mr. Bowis: We shall shortly be announcing decisions on expanded training facilities for minimally invasive therapy, jointly funded by the Government and the Wolfson Foundation.

British Orthopaedic Association

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she next expects to meet the British Orthopaedic Association; and what subjects she intends to discuss.

Mr. Sackville: There are currently no plans for Ministers to meet the British Orthopaedic Association (BOA) in the near future. However, the chief medical officer will be meeting the BOA's president on 17 August to discuss hip prostheses and the quality of care.

Clothier Inquiry

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, following the publication of the White Paper on open government, if she will consider making the Clothier inquiry an open inquiry under the Tribunals and Inquiries Act 1971.

Mrs. Virginia Bottomley: The public interest will be better served by an investigative type of inquiry rather than an adversarial one, in other words, by the type of inquiry that Sir Cecil Clothier is now leading.

NHS (Product Purchasing)

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is her policy on the use of inducements offered by manufacturers of drugs and hip and knee prostheses to NHS personnel to persuade them to buy their products.

Mr. Sackville: Unequivocal guidance issued to the health service in January—HSG(93)5—states that under no circumstances must purchasing decisions be influenced by inducements from suppliers or potential contractors. National health service employers and employees have a responsibility to ensure that at all times the interest of patients is paramount and that public funds are disbursed impartially and honestly.

GP Practices

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 14 July, *Official Report*, column *532*, how many *(a)* non-fund-holding practices and *(b)* fund-holding practices she has visited in the last year.

Mrs. Virginia Bottomley: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 14 July at column *532*.

General Practitioners

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what were the average earnings of *(a)* all general practitioners and *(b)* fund-holding general practitioners by the smallest geographical base for the most recent available period.

Mr. Sackville: Information about the geographical distribution of general practitioners' earnings or the earnings of general practitioner fund holders compared with non-fund holders is not available. The intended average net remuneration for an unrestricted principal providing general medical services in Great Britain in 1993-94 is £40,610. Payments for achieving higher levels of coverage for childhood immunisations and cervical screening and for administering the Hib meningitis vaccine are made in addition. The most recent information suggests these added an estimated £2,750 to the average general practitioner's remuneration in 1992-93.

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many students gained their final qualifications to practise medicine in the United Kingdom in 1990-91, 1991-92 and 1992-93; and how many of them entered general practice in the United Kingdom from each of those years.

Mr. Sackville: The available information is shown in the tables.

	Year ending:		
	31 July 1991	*31 July 1992*	*31 July 1993*
Students obtaining their first registerable qualification from medical schools in the United Kingdom	3,573	3,644	n/a

	Year ending:		
	30 June 1991	*30 June 1992*	*30 June 1993*
Doctors joining general practice in the United Kingdom	1,609	1,510	n/a

The doctors covered by the two tables will not be the same, as a period of training follows first registerable qualification before admission to general practice. The second table will include doctors who qualified outside the United Kingdom.

Fluoride Prescriptions

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the cost to the NHS of fluoride prescriptions for each quarter of 1992 and the first three months of 1993.

Mr. Sackville: The information for England is shown in the table.

Period	Net ingredient cost (£'000s)
1st Quarter 1992	10·2
2nd Quarter 1992	10·3
3rd Quarter 1992	8·7
4th Quarter 1992	8·9
1st Quarter 1993	66·9

Note: The net ingredient cost is the basic cost of the drug before any discount and not including dispensing costs or fees. The data cover prescriptions dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors, dispensing doctors, and prescriptions submitted by prescribing doctors and dentists. Dental practitioners providing general dental services in the national health service have, from 1 January 1993, been able to prescribe fluoride supplements under the national health service.

Needy Children

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy to secure that the children of homeless families are classified as children in need and gain access to services provided under the Children Act.

Mr. Bowis: We have no plans to do so. The definition of "in need" in the Children Act 1989 is in terms of a child's health and development, including disablement. It is for local authorities to seek out the extent of children in need in their areas and to publish services available to help them and their families.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what monitoring has been undertaken by her Department into the definition of in need according to part III of the Children Act 1989 used in practice by local authorities; and what plans she has to introduce new guidelines.

Mr. Bowis: The first report to Parliament of the working of the Children Act 1989—Cm 2144—was published in January 1993. We are keeping the position under review, but have no reason to believe that the guidance on this subject in "The Children Act 1989: Guidance and Regulations Volume 2 Family Support, Day Care and Educational Provision for Young Children", a copy of which is available in the Library, is in need of amendment.

Children's Residential Care

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will announce the final terms of reference and the membership of the support force for children's residential care.

Mr. Bowis: Further to my reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Esher (Mr. Taylor) on 24 June at columns *249-50*, the terms of reference are as follows:

1. *(a)* to offer advice to individual authorities on the interrelated issues of quality of care and management in children's residential care, with particular reference to the appointment and selection, personnel management, support, development and internal training of children's residential care staff.

(b) to offer advice to individual authorities and, where appropriate, groups of authorities on suitable mechanisms for matching needs and supply in their localities or regions, taking account of the potential contributions of voluntary, private and public sectors; and on related commissioning and contractual issues. A particular focus of the work will be to assist authorities and the voluntary and private sectors to improve occupancy rates and hence reduce unit costs in children's residential homes where this is appropriate.

(c) to prepare material for a code of employment practice, for discussion with employer and other interests.

2. The support force for children's residential care will work under Department of Health auspices, and from time to time as requested, report on its programme and progress. It will work with social services and, as appropriate, other agencies by invitation in a consulting and facilitating role; by implication it will draw attention to and disseminate examples of good practice. The social services inspectorate's advice will be available to it. It will work within the framework of the Children Act 1989 and regulations and guidance issued following that and other relevant legislation; the Warner report and Government decisions on it; and other material that may be relevant. Its remit is for a period of two years from the summer of 1993. Ministers will then review the progress made.

The members of the support force are:

Adrianne Jones CBE
Leader of the support force. Formerly director of social services for Birmingham and Hillingdon. Member of the Warner committee on the recruitment, selection and development of staff in children's homes.

Louise Bessant
Co-ordinator, Young People's Forum, Birmingham social services.

James King OBE
Former director of the Caldecott Community.

Brendah Malahleka
Service manager, children and families, London borough of Ealing.

Steven Moss
Assistant director, finance and administration, Manchester city council social services department.

Robert Sykes
Assistant director operations, Oxfordshire social services.

Susan Thomas
Chief personnel officer, London borough of Lewisham. Member of the Warner committee.

Mike Nichol
Formerly chief education officer for the Wirral, Cheshire. Now working as an educational consultant for Coopers and Lybrand.

Sellafield

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will consult the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment in the event of any application being made to vary the discharge licence from British Nuclear Fuel's Sellafield installation;

(2) what advice she has received from the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment concerning the health risk resulting from the proposed liquid and gaseous radioactive discharges from British Nuclear Fuel's Sellafield installation; and if she will publish the advice.

Mr. Sackville: Applications to dispose of radiactive waste from a licensed site are considered by Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution and the Ministry of Agriculture,

Fisheries and Food—"the inspectorates". It is for them to decide who they should consult in any particular case, subject to any relevant statutory requirements.

The Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE) commented to the inspectorates on British Nuclear Fuel's application for revised discharge authorisations at the Sellafield site. We have arranged for copies of COMARE's response to be placed in the Library. The inspectorates carefully considered all the responses made in the consultation including that from COMARE, before coming to the conclusion announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment on 28 June at column *392*.

Private Ambulances

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consideration she has given to the regulation of private ambulance operators.

Mr. Sackville: The code of practice recently agreed by the Department of Health's ambulance policy advisory group sets out minimum standards for non-national health service patient transport providers. It is for prospective purchasers of private ambulance services to satisfy themselves that operators are competent to provide the required service.

Patients (Major Surgery)

Mrs. Peacock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to ensure that patients entering *(a)* NHS and *(b)* private hospitals have all necessary facilities to safeguard them following major surgical procedures; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: A private hospital is required by law to register with the district health authority, which must satisfy itself that the statutory requirements, and any local conditions of registration, are being met at all times, including adequate medical, surgical and nursing equipment and adequate treatment facilties. It is for national health service providers to assess the level of service need to support surgical procedures, and to provide the staff and facilities to meet those needs. It is for NHS purchasers to satisfy themselves about the quality of the service provided to patients. We have no plans to alter the present arrangements.

NHS Dental Treatment

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the average cost of a course of NHS dental treatment per patient liable to full charge in each year since 1979.

Mr. Sackville: The information is shown in the table.

General Dental Services (GDS)—England

Year	*Patients liable to full charge Average Cost (£)*	*Patients wholly exempt or remitted Average Cost (£)*
1979	13·32	15·48
1980	16·26	19·20
1981	18·13	26·14
1982	19·38	27·71
1983	20·10	34·42
1984	21·49	37·07
1985	21·70	39·19
1986-87	23·46	42·64
1987-88	25·84	45·13
1988-89	28·46	49·23
1989-90	30·24	47·48
1990-91	n/a	n/a
1991-92	31·83	51·69
1992-93	n/a	n/a

Notes:

1. Data from 1979 to 1985 are shown in calendar years. Thereafter they are shown in financial years.
2. Data for 1990-91 are not available as the introduction of the new dental contract interrupted the data series.
3. Data for 1992-93 are not yet available.
4. The small number of courses of treatment where charges were partly remitted has not been included in the calculations.
5. Before 1 January 1989 dental examinations did not attract a patient charge. Therefore, a course of dental treatment which included only a dental examination did not attact a patient charge. Such courses of dental treatment have been allocated in this table to the appropriate category whether the patient was liable to charges or not.

Medical Care (Proposed Authority)

Mrs. Peacock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans she has to set up a medical/surgical equivalent to the Committee on Safety of Medicines;

(2) what plans she has for the creation of an Office of Medicine as a statutory body to oversee standards of medical care;

(3) what plans she has to introduce legislation to ensure that the NHS and the private medical sector are equally accountable and bound by the same regulations under one single regulatory authority.

Mr. Sackville: We have no such plans.

Surgeons

Mrs. Peacock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to ensure that surgeons do not undertake procedures for which they have not received specific training or accreditation.

Mr. Sackville: The accreditation of training posts and systems of postgraduate education, examination and training are matters for the responsible professional bodies. A doctor has a professional responsibility not to undertake a procedure which he or she is not competent to perform.

EMPLOYMENT

Occupational Hazards

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list the 10 most frequent occupational related causes of death for the latest available period.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The most frequent causes of recorded occupationally related mortality in 1991 and/or 1992 were: mesothelioma; accidental trauma; pneumoconiosis; asbestosis; accidental poisoning and gassing; lung cancer due to asbestos; byssinosis; other cancers; and allergic alveolitis, including farmer's lung. There were only occasional deaths recorded from other causes.

Social Charter

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment in what manner Her Majesty's Government have published or publicised the text of the social charter of the European Economic Community as agreed by 11 of its member states at Strasbourg on 9 December 1989.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The Government have never published or publicised the text of the social charter agreed by the other 11 member states.

Employment Rehabilitation Centre, Ingol

Mrs. Wise: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what was the capital cost of the purpose-built employment rehabilitation centre at Ingol, Preston, at the time it was built, expressed in 1993 values; and what price has been agreed for its sale.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service Agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Mrs. Audrey Wise, dated 22 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the capital cost of Preston (Ingol) Employment Rehabilitation Centre (ERC) when it was built and the price agreed for its sale. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

The building of Preston ERC was completed in 1978 and the centre was opened in 1979. The work involved in retrieving the exact total capital costs of the ERC and converting these to 1993 prices would incur disproportionate costs. I am therefore unable to supply this information.

The ERC was closed on 31 December 1992 and tenders were invited for its sale. A price has been agreed and the site has been sold subject to contract. You will appreciate that, until the sale is completed and contracts are exchanged, the price agreed is still classified as "Commercial in Confidence" and cannot be revealed.

I am sorry to have to send you a disappointing reply. However, I am satisfied that all the correct tendering procedures have been followed to ensure we obtain the best possible price for the site.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Insurance

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what conclusions he has reached on the report by the Director General of Fair Trading on the marketing and sale of investment-linked insurance products.

Mr. Kenneth Carlisle: The Director General of Fair Trading (DGFT) reported to my predecessor in March about the rules on marketing and sale of investment-linked life insurance products[1], made last July by the Securities and Investments Board (SIB) and the Life Assurance and Unit Trust Regulatory Organisation (LAUTRO). These rules had been drawn up in response to the then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in December 1990, who asked for changes in the rules to meet the concerns raised in the report of April 1990 by the previous DGFT.

[1] The marketing and sale of investment-linked insurance products. The rules of the Securities and Investments Board and the Life Assurance and Unit Trust Regulatory Organisation. A report by the Director General of Fair Trading to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, March 1993.

In his report under the Financial Services Act 1986 (FSA), the DGFT was of the opinion that four aspects of the new rules were likely to have significantly anti-competitive effects. Under the FSA, the Treasury must consider whether the rules are likely to have significant anti-competitive effects and, if it considers that they do, whether those effects are greater than necessary for investor protection.

In April, the Treasury invited comments on the DGFT's report as well as on his separate report under the Fair Trading Act 1973[2]. Many hon. Members have written to me about the reports, and a large number of written submissions have been received from interested parties, many of which have been discussed in detail with officials. I have taken account of the views and arguments put during this consultation process in reaching my conclusions.

I endorse the director general's finding that four aspects of the rules have or are likely to have significantly anti-competitive effects. I do not find that these effects are necessary to protect investors. The Treasury is therefore directing SIB to develop a new approach to the regulation of the marketing of life insurance products through rules to rectify the deficiencies identified. My reasons, and the changes the Treasury now requires, are set out below.

[2] "Fair Trading and Life Insurance Savings Products: A Report by the Director General of Fair Trading", March 1993.

There has been a good deal of justified criticism concerning the proportion of long-term policies surrendered early and the low surrender values of policies surrendered in the early years. The relevant SIB rules are designed to improve regulation and to help the investor by requiring life offices both to disclose surrender values for the first five years of life policies and to indicate the point at which the surrender value may equal or exceed the amount paid by the investor if the crossover point falls outside the first five years. The rules prevent life offices disclosing surrender values for a longer period.

The DGFT has welcomed the rule changes in so far as they give the investor more information about the long-term and illiquid nature of these investments and about likely surrender values in the early years. However, the DGFT concludes that the absence of information

about surrender values in the later years of the policy limits the ability of investors to make properly informed choices among the products of different life offices and between life products and other investments; and hence is likely to restrict and distort competition to a significant extent.

SIB and LAUTRO have concentrated on better disclosure of surrender values in the early years where the major concerns have arisen. Surrender values, however, do vary considerably between life offices in the later years and I agree with the DGFT that lack of information is likely significantly to restrict and distort competition. I have also taken into account other factors relevant to investor protection; in particular, the risk that disclosure of likely cash surrender values for each year of a policy could appear to offer guaranteed returns and could be in serious danger of overloading the investor with a huge array of figures. Any profile of figures which appeared to offer guaranteed returns would have investor disadvantages in so far as it altered life offices' investment behaviour and thus ultimately reduced the returns delivered or raised the cost of a given return; equally, a detailed array of figures, added to all the other quantitative information, could overload investors with complex and confusing details and thereby defeat the object of disclosure. I have examined these arguments and options and concluded that, through fuller disclosure of the implications of early surrender on the value of policies, it should be possible to remove the anti-competitive effect of non-disclosure of surrender values in later years in a way which avoids the danger of appearing to give guarantees and which does not overload the investor.

The Treasury is therefore directing SIB to develop a new approach and to bring forward rules which will provide a clear and quantified account of the effect of life offices' intended surrender value practices on the value of the policy if cashed in early beyond the initial five years, without implying guaranteed projections or overloading the investor with figures. The new requirements should provide, in plain terms, a clear description of the effect on surrender values throughout the duration of the policy.

While own charges—the charges currently levied by the particular life office—are required to be used in the calculations of likely surrender values during the first five years of a policy, SIB's and LAUTRO's rules require that illustrations of projected future returns on policies use standard—approximately average—assumptions about the charges levied by life offices. Illustrations are not mandated by the regulators but are a strong marketing tool. Requiring the use of standard charges prevents life offices from producing illustrations which demonstrate the relative merits of their products, thus restricting their ability to compete with others in the market. Use of own charges should also bring downward pressure on costs. I therefore agree with the DGFT that the requirement to use standard charges in illustrations is likely significantly to restrict and distort competition among life offices. Investor protection considerations also argue in favour of use of own charges. Use of standard charges can be misleading to investors by implying that charges do not affect performance when, in reality, charges of life offices to not alter rapidly and do influence total returns. In their joint submission to the Treasury commenting on the DGFT's report SIB, LAUTRO and the Financial Intermediaries, Managers and Brokers Regulatory Organisation accept that own charges ought now to be used in illustrations.

The Treasury is therefore directing SIB to bring forward rules which will require policy illustrations to use the life offices' own recent charges. This information should make clear to investors the full impact of product costs throughout the duration of the policy.

Within the independent financial adviser sector, individual firms are allowed to and do rebate commission to investors. The final price to the investor can therefore take account of the costs of distribution, with the more efficient advisers being able to offer keener prices. Cost competitiveness is allowed to reign. In marked contrast, SIB/LAUTRO rules have the effect of preventing price competition for a life office's products between its tied channels and outlets. There is no direct rule preventing the rebating of commission by tied agents to their customers. But the best advice rule has been found in practice to prevent differential pricing because it would prevent a tied agent advising the purchase of a particular product if the product were available more cheaply through another tied outlet.

The DGFT has concluded that rules which prevent some intermediaries from passing through to investors the benefits of cost differentials and efficiencies and which in practice require cross subsidisation between tied outlets are significantly anti-competitive. There has been no real attempt in the representations I have received to argue that the practice is anything other than anti-competitive and I agree with the DGFT's finding. The weight of the representations on this issue has been that the anti-competitive effects of the best advice rule are outweighed by investor protection benefits which also result from the best advice rule; in particular that an investor should be able to expect that if (s)he is buying a life office product through a tied channel, the same product could not be secured more cheaply through another tied outlet.

I have considered all the countervailing investor protection arguments very carefully, but I do not find them sufficiently convincing to outweigh the competitive disadvantages or even in their own right. I can see no good reason why price competition between tied agents and outlets should not be compatible with the preservation of best advice as well as suitability, just as it is with IFAs. Introducing competition within the tied channels will, on the contrary, result in benefits to the investor.

The Treasury is therefore directing SIB to adapt the best advice regime to allow differential pricing in the tied sector. As with IFAs, best advice would continue to pertain for the product and value for money/price within the range of products and prices offered by the particular tied outlet.

SIB and LAUTRO rules require commission, in cash terms, to be disclosed by independent financial advisers if requested by the investor—so-called "soft" disclosure. No such requirement applies to other intermediaries such as tied agents and company representatives. Whether or not the amount of commission is requested by investors, it is disclosed automatically by the life office no later than the start of the cooling-off period, but is expressed as a percentage of premiums to be paid.

The DGFT has concluded that these rules are likely to distort competition among IFAs and between them and other intermediaries to a significant extent. His reasoning rests mainly on the argument that the IFA sector is a market, separate from the tied agent and direct sales force sectors, in which commission is the price for the advice

which the investor receives. He therefore calls for the early automatic disclosure of commission, in actual cash amounts, to the investor, only by IFAs.

I have considered carefully the enormous number of representations about the structure of the life insurance-linked investment market. Polarisation has introduced dichotomies into the marketplace and there are significant differences between the roles of IFAs on the one hand and the tied agents and company representatives on the other. But they are not two completely distinct and separate markets. Their roles and functions overlap and they are in competition with each other for much of the same business. Tied agents and life offices' direct sales forces are also in the business of giving advice, although their advice is restricted to the investment decision and to the choice of product within the range of a given life office. Similarly, commission cannot be regarded simply as the price of advice. I have concluded that to require early automatic disclosure of commission only by IFAs would distort the market further and would be likely to result in a significant reduction in competition by encouraging IFAs to become tied. IFAs offer a valuable range of choice and advice to investors as well as providing an essential element of competition within the industry: it is important that the IFA distribution channel is not disadvantaged in relation to the other distribution channels by the commission disclosure regime.

The current rule on commission disclosure nevertheless remains a very serious concern in an industry where sales practices are often dominated and perceived to be dominated by the payment of commission. Up-front commissions are of significant size and vary substantially both for similar products between life offices and between different products supplied by the same life office. Especially where the investor is not fully aware of the level of commission received, there is a serious risk of advice being biased by the level of commission received. This risk of bias exists in both the tied and independent sectors. Where commission is not paid, the structure of remuneration and incentives can also create a risk of bias. The current rule discriminates unfairly between IFAs on the one hand and tied agents and company representatives on the other, to the former's disadvantage. By requiring "soft" disclosure only, the current rule also allows products to compete in practice other than on the basis of their price, quality and suitability. I have assessed the evidence and have concluded that the current rule is likely to have the effect of significantly distorting and restricting competition between life offices, distribution channels and products.

In order not to distort the marketplace, it will be necessary to require automatic disclosure of commission in cash terms at an early stage by all distribution channels or broadly equivalent information in the cases of direct sales forces and bancassurance where commission is not paid. This, of course, should also enhance investor protection in that it will enable investors more easily to judge the extent to which the advice they receive could be biased. I have, however, had to consider carefully whether the likely quality and comparability of the information will be such as to be informative to the investor. I believe that it should be. But the construction of measures for all distribution channels which are meaningful, not open to manipulation and cost effective, requires detailed and expert consideration and a combination of definition and oversight by the regulatory bodies.

Accordingly, the Treasury is directing SIB to develop proposals for fuller disclosure of commission, as specified above, and the nearest equivalent for distribution channels where commission is not paid or forms only a small element of remuneration. In developing these proposals, I know that SIB will wish to work closely with the industry and other regulatory bodies and I look particularly to the industry to respond constructively to this remit. I am also asking SIB to see that the new regime on disclosure of commission and equivalents is firmly enforced.

The regulation of the sale and marketing of life insurance policies has been the subject of lengthy—too lengthy—debate. The arguments on each of the points raised by the DGFT are complex, but it is now time to draw the debate to a rapid close so that both firms and regulators can settle down in a stable regime to plan with confidence. This must be in the best long-term interest of investors and the industry alike. Disclosure of more information to their clients, with proper explanation, should hold no fears for advisers, be they IFAs, tied agents or direct sales forces. Indeed, greater transparency should help increase consumer confidence in the life insurance industry and promote healthy competition in the market for long-term savings products.

The Treasury is therefore directing SIB to bring forward by the end of 1993 detailed new draft rules as described above, or in the case of commission disclosure detailed proposals for how commission and equivalents should be measured. To ensure that they are effective and durable, it is important that the new arrangements are consumer tested before they are introduced. I am also asking SIB to consider adjustments to supervision to secure compliance with the spirit as well as the letter of the new regime and to make an assessment of the potential cost of compliance to ensure that the burdens on business are no more than necessary to deliver fair competition and investor protection.

Mr. Darling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will publish his proposals to amend the tax system to allow for reserving in insurance business; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Dorrell: In his Budget speech my right hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont) referred to representations made by the insurance industry and acknowledged that there may be a case for allowing tax relief on certain types of equalisation reserves covering occasional, exceptional losses. Such reserves would have to be within the regulatory framework for the industry. The Inland Revenue and the Department of Trade and Industry will next week be jointly issuing the consultation document which we promised. This looks at the issues in greater detail and invites comments on a number of matters by 29 October 1993.

As my right hon. Friend said in his Budget speech, tax-deductible equalisation reserves would be a major departure for the British tax system. If there is a consensus that equalisation reserves for particular types of insurance business should become a regulatory requirement, and practical methods of isolating the business in question and of calculating the reserve can be found, we would need to consider carefully whether the introduction of a regulatory requirement, accompanied by tax relief, should be financed by compensating changes elsewhere. Given the

overall fiscal position, I am clear that it would not be appropriate for the Exchequer to suffer a net cost from the introduction of such a scheme.

Central Statistical Office

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how the Central Statistical Office performed against its key targets for 1992-93; and what changes have been made for 1993-94.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: The Central Statistical Office's performance against its key targets for 1992-93 is described in the agency's annual report and accounts, which are being laid before the House and published today. The CSO met all 20 of its performance targets relating to the quality of economic statistics and overall met 30 out of 33 targets set for the year. There were significant reductions in the scale of revisions to key economic statistics and in balancing items in the sectoral accounts.

These improvements continue the significant progress seen in the quality of economic statistics since the formation of the CSO as a separate department in 1989 and its establishment as an executive agency in 1991. The staff of the CSO are to be congratulated on seeing through these substantial developments.

The CSO's key targets for 1993-94 are set out in the "CSO Programme Strategies 1993-96", a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House. As before, these targets cover the timeliness of published statistics, the size of revisions, the coherence of key economic statistics, the response rates for statistical inquiries, action to minimise the load on respondents, reponse times to public requests for information and the CSO's running costs, efficiency improvements and receipts. A number of the targets have been tightened for 1993-94 in recognition of the improvement in CSO performance.

Incomes

Ms Corston: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the research projects and reviews, including regression analyses, undertaken by the Central Statistical Office and other Government bodies to show the factors related to the trends in disposable income in the 1980s and 1990s at the top and the bottom of the distribution of income among the population of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Nelson: The Central Statistical Office is currently reviewing all aspects of the annual article on "The effects of taxes and benefits on household income". The 1991 article, published in the May edition of "Economic Trends", announced the review and invited readers to comment on the current analysis.

The Central Statistical Office is not sponsoring any research projects by outside bodies in this area at present.

Relocation Costs

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the amount of *(a)* average, *(b)* lowest and *(c)* highest total costs of relocation incurred by an employee and reimbursed or paid directly by an employer in respect of civil servants in (i) Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, (ii) Her Majesty's Inland Revenue and (iii) Her Majesty's Treasury in the last two years.

Mr. Dorrell: During the past two years, the total amounts of payments made to, or on behalf of, employees relocated by the departments specified—excluding additional housing cost allowances which are only paid to those employees moving to higher cost areas—are given in the table:

	Average £000	*Lowest £000*	*Highest £000*
Customs and Excise	32	3	[1]245
Inland Revenue	[2]27	1	[1]98
Treasury	17	9	26

Notes:[1] *The highest total payments made are due to a combination of factors including the slump in the United Kingdom housing market, particularly in London and the south-east, and the fact that the employees concerned experienced long delay in disposing of their properties at their former locations. The bulk of the payments represent reimbursed bridging loan interest and special payments to relieve financial hardship of employees in respect of a fall in the value of their properties whilst they were on the market.*

[2] *This is the average figure of 1991-92, the latest year available.*

Occupational Pensions

Mr. Bowden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the proportion of *(a)* all pensioners, *(b)* single male pensioners, *(c)* single female pensioners, *(d)* pensioner couples, *(e)* single women aged 75 years or over and *(f)* single men aged 75 years or over, who are in receipt of an occupational pension on the basis of the most recent family expenditure survey data available; and for each group, what is the mean and median amount received.

Mr. Nelson: The figures in the table are from the 1991 family expenditure survey. Figures are subject to sampling variation. The amounts have been rounded to the nearest 10p.

	Proportion receiving an occupational pension	*Mean amount occupational pension per week*	*Median amount occupational pension per week*
	Per cent.	*£*	*£*
All pensioners	43·1	46·90	30·50
Single male pensioners	59·6	45·80	28·20
Single female pensioners	43·1	35·50	24·10
Pensioner couples	68·8	67·50	40·10
Single women aged 75 years and over	36·3	35·80	23·30
Single men aged 75 years or over	55·6	40·70	26·00

Government Debt

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what has been the distribution of Government debt between the banking and non-banking sectors in each month since the Budget.

Mr. Nelson *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* Estimates of gilt sales by sector are published in the Bank of England's monthly monetary statistics press release—public sector

funding table. Estimates of the sectoral distribution of the level of outstanding national debt are made quarterly and published in the November issue of the "Bank of England Quarterly Bulletin"—tables H and J in the 1992 edition.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the Government's policy on the proportion of Government debt to be sold to the banking sector.

Mr. Nelson *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* The Government's policy is to fully fund their borrowing needs. There is no policy as to the proportion of debt to be sold to any particular sector.

Surplus Land Sales

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guidance he has issued on maximising the financial return from the sale of surplus land.

Mr. Dorrell: Revised guidance on the disposal of land and buildings was issued to Government Departments and non-departmental public bodies on 23 July 1992. The guidance was circulated at the same time to members of the Public Accounts Committee, together with a note setting out the key points.

VAT

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to change the liability of VAT of amateur sports and cultural activities in the public sector.

Sir John Cope: I am discussing with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for National Heritage a VAT exemption for the supply of certain services by non-profit-making organisations and local authorities to persons who take part in sport or physical education. This would be a limited exemption to be introduced by Treasury order. The precise scope of the exemption would be determined after we have discussed with the representative sports bodies the services and sports to be included.

We shall also be holding discussions with a view to examining the case for exempting certain cultural services and associated goods supplied by public authorities.

Sterling Deposits

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his estimate of the gross figures for sterling deposits held in Switzerland by institutions other than the central bank.

Mr. Nelson *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* Neither the Bank of England nor the Treasury collects this information.

Barlow Clowes

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what action he has taken to date against the third parties implicated in the Barlow Clowes collapse.

Mr. Nelson: I have been asked to reply.

Responsibility for Barlow Clowes matters rests with the Treasury under the Transfer of Functions (Financial Services) Order 1992.

The Government continue vigorously to pursue any claims capable of reducing the cost to the taxpayer of the ex gratia payments scheme. Because of a number of outstanding actions, I cannot give details of recoveries made, as doing so might influence their outcome. However, as I said on 16 June, *Official Report*, columns *613-14*, the Government have secured an order for damages against Mr. and Mrs. Clowes in the sum of £31 million.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Abu Dhabi (British Detainees)

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the British detainees in Abu Dhabi.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: On 13 July 1993 all the Bank of Credit and Commerce International detainees in Abu Dhabi were either charged or conditionally released. Five British nationals in detention were charged. One British national, who had been detained, has been released but cannot leave the United Arab Emirates until investigations are completed. A British national who was previously released but unable to leave the UAE has been charged. The trial date has been set for 9 October 1993.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimates he has of the size of *(a)* regular forces of the Yugoslav army and *(b)* regular forces of the Croatian army currently present and operating in Bosnia-Herzegovina; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: There is continuing evidence that Serbian and Croatian Government forces are operating in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but due to constant troop movements and the difficulties faced by international monitors, it is not possible to provide reliable estimates of their numbers.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to President Izetbegovic about the maltreatment of mentally handicapped adults and children at Fojnica hospital in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We share the United Nations High Commission for Refugees' concern about the desperate plight of the patients in the hospital in Fojnica. This is a further example of how innocent civilians have suffered as a result of the conflict in Bosnia. We have repeatedly urged all parties to respect the rights and interests of civilians.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress the United Nations Security Council has reported on investigations carried out by the United Nations Sanctions Committee into Croatian breaches of United Nations Security Council resolution 713 following investigations into this matter in September 1992; when Her Majesty's Government received a full report of the alleged violations contained in the case referred by the United Nations Sanctions Committee to the United Nations Security Council in September 1992; if he will publish this report; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Following the discovery of arms consignments in Croatia by United Nations forces in September 1992, the United Nations Sanctions Committee asked the Croatian and Iranian Governments for an explanation. The Croatians denied prior knowledge of the consignment. The Iranian authorities have not satisfactorily explained why the arms concerned were being transported in an Iranian aircraft.

The equipment has since been destroyed by the United Nations Protection Force on the instructions of the United Nations.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is Her Majesty's Government's policy on the issue of sanctions against Croatia; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Foreign Ministers of the European Community agreed in Brussels on 19 July to consider withdrawing Croatia's preferential trading benefits with the European Community, in view of Croatia's continued involvement in the conflict in Bosnia.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received from British forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina of atrocities having been carried out by Muslim forces within the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina; and what representations have been made to the Bosnian presidency.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: British forces deployed in Bosnia under the auspices of UNPROFOR provide us with regular reports about events on the ground there. It is clear that all parties have been responsible for committing atrocities, but the record of the Bosnia Serbs is worst. We have repeatedly urged all parties to respect the rights and interests of civilians.

Entry Clearance Posts

Ms Gordon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what posts have been designated for the purpose of receiving applications for entry clearance in *(a)* the states comprising the Indian sub-continent, *(b)* the states comprising the territories of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and *(c)* Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia and Kenya; and what are the categories of applications applicable in each location.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I am arranging to send the hon. Member a full list showing which diplomatic and consular posts accept which kinds of application for entry clearance.

Debt

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the current total of outstanding official debt owed to the United Kingdom by countries in Sub-Saharan Africa; and how much of that debt is owned to *(a)* the Export Credits Guarantee Department, *(b)* the Overseas Development Administration and *(c)* the Commonwealth Development Corporation.

Mr. Portillo: I have been asked to reply.

Total outstanding official debt owed to ECGD and ODA by countries in Sub-Saharan Africa is currently £3·6 billion and £98 million respectively. Debt owed to the Commonwealth Development Corporation is not treated as official debt.

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Judges' Notes (Murder Trials)

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will make it his policy to make available to an hon. Member the judge's notes for a murder trial in which one of his constituents wishes him to inquire into his conviction.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Judge's notes are a closed record and not normally made available. The verbatim record of a murder trial is kept for five years, and I refer the hon. Member to my reply to his question which appeared in *Hansard* of 8 July 1993, column *205*.

"A New Framework for Local Justice"

Mr. Deva: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what representations he has received from magistrates courts committees and their clerks on the White Paper "A New Framework for Local Justice" would lead to a better administration of summary justice.

Mr. John M. Taylor: A list of all those who responded to each consultative document is contained in the relevant decision paper. An analysis of the responses received was published with each decision paper. There has also been regular correspondence and meetings with magistrates courts committee staff, magistrates and their representative organisations.

Mr. Deva: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what account was taken in formulating the proposals in the White Paper, "A New Framework for Local Justice" of the policy of local management empowerment.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The White Paper "A New Framework for Local Justice" took account of a 1989 scrutiny which recommended that the magistrates courts service should be organised as an executive agency, but concluded that the service should continue to be managed locally. The White Paper addresses weaknesses in the service identified by the scrutiny, while leaving the management of the service in the hands of local committee of magistrates and enhancing the ability of the committees to manage strategically and exercise proper scrutiny of the organisation for which they are responsible.

Mr. Deva: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what estimate he has made of the potential savings resulting from the implementation of the proposals contained in the White Paper "A New Framework for Local Justice".

Mr. John M. Taylor: The White Paper announced wide-ranging changes to the organisational structure of the magistrates courts service. The purpose of these changes is to provide clearer lines of accountability, to secure maximum co-operation in the management of the service with other parts of the justice system, to guarantee the judicial independence of magistrates and their legal

advisers and to yield improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the service. Better value for money resulting from the new arrangements should when realised more than offset the transitional costs. The particular savings at local level will depend largely on the management decisions taken by magistrates' courts committees about the way they will implement the changes.

Mr. Deva: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what assessment he has made as to the extent to which the changes envisaged in the White Paper "A New Framework for Local Justice" will lead to the better administration of summary justice in outer London.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The changes announced in the White Paper "A New Framework for Local Justice" will lead to a better administration of summary justice throughout England and Wales including outer London by providing clearer lines of accountability both locally and to the Lord Chancellor, by guaranteeing the judicial independence of magistrates and their legal advisers, by yielding improvements in efficiency and effectiveness and by securing maximum co-operation in the management of the service with other parts of the criminal justice system. The newly formed magistrates courts inspectorate will have a particular responsibility for helping to raise the performance standards of management and administration.

Mr. Deva: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what assessment he has made of the effects of the White Paper "A New Framework for Local Justice" on the independence of justices' clerks.

Mr. John M. Taylor: I am entirely committed to the principle of judicial independence. This is why the legislation which, with Parliament's approval, will put the new statutory framework in place, will enshrine in statute a guarantee of judicial independence. Justices' clerks are not judicial officers, but their advice to magistrates in individual cases will not be subject to management direction. In respect of management responsibilities—a very substantial part of the justices' clerks' responsibility—it is important to have a proper framework of line management and accountability. The White Paper reforms will provide this.

Mr. Deva: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what assessment he has made of the extent to which the proposed population criterion for magistrates courts committee areas contained in the White Paper "A New Framework for Local Justice".

Mr. John M. Taylor: We have concluded that the number of magistrates courts committees should be reduced in order to yield improvement in efficiency and effectiveness and to secure maximum co-operation with other parts of the criminal justice system. Population is one of a number of criteria developed in consultation with the service against which we will decide how this reduction should be effected.

Mr. Deva: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department which magistrates courts committees have *(a)* a weighted case load of over 90,000, *(b)* an annual outturn, at 1991-92 prices of over £2·5 million and *(c)* a population of over 750,000; and if he will make a statement on the extent to which these reach performance targets.

Mr. John M. Taylor: This information is set out in the Magistrates Courts Consultative Council document No. 2 "Magistrates' Courts Committee Areas (excluding Greater London)", a copy of which I have arranged to be placed in the Library of the House. The reorganisation proposals for courts committees are intended to lead to improvements in local performance and accountability and these will be measured by performance standards which we are now developing.

Appeals

Mr. Cox: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what is the number of cases heard by appeal courts in England and Wales where the original sentence has either been reduced or quashed in the last three years.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The table shows the total number of appellants dealt with during the last three years in the Court of Appeal, criminal division and the Crown court—on appeal from a magistrates' court—whose appeals against sentence have been allowed or allowed in part.

Successful appeals against sentence to the Court of Appeal and the Crown Court during the years 1990 to 1992

	Court of Appeal	*Crown Court*
1990	1,526	3,157
1991	1,219	2,941
1992	1,049	2,883

Judges (Dismissal)

Mr. Cox: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what has been the number of judges dismissed in each of the last three years for incapacity.

Mr. John M. Taylor: No judges have been removed from office on the ground of incapacity in the last three years.

Judges (Criticism)

Mr. Cox: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what has been the number of appeal court cases where the action of the trial judge has been criticised by the appeal court in each of the last three years.

Mr. John M. Taylor: This information is not collected.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what procedures are followed when a judge is criticised by the appeal courts for the way in which he has handled cases appearing before them; and if he will make a statement.

Mr John M. Taylor: In all cases heard at the Court of Appeal criminal division, copies of judgments of the Court of Appeal are sent to the Crown court centre at which the trial took place. A separate copy is sent direct to the trial judge.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Drinking Water

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Chairman of the Accommodation and Works Committee what programme is in hand to enable drinking water of potable quality to flow to all water taps in the Palace of Westminster.

Mr. Ray Powell: Drinking water supplied direct from the mains is already available from all taps in the parliamentary estate which are so marked. Water supplied to other cold taps—for example, to wash hand basins—may or may not be of potable quality, since some of this water comes from storage cisterns. There are no plans to supply mains water to every cold tap.

Vote Office

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, representing the House of Commons Commission, which of the domestic Select Committees will have responsibility for the services provided by the Vote Office following the transfer of that office from the Library Department to the Clerk's Department with effect from 1 November.

Mr. Beith: The provision of documents and publications to Members by the Vote Office is a matter within the area of responsibility of the Administration Committee, but the Vote Office may need to be associated with the work of other committees as appropriate—for example with the Information Committee in respect of policy relating to information technology.

SCOTLAND

Salmon

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what consideration he has given to the report of the Salmon Advisory Committee on factors affecting emigrating smolts and returning adult salmon, with particular reference to the provisions of the Salmon Act 1986 and other legislation relating to dams and weirs; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Hector Monro: This report has been extremely helpful. As a result, I propose to consult further in the autumn on the provision of fish passes and fish screens, with a view to making regulations under the Salmon Act 1986.

Scottish Agricultural Science Agency

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish the annual report and accounts of the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency for 1992-93.

Mr. Lang: I have today published the report, copies of which have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Courts

Mr. Gallie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what targets have been set for completing office business in the sheriff courts and supreme courts; and what performance was secured in 1992-93.

Mr. Lang: The targets set for completion of office business in the sheriff courts in 1992-93 are set out. These targets remain in force for 1993-94. The percentage figures following each target indicate the proportion of sheriff courts achieving the target figures or better in the course of the year. More detailed information on the performance of individual court offices will be made available to local court advisory committees. Similar targets are in force in the supreme courts and all of these were achieved in 1992-93.

Targets for sheriff clerk offices and performance 1992-93

	Per cent.
To issue the first deliverance in all ordinary writs, or return to sender, within two working days of receipt.	95
To issue the first deliverance in all summary cause actions—including small claims—or return to sender, within three working days of receipt.	94
To draft, in preparation for signature, all final ordinary decrees in absence—excluding divorce—within one working day of receipt of the minute craving decree.	90
To draft, within seven days of receipt of the affidavits, in preparation for signature, all final decrees in undefended ordinary actions of divorce *or* return the affidavits to the sender.	87
To draft, in preparation for signature, all decrees in actions of divorce under the simplified procedure within one working day of expiry of the period of notice.	97
To issue extract decrees in all ordinary actions—excluding divorce—within three working days of the date of ordering *or* the expiry of the days of appeal —whichever is the later.	84
To issue all summary cause/small claim extract decrees within one working day of the due date.	95
To issue extract decrees in all ordinary actions of divorce within one working day of the due date.	84
To issue extract decrees of divorce under the simplified procedure within one working day of the due date.	89
To issue the first deliverance in all petitions for sequestration/liquidation, or return to sender, within two working days of receipt.	90
To prepare for signature the first deliverance in all adoption petitions within one working day of a correct petition being received.	90
To scrutinise and accept or reject commissary petitions and inventories within two working days of receipt.	93
To issue confirmation within three working days of acceptance of inventory.	90
To conduct small estate interviews within seven days from the time an interview is requested.	98
To process juror claims for payment, or return to sender, within two working days of receipt.	98
To process postal fines—other than unidentified payments—on day of receipt.	99
To issue warning letters, means enquiry citations, warrants, extracts, etc., and transfer fines within seven days of the trawl.	96

	Per cent.
To remit all non-Exchequer receipts to entitled parties within 14 days from the end of the last accountancy period.	96
To effect a card reconciliation of all outstanding financial penalties on a monthly basis.	96
To reply to letter pleas within one working day of the court.	99
To order social enquiry and other reports within one working day of the court.	99
To complete probation, community service, compensation and fines supervision orders within two working days of the court.	99
To issue juror citations in the first instance at least 21 days prior to a jury sitting/trial.	99
To reply to all letter inquiries except those which require extensive investigation within two working days of receipt.	93

Mr. Gallie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what objectives for reducing court waiting periods have been established; what targets have been set for 1993-94 in respect of court waiting periods for the supreme and sheriff courts; and if he will give details of the performance of the supreme courts and each of the sheriff courts in 1992-93.

Mr. Lang: The programming of court business is a matter for the judiciary. Acting in co-operation with the judiciary in the supreme and sheriff courts, the Government seek to provide the resources which will allow speedy access to justice. Having regard to the time required by parties to have their cases properly prepared, the following objectives have been adopted:

the Lord President of the Court of Session has accepted the recommendations of a committee chaired by Lord Maxwell relating to the reduction of waiting periods in the supreme courts: the target is to reduce waiting periods to the recommended levels and, subject to any acceleration in the rate of increase in court work, maintain waiting periods at that level: for certain categories of hearing, additional targets involving much reduced waiting periods, have been set;

sheriffs principal have agreed to overall targets of reducing waiting periods for summary criminal trials in the sheriff courts to 12 weeks or less by the end of 1993-94 and to hold them at that level thereafter; and to maintain waiting periods at 12 weeks or less for civil cases in the sheriff courts.

The main targets for waiting periods for 1993-94 are set down—"waiting period" is the period between a trial or proof being requested or an appeal being received and the date assigned expressed in weeks. The same targets applied in 1992-93 and national performance for that year is noted in the second column.

	Target	1992-93 performance
Criminal Appeal Business		
Summary prosecutions:		
Notes of Appeal against Sentence and Stated cases (accused in custody)	4	4
Court of Session		
(a) Ordinary proofs	24	20
(b) Defended Consistorial proofs	17	17
Sheriff Courts (national average)		
(a) Civil proofs/debates	12	11·6
(b) Summary Criminal Trials	12	14·8

In 1992-93, waiting periods of 12 weeks or less were achieved for civil debates/proofs in 84 per cent. of sheriff courts.

Waiting periods of 12 weeks or less were achieved for summary criminal business in 72 per cent. of sheriff courts.

Performance of individual sheriff courts at 31 March 1993 is set out in the table:

Court	Civil proofs	Summary criminal trials
Falkirk	15	17
Kirkcaldy	15	12
Dingwall	14	14
Hamilton	14	15
Airdrie	14	17
Stirling	14	11
Glasgow	13	22
Dumbarton	13	10
Dumfries	12	12
Fort William	12	14
Arbroath	12	12
Stonehaven	12	16
Wick	12	12
Dornoch	12	12
Stornoway	12	12
Cupar	11	12
Kirkcudbright	11	10
Stranraer	11	11
Rothesay	11	10
Aberdeen	11	12
Peterhead	11	11
Kilmarnock	11	10
Linlithgow	11	15
Peebles	10	11
Dunoon	10	12
Inverness	10	11
Tain	10	10
Lanark	10	12
Oban	10	9
Campbeltown	10	6
Selkirk	10	9
Edinburgh	9	8
Alloa	9	13
Dunfermlin	9	15
Jedburgh	9	9
Banff	9	10
Perth	9	12
Duns	9	9
Portree	8	8
Lochmaddy	8	12
Greenock	8	12
Elgin	8	8
Dundee	8	12
Forfar	8	6
Haddington	8	19
Kirkwall	8	8
Ayr	7	12
Lerwick	6	6
Paisley	6	14

In addition, the sheriffs principal have agreed that sheriff court programmes should be designed to ensure that the number of trials adjourned due to lack of court time should not exceed 5 per cent of the total number set down, a target met in 87 per cent of sheriff courts.

Council Tax

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the entitlement of a disabled person to reduction of council tax.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 14 July 1993]:* There are several provisions designed to ensure that the council tax payable in respect of a disabled person's sole or main residence is not higher than it would be if the house was not that person's residence. These operate whether or not the disabled person is liable for payment of the council tax.

Any fixtures designed to make a house suitable for a person who is physically disabled must be ignored in the valuation of a house if they would tend to add to its value.

Many people with disabilities require extra space in the form of a second kitchen or bathroom, an extra room of another type or wheelchair circulation space. These features might tend to increase the valuation of a house and hence its council tax bill. To avoid this, a disabled person's home with any of these features is taxed as if it was in the valuation band below that shown in the valuation list. As houses in band A already carry the minimum bill, their occupants are not facing any increase due to someone's disability and no reduction falls to be made in their case.

Islands Shipping Services

Mr. McLeish: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Aberdeen, South (Mr. Robertson) of 26 May, *Official Report*, column *589*, if he will list the consultants which his Department has invited to tender for the studies into the financial assistance which he provides for lifeline shipping services and the organisation and structure of Caledonian MacBrayne; if he will require them to declare any actual or potential conflict of interest and to give a commitment not to use for any other purpose the information gleaned during the course of the study; if he will publish the terms of reference of the study; and if he will publish the report.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* The consultants who have been invited to tender for the review of shipping subsidies and study of options for the future organisation and structure of Caledonian MacBrayne are as follows:

Ash Consulting Group
Coopers and Lybrand
KPMG Management Consulting
Noble and Company Ltd.
PA Cambridge Economic Consultants Ltd.
Price Waterhouse
Quayle Munro Ltd.
Touche Ross and Co.

The consultants will be required to declare any actual or potential conflict of interest and due consideration will be given to this issue in deciding which consultants should be appointed to undertake the studies. The consultants will be bound by standard Scottish Office conditions of contract for consultancy services which require that confidential and commercially sensitive information obtained by reason of the contract shall not be disclosed for any other purpose. When the contract for this assignment is awarded, I shall arrange to place in the Library a copy of the terms of reference for the studies. The studies will necessarily involve examination of confidential and commerially sensitive information which it would not be appropriate to publish. However, the Scottish Office will discuss with the consultants the extent to which it would be possible to publish the findings and conclusions of the studies without breaching commercial confidentiality.

EDUCATION

General Studies

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is his policy with respect to supporting general studies as a full A-level with equal status to other subjects as regards university requirements; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Boswell: Admission requirements are a matter for individual higher education institutions.

School Meals

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what research has been undertaken by his Department into the reintroduction of required standards for school meals.

Mr. Forth: The Department has not undertaken any research in this area.

Discretionary Student Grants

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the oral answer to the hon. Member for Batley and Spen (Mrs. Peacock), *Official Report* of 13 July, column 822, if he will publish the figures held by his Department regarding discretionary grants; and if he will list the spending at 1992 prices on discretionary grant awards by each local education authority in the last five years for which figures are available, indicating the political control of each authority.

Mr. Boswell: Details of the numbers of and spending on discretionary awards by local education authorities are published in the Department's regular statistical bulletins, copies of which are in the Library. Information on expenditure on discretionary awards by each local education authority in England and Wales, at 1991-92 prices, for years between 1986-87 and 1990-91—the latest year for which a breakdown is available—is included in the table. Information for the academic year 1988-89 is not readily available and cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate costs. Details of the political control of each authority during that period can be found in the relevant volumes of the "Municipal Year Book", copies of which are in the Library.

Expenditure on discretionary awards (£000) in 1991-92 constant prices

	1986-87	*1987-88*	*1988-90*	*1990-91*
City of London	—	—	—	219·6
Camden (1)	—	—	—	n/a
Greenwich	—	—	—	377·2
Hackney	—	—	—	1,244·0

	1986-87	*1987-88*	*1988-90*	*1990-91*
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	—	3,246·0
Islington	—	—	—	80·8
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	—	483·1
Lambeth	—	—	—	1,050·3
Lewisham	—	—	—	862·0
Southwark	—	—	—	756·3
Tower Hamlets	—	—	—	918·3
Wandsworth	—	—	—	3,921·5
City of Westminster	—	—	—	280·2
ILEA/LRB [2]	27,192·8	28,991·6	20,129·3	8,871·6
Barking	672·9	527·7	835·7	286·1
Barnet	1,017·4	771·5	522·7	530·6
Bexley	563·3	433·7	352·1	424·1
Brent	5,145·3	4,447·8	919·8	886·4
Bromley	814·1	920·6	983·8	980·3
Croydon	719·0	773·8	732·8	746·2
Ealing	1,284·5	1,451·7	1,876·4	1,331·8
Enfield	510·4	588·8	292·2	566·8
Haringey	1,084·3	937·6	702·1	112·9
Harrow	428·0	340·2	393·9	398·5
Havering	438·7	604·5	494·1	668·5
Hillingdon	780·9	613·4	671·4	349·7
Hounslow	464·5	467·6	490·1	373·1
Kingston-upon-Thames	332·1	268·8	276·4	464·9
Merton	393·5	308·5	463·0	519·7
Newham	887·7	891·6	1·123·6	845·4
Redbridge	469·0	449·6	486·7	988·1
Richmond-upon-Thames	606·1	515·7	567·5	658·6
Sutton	308·6	341·7	341·6	371·6
Waltham Forest	875·3	1,128·2	1,205·2	970·3
Birmingham	1,754·5	1,707·5	1,907·5	2·889·4
Coventry	799·7	896·5	794·0	780·1
Dudley	473·3	643·2	744·1	717·9
Sandwell	1,039·7	1,019·8	1,076·8	957·8
Solihull	309·2	283·9	305·9	379·8
Walsall	1,173·5	1,261·2	1,169·9	1,715·7
Wolverhampton	247·9	277·5	273·5	297·8
Knowsley	1,657·5	1,729·7	1·103·6	1,257·8
Liverpool	2,999·2	3,261·1	6,787·0	6,427·4
St Helens	858·9	795·7	814·4	757·5
Sefton	662·8	599·8	791·6	1,290·4
Wirral	1,644·9	1,682·4	1·908·1	1,823·0
Bolton	1,389·4	1,368·7	1,193·7	1,473·9
Bury	1,106·4	1,239·6	1,048·1	1,047·9
Manchester	2,941·4	2,991·8	2,233·6	2,156·1
Oldham	668·2	688·5	1,329·5	862·1
Rochdale	659·5	566·6	626·9	876·2
Salford	895·2	830·7	793·6	815·6
Stockport	977·4	986·6	1,032·5	813·8
Tameside	554·6	511·6	406·4	496·0
Trafford	682·4	779·4	813·0	0·0
Wigan	1,519·1	1,281·9	964·1	725·8
Barnsley	882·2	1,100·8	1,343·4	1,479·5
Doncaster	781·2	785·7	766·0	927·5
Rotherham	834·3	974·2	855·6	816·6
Sheffield	3,170·7	3,041·8	2,880·3	2,563·4
Bradford	2,435·6	3,008·4	1,865·6	2,071·4
Calderdale	444·8	612·8	667·6	584·2
Kirklees	2,408·9	2,592·1	2,920·5	3,149·8
Leeds	2,113·2	2,723·8	2,661·8	2668·1
Wakefield	1,136·7	1,348·0	1,305·0	1,318·8
Gateshead	391·3	407·4	607·9	767·8
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	946·8	848·8	915·8	1,078·4
North Tyneside	1,178·8	1,320·1	1,241·0	994·1
South Tyneside	362·1	449·0	540·8	503·1
Sunderland[1]	1,846·5	1,584·4	0·0	n/a
Isles of Scilly	105·2	112·4	91·3	0·0
Avon[1]	4,418·1	4,321·4	3,089·6	n/a
Bedfordshire	1,787·4	2,525·8	1,525·0	1,295·5
Berkshire[1]	1,474·7	1,752·4	1,441·2	n/a
Buckinghamshire	1,198·1	1,290·2	1,288·9	1,340·7
Cambridgeshire	1,417·4	1,540·4	1,813·7	1,892·3
Cheshire	5,228·9	5,210·2	5,442·3	8,112·1
Cleveland	2,053·1	2,012·5	2,021·2	2,284·8
Cornwall	1,913·7	1,723·5	2,444·1	2,638·8
Cumbria	3,083·6	3,038·5	2,744·3	4,140·9
Derbyshire	3,796·4	3,407·1	3,888·7	5,109·2
Devon	5,378·4	5,640·1	5,463·2	5,481·5

	1986-87	1987-88	1988-90	1990-91
Dorset	2,408·4	2,500·8	2,847·1	3,666·0
Durham	1,224·8	1,038·6	1,492·6	2,006·0
East Sussex	1,811·6	1,783·3	1,027·6	1,387·7
Essex	7,106·1	8,467·7	6,692·7	6,789·0
Gloucestershire	3,385·5	2,985·8	3,058·5	3,017·1
Hampshire	11,848·1	11,201·1	6,428·9	6,899·6
Hereford and Worchester	1,475·5	1,326·4	1,447·0	1,553·6
Hertfordshire	2,486·9	2,780·6	4,508·6	3,639·8
Humberside	4,494·7	4,585·6	5,212·0	5,691·6
Isle of Wight	551·1	541·6	562·5	391·5
Kent	7,217·3	6,877·8	5,743·4	6,185·6
Lancashire	7,343·6	7,012·0	9,899·8	10,415·7
Leicestershire	4,976·2	5,382·2	5,484·3	6,177·1
Lincolnshire	2,178·4	1,971·3	1,600·7	1894·8
Norfolk	2,426·6	2,443·2	2,612·1	3,073·6
North Yorkshire	6,182·0	6,466·4	5,826·1	9,248·6
Northamptonshire	1,710·7	1,264·9	1,133·9	1,712·0
Northumberland	1,851·0	1,804·9	2,233·0	2,407·3
Nottinghamshire	4,016·3	4,023·2	4,509·4	3,213·4
Oxfordshire	1,519·5	1,260·1	1,241·5	1,339·1
Shropshire	1,751·8	1,795·2	1,689·0	1,835·8
Somerset	1,328·3	1,555·5	1,907·3	1,819·5
Staffordshire	2,220·0	2,758·4	1,856·4	1,870·9
Suffolk	2,673·1	2,527·5	2,588·8	3,263·7
Surrey	2,254·4	2,220·1	2,076·3	2,094·4
Warwickshire	1,192·0	1,858·3	1,049·6	1,212·7
West Sussex	1,161·8	1,055·8	1,256·6	1,514·2
Wiltshire	2,129·1	1,947·2	1,898·1	1,882·5
Clywd	1,693·2	1,671·4	2,041·1	2,078·6
Dyfed	1,928·3	1,744·5	2,206·6	2,608·0
Gwent	2,780·0	2,975·0	982·9	882·2
Gwynedd	1,266·9	1,127·1	919·7	1,130·4
Mid-Glamorgan	584·9	479·3	1,833·4	1,578·7
Powys	786·6	757·8	904·4	1,010·5
South Glamorgan	1,540·6	1,502·0	1,399·0	1,608·5
West Glamorgan	1,058·4	1010·3	978·9	1,108·4

[1]LEAs unable to provide appropriate information.
[2]ILBs took over responsibility from ILEA for most awards in 1990-91; some awards were made by the London residuary body.

PRIME MINISTER

Bermuda

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Bermuda Government about bringing the law on consensual sexual relations between adult men in private into line with the legislative position in Britain.

The Prime Minister: This is primarily a matter for the Government of Bermuda. Nevertheless, I expressed my concerns about this issue to the Premier of Bermuda when we met on 14 July. The Premier indicated that the Bermuda Government may look further at this issue after their general election to be held before May 1994.

Ministerial Advisers

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to his answer of 18 November, *Official Report*, column *216*, if he will publish the current list of special advisers attached to Ministers stating the Minister they work for, the date of their appointment and the name of their previous employer before their initial appointment as a special adviser attached to a Minister.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 20 July 1993]*: There are currently 41 special advisers attached to Ministers. The names of the advisers, the Ministers they work for, the date of the appointment and the name of their previous employer before their initial appointment as a special adviser is as follows:

Name	*Minister(s) served*	*Date of appointment*	*Previous employer*
K. Adams	Secretary of State for the Environment	28 May 1993	Rt. Hon. John Gummer
P. Barnes	Secretary of State for Social Security	3 May 1993	Boston Consulting Group
C. Blunt	Secretary of State for Defence	15 February 1993	PI Political Consultants
Sir R. Braithwaite*	Prime Minister	1 June 1992	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
T. Burke*	Secretary of State for the Environment	10 April 1992	Green Alliance
J. Caine	Secretary of State for Northern Ireland	17 June 1992	Conservative Central Office
D. Cameron	Jointly to the three Ministers of State and the Under Secretary of State in the Home Office	21 June 1993	Conservative Central Office
Dr. E. Cottrell	Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	27 May 1993	Conservative Central Office

Name	*Minister(s) served*	*Date of appointment*	*Previous employer*
Dr. W. Eltis*	President of the Board of Trade	1 January 1993	National Economic Development Office
Sir C. Foster*	Secretary of State for Transport	1 June 1992	Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte
M. Fraser	Minister of State for Overseas Development	10 April 1992	Conservative Central Office
C. Grantham	Secretary of State for Education	11 April 1992	Westminster Briefing
J. Gray	Jointly to the Ministers for Local Government and Inner Cities; Environment and Countryside; and Housing and Planning	27 May 1993	GNI Ltd.
D. Green	Prime Minister	1 June 1992	Business Television
Professor P. Hall*	Secretary of State for Environment	27 May 1993	University of California
Mrs. S. Hogg	Prime Minister	10 April 1992	Daily and Sunday Telegraph
Ms S. Hole	Chief Whip	13 April 1992	Lord Rothschild
A. Kemp*	President of the Board of Trade	28 May 1992	CDP Nexus Ltd.
Mrs. T. Keswick	Chancellor of the Exchequer	28 May 1993	Cluff Investments and Trading
Mrs. E. Laing	Secretary of State for Transport	13 April 1992	Shopping Hours Reform Council
K. Leggett*	Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	21 June 1993	National Farmers Union
D. Loehnis	Secretary of State for National Heritage	7 November 1992	Sunday Telegraph
G. Mackay	Secretary of State for Scotland	8 May 1992	Pieda plc
M. MacLay	Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs	19 July 1993	The European
R. Marsh	Secretary of State for Health	21 April 1992	Conservative Central Office
Ms S. McEwen	Chief Whip (House of Lords)	29 June 1992	Namara Cowan Ltd.
M. McManus	Secretary of State for Employment	28 May 1993	Conservative Central Office
Dr. J. Nicholson*	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	1 September 1992	John Nicholson Associates Ltd.
Sir I. Pearce*	Secretary of State for Transport	16 June 1992	Richard Ellis and English Estates
Lord Poole	Prime Minister	13 May 1992	James Capel
Mrs. K. Ramsay	Prime Minister	2 June 1992	Conservative Central Office
P. Rock	Home Secretary	28 May 1993	Conservative Central Office
A. Rosling	Prime Minister	10 April 1992	Hanson plc
D. Ruffley	Financial Secretary	28 May 1993	Clifford Chance
R. Salmon*	Secretary of State for Transport	18 January 1993	Cuff & Co. Ltd. and Fund Holdings Ltd.
I. Stewart	Lord President	27 April 1992	Conservative Central Office
Lady Strathnaver	President of the Board of Trade	21 April 1992	Haymarket Publishing Services Ltd.
J. Swift*	Secretary of State for Transport	18 January 1993	Barrister
N. True	Prime Minister	10 April 1992	Public Policy Unit
I. Wilton	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	27 April 1992	Conservative Central Office
A. Young	Secretary of State for Scotland	8 May 1992	—

* Special advisers fall into two categories, political and those with specialised expertise relevant to their appropriate Secretary of State. The latter are indicated by an asterisk.

Engagements

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 22 July.

Sir Peter Tapsell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Thursday 22 July.

The Prime Minister: This morning, I presided at a meeting of the Cabinet and had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in this House, I shall be having further meetings later today.

Olympic Bid

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister how many times (1) he has met the leaders of Manchester city council to discuss the bid to stage the Olympic games; (2) how much financial support the Government have committed to the Manchester bid to stage the Olympics; and how much money has so far been paid over.

The Prime Minister: I have met the leader of Manchester city council with other members of the bid committee three times to discuss the British Olympic bid; I launched the formal bid document with the committee at Downing street on 17 February; and I have met them informally on a number of other occasions.

Up to £75 million has been made available by the Government for the bid itself and for the construction of key facilities. Of that, some £22 million has been spent to date. If the bid is successful, the Government will ensure that all the necessary facilities are built by a mixture of private and public finances and that the funding necessary to stage and organise the games is provided.

Meetings

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister when he last met *(a)* Sheikh Zayed of Abu Dhabi and *(b)* the Pakistan high commissioner to the Court of St James.

The Prime Minister: I last met Sheikh Zayed of Abu Dhabi on 25 July 1989 when I was Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. I last met the Pakistan high commissioner on 29 March this year.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Prime Minister what pressures Her Majesty's Government are putting on the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina to attend and fully co-operate with the peace talks in Geneva; and if he will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: We are encouraging the Bosnian presidency to engage in direct negotiations with the other parties under the auspices of Lord Owen and Mr. Stoltenberg. We have repeatedly made clear that a lasting and equitable peace can be achieved only by a negotiated settlement freely agreed by all three parties. We will not accept a territorial solution for Bosnia dictated by the Serbs and Croats at the expense of the Bosnian Muslims.

Wild Birds

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what plans he has to discuss the EC directive on the conservation of wild birds at the forthcoming United Kingdom/French summit; and if he will make representations to the French Government over the fulfilment of the directive's protection for migratory birds from netting, shooting and trapping;

(2) what discussions he has had with the Prime Minister of France concerning the requirements under the EC directive on the conservation of wild birds to control the hunting and shooting of wild birds.

The Prime Minister: I am not aware of any proposals by the French Government for the admendment to the birds directive. Nor do I expect the matter to be raised at the meeting between Heads of State currently planned. There have been discussions by EC Environment Ministers on proposals by the Commission to amend annex III of the directive, but no agreement has yet been reached.

Security Service

Mr. Allason: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the directive circulated to former members of the security service regarding the biographer of the late Sir Dick White.

The Prime Minister: There is no authorised biographer of Sir Dick White. Although the Government have recently taken a number of significant steps towards greater openness for the security and intelligence services, they continue to attach the highest importance to maintaining the principle that members and former members of those services are under a lifelong duty of confidence to the Crown in relation to information deriving from their employment.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Tourism

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the developments that have so far been completed under the terms of the EC tourism operational programme; what proportion of those projects were funded by *(a)* Her Majesty's Government and *(b)* from EC sources; how many developments are yet to be completed; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: Those projects assisted under the tourism operational programme for Northern Ireland 1990-93 which have been completed by 30 June 1993 are listed. Her Majesty's Government did not fund the projects which were assisted by the European regional development fund.

Capital Development

Dunluce centre, Portrush
The Navan centre, County Armagh
The Tower museum, Londonderry
18th century gaol block, Downpatrick
Ballance house phase II, Glenavy
Lough Neagh discovery centre
Palace stables, Armagh
Sinton's mill, Blackwater town
Ulster and American streets, Ulster American folk park, Omagh
Ulster history park visitor centre, Omagh
Ballycastle seafront development
Benone tourism complex phase III
Banbridge gateway tourist information centre
Lislap cottage restoration, Gortin
Round lake, Fivemiletown
Sixmilewater caravan park, Antrim
Corn mill, Castleward
Warrenpoint promenade, stage I, phase II
International youth hostel, Londonderry
Queen Mary's hostel, Belfast
Glenada house, Newcastle
Benone III, environmental improvements
Margy bridge, Ballycastle
Ardclennis activity centre, Co Fermanagh
Bannview squash club, Craigavon
Belleek and district development trust cruising project
Belleekci pottery enhancement of visitor centre
Portrush parascending project
Lockside cruises, Co Fermanagh
Lusty Beg island cruiser, Co Fermanagh
Raspberry Hill health farm
Rosskit slipway facilities, Co Fermanagh
Down Royal racecourse visitor facilities
Bushtown House hotel, leisure/conference facilities
Glenavon House hotel, leisure/conference facilities
Lough Erne yacht club
Lough Beg leisure facilities, Co Londonderry

Non Capital Developments: Studies

Ballycastle marina
Ballyleidy golf project
Ballyronan tourism project development
Belfast City centre hotel, Laganside
Belfast science centre
Bessbrook tramway
Coalisland canal
Coalisland heritage development
Colebrook development
Disabled access to tourist accommodation
Down Royal racecourse
Equestrian development
Glens of Antrim
Sustainable tourism
Lecale/Down area
Lough Neagh
Newry/Portadown canal
Roe Valley development
South Armagh tourism development

South Down tourism development
St Patrick's country heritage centre
Strabane canal

A further 55 capital and 35 non-capital projects were under way at 30 June.

The European social fund is also supporting an on going programme of training for the tourism and hospitality industry. To date, a total of 1,162 people have benifited from this training.

Select Committees

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the views given by the then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to the Procedure Committee in its review of the working of Select Committees in Session 1989-90 on a Select Committee for Northern Ireland remain the Government's position.

Sir Patrick Mayhew: As the Government have repeatedly made clear, a Select Committee may, in principle, be desirable. But a number of issues, including the extent of support from elected representatives from both sides of the community in Northern Ireland, need to be considered. The Government keep the matter under review.

Sight Tests

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what are the estimated savings made in 1992-93 as a result of the introduction of a charge for sight tests.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* The sum is £2·3 million.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many national health service eye examinations have been undertaken since 1985 in each health and social services board and in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Ancram *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* The number of health service sight tests undertaken in each year is shown in the table.

Thousands

Calendar year	*Health and Social Services Board*				
	Eastern	*Northern*	*Southern*	*Western*	*Northern Ireland Total*
1985	100·8	55·0	31·7	31·8	219·3
1986	105·3	57·2	32·9	33·2	228·6
1987	113·5	61·3	34·9	35·2	244·9
1988	130·6	67·2	41·4	40·4	279·6
[1]1989	86·0	48·4	28·3	29·2	191·9
1990	45·1	30·0	20·0	19·8	114·9
1991	52·3	35·0	23·9	24·7	135·9
1992	62·0	39·2	27·4	28·6	157·2

[1] From 1 April 1989 health service sight tests were restricted to certain groups in the population. The 1989 figures therefore include sight tests carried out under both the old and the new schemes. Consequently the 1989 figures are not directly comparable with those in 1990.

Eye Disease

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the incidence of eye disease leading to blindness or hospital treatment in Northern Ireland giving the numbers of people involved.

Mr. Ancram *[holding reply 21 July 1993]:* Information on the incidence of all eye disease is not available centrally.

Activity in the speciality of ophthalmology in Northern Ireland hospitals for the year from 1 April 1992 to 31 March 1993 is as set out below:

	Number
Admissions	5,992
Day cases	2,750
Outpatient referrals	21,832
Cases operated on	6,095

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were registered blind and partially sighted in each year since 1985; and what figures are projected for registrations in *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years time.

Mr. Ancram *[holding reply 21 July 1993]:* The information is not available in the form requested. The numbers of blind and partially sighted people in contact with, or known to, health and social services boards are presented in the tables below. This includes some people who are not registered. Information on projected figures in five and 10 years' time is not available centrally.

Year	*Number of blind people*	*Number of partially sighted people*
1985[1]	3,437	1,285
1986[1]	3,534	1,304
1987[1,3]	3,833	1,383
1988-89[2]	3,568	1,167
1989-90[2,4]	2,497	869
1990-91[2]	2,974	1,087
1991-92[2,5]	3,116	1,254

[1]Blind and partially sighted people known to health boards.
[2]Blind and partially sighted people in contact with health boards.
[3]Includes estimated data.
[4]Boards were in contact with a further 579 visually impaired people who were not categorised.
[5]Provisional data.

LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Newton: The functions of the Privy Council Office do not include the provision of assistance to small businesses.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Salmon

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what assessment she has made of the degree to which the provisions of section 14 of the Salmon

and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975, concerning the duties of proprietors of undertakings that take water to instal gratings of an approved type to prevent the passage of migratory fish, are being enforced; what consideration she has given in this context to the report of the Salmon Advisory Committee on factors affecting emigrating smolts and returning adults; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Jack: Responsibility for ensuring compliance with the requirements of section 14 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 rests largely with the National Rivers Authority. We will be discussing with it the question of enforcement of that provision in the light of the comments made by the Salmon Advisory Committee in its report.

Melatonin

Mr. Morley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will make a statement on the commercial use of melatonin in lamb production.

Mr. Soames: Melatonin is a naturally occurring substance which controls the ovulation cycle in ewes. Products containing melatonin can be administered to ewes to enable them to be mated earlier in the season before the usual peak of reproductive activity. Melatonin is classified as a veterinary medicine and all products containing it must be licensed under the Medicines Act 1968 before they can be made commercially available. One such product has been licensed, following a rigorous scrutiny of its efficacy, quality and safety, including safety to the animal. Melatonin is available on prescription only and must be used under the direction of a veterinary surgeon.

The Farm Animal Wefare Council is currently undertaking a study of the sheep industry. It will offer advice to the Government on the welfare of sheep and is expected to consider the use of substances such as melatonin. The results of the study are due by the end of the year.

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many new cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy have been reported in *(a)* England and *(b)* Lancashire since the end of April.

Mr. Soames: From 1 May to 16 July 1993, 6,748 suspected cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy have been reported in England to the Ministry. Of these, 327 have been reported in Lancashire.

Nuclear Waste

Mr Dafis: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the current and planned programmes undertaken by her Department to monitor the effect of the thermal oxide reprocessing plant's aerial and marine discharges on *(a)* seals and other marine mammals and *(b)* sea birds; and if she will make it her policy to publish the results of the monitoring undertaken at regular intervals.

Mr. Jack: A decision on whether THORP should be allowed to operate will not be made until after the further consultation announced on 28 June by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment has been completed. In the light of that decision, I will review the need, if any, for changes to my Department's already extensive environmental monitoring programmes. The results of these programmes are reported annually and copies are placed in the Library of the House.

Pesticides

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food when he last met representatives from the Pesticide Exposure Group of Sufferers; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Soames: I met representatives of the Pesticide Exposure Group of Sufferers on 3 September 1992. A number of incidents relating to the safety of pesticides and sheep dips were discussed. I emphasised that it was important that those who discussed. I emphasised that it was important that those who believed themselves to have been adversely affected by exposure to pesticides should report the incident immediately to their local Health and Safety Executive office or, in the case of sheep dips, to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate—telephone No. 0932 336911 Ext 3040—and provide as much evidence as possible. It was only in this way that an incident could be properly investigated.

Sheep Dips

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many incidents arising from exposure to organophosphate sheep dips have been reported in *(a)* 1991 and *(b)* 1992; and what were the occupations of the people involved.

Mr. Soames: The following numbers of suspected adverse reaction reports to organophosphorus sheep dips involving humans have been received by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate:

	Number
1991	132
1992	133

The occupations of the people involved were:

Farmer
Farm worker
Contract dipper
Lorry driver
Housewife
Animal health inspector
Builder
Police constable
Trading standards officer

A number of reports also involved children, while others did not include information on the occupation of the person involved.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the sheep dips currently granted approval by her Department, indicating which ones contain organophosphates.

Mr. Soames: The information requested is as follows:

Product name	*Product licence holder*
ORGANOPHOSPHORUS SHEEP DIPS	
1. Paracide Plus	Battle Hayward and Bower Ltd.
Also known as *Paracide Plus* when sold by: Downland Marketing Ltd. Chapman and Frearson Ltd. Messrs J. Todd and Son The Vale of Tivy Agriculture Society Ltd. Messrs J. S. Hubbuck and Son H&G Farm Feeds Ray Green Animal Health Colin Henderson Metcalf Feed Formulations Agripharm Animal Health Yorkshire Animal Health	
Also known as *Summer Fly Dip* when sold by: Battle Hayward and Bower Ltd.	
2. Diazadip All Seasons Scab Approved Dip	Bayer UK Ltd.
3. Topclip Gold Shield Scab Approved Sheep Dip	Ciba-Geigy Agriculture
Also known as *Paracide Fly and Scab Dip* when sold by: Battle, Hayward and Bower Ltd.	
Also known as *Diazadip Scab Approved All-purpose Sheep Dip* when sold by: Bayer UK Ltd.	
4. Coopers Powerpack Winter Dip	Coopers Animal Health Ltd.
5. Coopers Powerpack Summer Dip Scab Approved	Coopers Animal Health Ltd.
6. Osmonds Gold Fleece Sheep Dip	Osmond and Son (Dublin) Ltd.
Also known as *Golden Fleece Sheep Dip* when sold by: Bimeda UK Ltd.	
Also known as *Deosan Diazinon Sheep Dip* when sold by: Deosan Ltd.	
Also known as *Downland Scab Approved Fly Dip* when sold by: Osmond and Son (Dublin) Ltd.	
7. Young's Scab Approved Summer Dip	Robert Young and Co. Ltd.
8. Young's Scab Approved Flyte 1250 Sheep Dip	Robert Young and Co. Ltd.
Also known as *Seraphos Scab Approved Sheep Dip* when sold by: Crown Vet Pharmaceuticals	
Also known as *Downland Seraphos* when sold by: Downland Marketing Ltd.	
9. Rycovet Sheep Dip (Scab) Approved	Robert Young and Co. Ltd.
NON-ORGANOPHOSPHORUS SHEEP DIPS	
1. Bayticol Scab and Tick Dip (Scab Approved)	Bayer UK Ltd.
2. Coopers Green Label Scab and Tick Dip	Coopers Animal Health Ltd.
3. Taktic	Hoechst UK Ltd.

Farmers (Suicides)

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is she will publish figures showing the number of suicides occurring monthly within the farming population in the United Kingdom within each of the last four years.

Mr. Sackville: I have been asked to reply.

The information shown in the tables is for England and Wales. Information relating to Scotland and Northern Ireland are matters for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland and my right hon. and Learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Suicides among farmers and farm workers by month of occurrence, sex and age, 1989

	Males			*Females*		
	16+	*16-64*	*65+*	*16+*	*16-59*	*60+*
January	7	7	—	—	—	—
February	4	4	—	1	1	—
March	2	2	—	—	—	—
April	2	2	—	—	—	—
May	3	3	—	—	—	—
June	6	3	3	—	—	—
July	5	2	3	1	1	—
August	5	3	2	—	—	—
September	7	5	2	—	—	—
October	7	7	—	—	—	—
November	6	5	1	—	—	—
December	4	3	1	1	1	—
Total	58	46	12	3	3	—

Suicides among farmers and farm workers by month of occurrence, sex and age, 1990

	Males			*Females*		
	16+	*16-64*	*65+*	*16+*	*16-59*	*60+*
January	7	4	3	—	—	—
February	3	2	1	—	—	—
March	5	5	—	—	—	—

	Males			Females		
	16+	16-64	65+	16+	16-59	60+
April	7	6	1	—	—	—
May	2	1	1	2	2	—
June	5	2	3	—	—	—
July	4	3	1	—	—	—
August	5	5	—	—	—	—
September	8	6	2	—	—	—
October	3	3	—	—	—	—
November	2	1	1	—	—	—
December	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	51	38	13	2	2	—

Suicides among farmers and farm workers by month of occurrence, sex and age, 1991

	Males			Females		
	16+	16-64	65+	16+	16-59	60+
January	3	1	2	—	—	—
February	5	3	2	1	—	1
March	10	6	4	1	1	—
April	11	9	2	—	—	—
May	2	2	—	—	—	—
June	3	3	—	—	—	—
July	4	3	1	—	—	—
August	5	3	2	—	—	—
September	7	6	1	—	—	—
October	6	4	2	—	—	—
November	4	2	2	—	—	—
December	1	1	—	1	1	—
Total	61	43	18	3	2	1

Suicides among farmers and farm workers by month of occurrence[1], *sex and age, 1992*

	Males			Females		
	16+	16-64	65+	16+	16-59	60+
January	4	4	—	—	—	—
February	8	6	2	—	—	—
March	4	4	—	1	—	1
April	3	3	—	—	—	—
May	2	2	—	—	—	—
June	4	3	1	—	—	—
July	5	2	3	—	—	—
August	6	2	4	—	—	—
September	2	2	—	—	—	—
October	3	3	—	—	—	—
November	3	3	—	—	—	—
December	2	2	—	—	—	—
Total	46	36	10	1	—	1

[1] This table does not include those deaths that occurred in 1992 but not registered until 1993.

TRANSPORT

Motorways

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects *(a)* the M65 to M6/M61 link, *(b)* the widening of the M6 between junctions with the M61 and M55 and *(c)* the widening of the M6 between the junctions with the M56 and M62 to be completed.

Mr. Key: For *(a)* construction is planned to start early next year and is expected to take three years to complete; for *(b)* work is in progress and is expected to be completed by December 1994; and for *(c)* work is again in progress with completion expected in spring 1996.

Continental Freight Depots

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which sites have been designated as continental freight depots; and when construction will commence.

Mr. Freeman: British Rail has selected nine sites, at Glasgow (Mossend), Teesside (Wilton), Wakefield, Manchester (Trafford Park), Liverpool, Birmingham (Landor Street), Cardiff, London (Stratford) and London (Willesden).

Birmingham, Cardiff, Liverpool and Teesside are existing terminals. Trafford Park and Willesden are all but completed. Work at Glasgow is expected to start within the next two months. Construction of the terminal at Wakefield will commence once agreement is reached

between BR and its development partners. Stratford will come on stream once demand warrants a second terminal to serve London and the south-east.

Disabled Passenger Scheme

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what are the expected savings to be made from the repeal of the disabled passenger scheme.

Mr. Key: I understand the saving will be in the region of £500,000 in the first year, based on the approximate annual number of new applications.

Current beneficiaries under this scheme will not lose their entitlement to exemption from vehicle excise duty as a result of the repeal.

Severn Bridge

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what information he has as to the changes in transport movements across the Severn bridge in each of the last three years; and what assessment he has made on the effects of price increases.

Mr. Key: The following figures are for traffic crossing the bridge westbound from England to Wales:

Period	*Number of vehicles (millions)*
May 1990 to April 1991	9·3
May 1991 to April 1992	9·5
May 1992 to April 1993	8·8

It is not at present possible to isolate the effects of toll increases. The increases in April 1992 coincided with the introduction of one-way tolling. It is likely that this will have reduced westbound traffic and increased eastbound traffic.

Arrangments are in hand to monitor traffic from Wales to England.

World Heritage Sites

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many new roads have been built across world heritage sites in Britain in the past five years.

Mr. Key: None in England. Roads in Scotland and Wales are the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Secretary of State for Wales respectively.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

Mr. Stern: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to his answer of 15 July, *Official Report* column *587*, what is the average cost to the DVLA of supplying a printout to a magistrates court of a driver's licence history needed to assist in sentencing; what is the average delay between receipt of a requests from a magistrate's court and the printout being supplied; and what would be the capital and running costs of supplying magistrates courts with live terminals to enable them to obtain the information themselves.

Mr. Key: The current average cost to DVLA for a driver licence printout is £1. Most printouts are despatched from DVLA within five working days of receipt of the request. The cost of supplying magistrates courts with terminals to enable them to obtain the information direct is a matter for My right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor. Such a system would add approximately £0·5 million to DVLA's annual running costs.

Airports

Mr. Dunn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he received the report of the RUCATSE working group into south-east runway capacity; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. MacGregor: I have now received the report. It is a thorough and useful piece of work which will help set the framework for an informed debate on this important subject. The report deals with the issue of the possible need for more runway capacity in the south-east; the timing of that need; and sets out the advantages and disadvantages of development at a number of sites. It makes no recommendations about which site should be developed.

A feature of the working group was its particularly wide-ranging membership. Local area representatives, environmental groups and the air transport industry have all been associated with the analysis set out in the report. I am sure that this diversity will make the report all the more useful. I therefore want to thank all those involved for the time and energy they have devoted to the work.

I am today putting a copy of the report in the Library of the house and will send copies to members with constituencies near those sites subject to detailed assessment.

Given the importance of this subject, I will attach particular weight to the consultation process which begins today. I invite all those with an interest in the subject to let my Department know their views on the issues raised in this report by the end of May 1994.

Motorway Charging

Mr. David Howell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress is being made by his Department in technological methods of charging cars for the use of motorways, with particular reference to electronic charging on motorways funded by the private sector; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The Green Paper, "Paying for Better Motorways" (Cm 2200), which was published on 26 May, describes a number of possible systems of electronic charging for motorways. We keep in close contact with technological developments in this country and abroad. In particular Department of Transport representatives participate in the relevant European bodies undertaking research and development standards for possible future applications.

M25

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he has anything to add to his answer of 19 July concerning the additional flows of vehicles on the M25 motorway expected from the construction of a single additional lane; and what approximate increase he expects in vehicle flows in vehicles per hour and in overall percentage terms.

Mr. Key: I have nothing to add to my answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, columns 75-76.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies he has made of delays on motorways occasioned by various factors, other than traffic demand; and if he will now make a comprehensive study of all causes of delay on the M25 before authorising public expenditure on additional lanes or new parallel roads.

Mr. Key: Studies have been made of roadworks sites from which estimates of delays can be made. We also currently have a research contract running to study the effects of incidents, for example, accidents and breakdowns, on the operation of motorways generally which will enable delays due to such incidents to be estimated.

I have no plans for a study of delays for the M25.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measurements have been made of delays to vehicles wishing to join the M25 motorway between its intersections with the M3 and M40, other than those occasioned by accidents, shed loads, roadworks or other non-demand factors.

Mr. Key: No measurements have been made of delays to traffic wishing to join the M25 between its junctions with the M3 and M40 from any causes.

Mr. Dunn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement about his plans for improving the M25.

Mr. MacGregor: The M25 is the hub of the national motorway network. Many other motorways—M1, M40, M4, M3, M23, M20, M11 and A1(M) lead off it. It is, therefore, a key component in the movement of long-distance national and international traffic, in particular by enabling traffic from the midlands and the north of England to reach the south-east and the channel without going through London. It is essential for our industry and commerce, upon which we depend for our further economic prosperity, that it should work effectively. Besides its national importance, it is also very important at the regional level, playing a major part in the economic development of the south-east.

This importance is reflected in its very heavy use. The White Paper "Roads for Prosperity", published in May 1989, announced plans to widen the whole of the motorway to dual four-lane standard as part of the motorway widening programme. Work on this is proceeding. Widening between junctions 15 and 16 is currently in progress and earlier this year we consulted local interests on our proposals for widening within existing highway boundaries between junctions 7 and 8 and 10 and 11.

However, it has become clear that on certain sections in particular traffic volumes have been rising and will continue to rise to the point where dual four lanes will not be enough to prevent chronic congestion. This problem is particularly acute on the section between junctions 12 and 15—between the M3 and the M4. That is why, as a first phase, we published in June 1992 proposals for dual three-lane link roads to augment the existing dual four-lane road. Although these proposals were welcomed in some quarters, they attracted understandable concern in others, particularly from those living near the motorway. I have, therefore, considered very carefully all the issues raised by those who question the justification for these proposals. My conclusion is that the balance of public interest lies in taking these proposals forward and that the link roads should proceed to the next stage in the statutory process.

In reaching my conclusion, I have looked particularly carefully at alternatives to the link road proposals. I do not believe that any of these would be an adequate response to the magnitude of the problem. Even with improved traffic management, such as the pilot scheme I have recently announced for controlled motorway operation, additional capacity will be needed. Without it, heavy lorries and other long-distance traffic will increasingly divert to the local road network to the point where conditions become intolerable for local people. Nor is increased use of rail transport a feasible option; there are no existing lines able to cope with the variety of journeys of those using the motorway and it is unrealistic to consider building new lines, nor would they match up to requirements. The link roads, moreover, are designed for purposes other than commuting and other journeys into London.

Junctions 12 to 15 present the most pressing problem, which we have addressed first. But junctions 15 to 16 between the M4 and the M40 will also present a serious congestion problem in future, even after current widening to four lanes is completed. I am therefore today launching a public consultation on link roads on this stretch as well.

However, in deciding to proceed to public inquiry for junctions 12 to 15 and to launch a public consultation for junctions 15 to 16, I can give a number of assurances.

First, I have no plans for similiar link roads around the whole of the motorway. I forsee no need at all for widening beyond D4 between junctions 3 to 10 and junctions 21 to 30. I cannot rule out the need for widening beyond D4 on the remaining stretches—junctions 10 to 12, junctions 16 to 21 and junctions 30 to 3. The need for this will not become clear until future work has been carried out by consultants and any proposals would not necessarily be in the form of dual three-lane link roads. A solution involving fewer additional lanes might be acceptable.

Secondly, I am determined that the greatest attention should be given to the environmental aspects of the proposals. The fact that we are intending to devote some two thirds of the land taken on junctions 12 to 15 to mitigation measures, including extensive landscaping and planting, not only shows my enthusiam for this but means that there will be considerable landscaping and noise barrier improvements over the existing section. And the proposals will naturally be subject to a very full environmental impact assessment in conformity with EC directives and the Department's new manual of environmental assessment, which can be considered at the inquiry.

Thirdly, my intention to proceed with the link roads does not imply any diminution in the Government's committment in the regional strategy for the south-east to encourage investment to the east of London. We have a very substantial programme of investment in road improvements to the east to which we shall continue to give high priority within the public spending constraints we face. For example, work is starting this year on the £200 million Hackney-M11 link.

Fourthly, the Government continue to be strongly committed to improving conditions for rail users on Network SouthEast and users of other public transport.

Last year, investment in London Transport and Network SouthEast was running at three times that in roads in London. The citizens charter commits us to improving conditions for both road and rail users and I intend to honour this commitment.

The Government are currently consulting on the introduction of charges or tolls for the motorway network —"Paying for Better Motorways", Cm. 2200. No decisions have yet been taken, but if the Government decide to pursue a policy of charging or tolling and the necessary legislation is passed by Parliament, the M25, including the link roads, could be part of the charged network. I do not expect any motorway charging system that might be introduced in the future to remove the urgent need to increase the capacity of these already over-used sections of the M25. Depending on the results of the consultation exercise and subsequent decisions and legislation, these and other motorways widening schemes could also be candidates for private financing.

A copy of the detailed departmental response to the proposals for junctions 12 to 15 has been placed in the Library. Copies have already been circulated to those who commented and other interested parties. Copies of the public consultation document on junctions 15 to 16 are also available.

Crossrail

Mr. Livingstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consideration he has given to the reactivation, or construction of additional stations on the proposed alignment of the Crossrail link between Westbourne Park and Wembley Park, with particular reference to those providing interchange with main bus routes.

Mr. Norris: It is for the promoters of the CrossRail Bill to consider whether such stations would be justified in operational and financial terms. I understand that several possible station sites are being considered.

Land Compensation Act 1973

Sir Keith Speed: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much compensation has been paid by his Department under part I of the Land Compensation Act 1973 for each of the past five years.

Mr. Key: The amounts paid in recent years are £9·6 million in 1989-90, £36·1 million in 1990-91, £31·1 million in 1991-92 and £36·5 million in 1992-93. I regret that information for 1988-89 and earlier years is not readily available.

Rail Tracks

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what safety training is given to contractors' staff working on British Rail tracks; and what assessment he has made as to the adequacy of these arrangements.

Mr. Freeman: Contractors' staff working on British Rail tracks receive the same thorough safety training as British Rail employees exposed to the same risks. Improving the safety of all personnel working on tracks is a strategic objective in British Rail's safety plan. The Health and Safety Executive's railway inspectorate monitors the safety arrangements for railway employees and contractors.

Alcohol-related Offences

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport in what circumstances *(a)* EC nationals and *(b)* non-EC nationals may legally drive in the United Kingdom while banned from driving for alcohol-related offences in their own countries; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The removal of the right to drive in another member state or other non-EC country applies only in that jurisdiction. Drivers banned in other countries may drive here provided they are not banned in the United Kingdom. Work has recently started under European political co-operation in the judicial co-operation working group on criminal matters to explore the possibility of an agreement which would mean that a driver disqualified from driving in one member state would not be able to drive elsewhere in the Community.

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport in what circumstances persons banned from driving by British courts for alcohol-related offences may legally drive in other EC countries during the period of their suspension; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The jurisdiction of the British courts only applies to this country. Drivers banned here may legally drive elsewhere in the European Community.

Peter and Michael Whiting

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the deaths of Peter and Michael Whiting at Ospringe bridge on 14 July.

Mr. Freeman: I much regret to report that at 14.45 on Wednesday 14 July two contractors were struck and killed by the 13.35 Victoria to Dover Western Docks train while working at Ospringe Road bridge, Faversham. The contractors were employed by Lowery of Ashford. Network SouthEast is conducting an internal inquiry into the accident. An inspecting officer from the Health and Safety Executive's railway inspectorate also attended the scene and made inquiries. HSE will consider the findings of these investigations and decide whether any action is necessary.

British Rail

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* British Rail staff and *(b)* contractors' staff have been killed in the course of their duties in each of the past five years.

Mr. Freeman: The Health and Safety Executive's railway inspectorate maintains records of railways accidents and casualties. However, its records do not differentiate between railway operator and contractors' staff, nor do they readily differentiate between railway operators.

Fatalities in respect of railway and contractors' staff for the latest available five-year period are:

	Number
1987	16
1988	16
1989	18
1990	22
[1]1991-92	17

[1]The 1991-92 period runs from April 1991 to March 1992. There were five fatalities in the first three months of 1991.

WALES

Disabled Children

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement outlining the progress made to date by local authorities in Wales on maintaining registers of disabled children; and when he expects the first registers to be completed.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Two local authorities indicate that registers have been established. Two authorities hope to complete the register within six to nine months. Another is writing to parents seeking consent to inclusion of children's names on the register and cannot predict the date of completion. Three authorities plan inter-agency consultation later this year to establish unified registers.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what research has been undertaken by his Department concerning the availability of locally based respite care facilities for children with disabilities in Wales.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The range of local respite care services in Wales was identified in paragraphs 3.11-3.14 of the report of a survey undertaken by social services inspectorate, Wales in August 1991 on "Organisation of Services to Children with a Disability".

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information he has on the number of local authorities in Wales which *(a)* provide advice and counselling to children with disabilities and their parents, *(b)* prepare children with disabilities for independence, *(c)* provide respite care for children with disabilities and *(d)* provide full-time accommodation for children with disabilities.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: All authorities have indicated that they provide these services.

Organophosphate Poisoning

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information he has on the number of patients treated within hospitals in Wales for organophosphate poisoning by health authority area in each year since 1987.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Based on information supplied by hospitals, the number of discharges and deaths of people treated as in-patients or day cases in NHS hospitals in Wales for toxic effects of organophosphate and carbamate for the years requested is given as follows:

Discharges and deaths of in-patients and day cases treated for toxic effect of organophosphate and carbamate[1]

Health Authority of residence	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*
Clwyd	2	1	—	—
Gwent	2	—	—	1
Mid Glamorgan	—	—	—	1
South Glamorgan	1	—	—	1
West Glamorgan	2	1	—	—

[1] Figures may understate the true position in that not all hospitals supply complete medical details on patient discharges and deaths.

Speech Therapists

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the ratio of schoolchildren aged between three and 19 years to speech therapists in each local education authority in Wales.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The information requested is not centrally available.

Respite Care

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the local authorities in Wales who provide respite care *(a)* within the context of planned packages of care, *(b)* as relief care only and *(c)* on an emergency basis.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: All local authorities in Wales arrange respite care as *(a)* planned packages of care, *(b)* relief care only and *(c)* on an emergency basis, and all identified respite care in different forms as part of their social care plans and within their plans under the mental handicap and mental illness strategies.

Village Halls

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will provide additional funds to assist village halls in Wales to implement the requirements of *(a)* the Children Act 1989 and *(b)* EC directives on hygiene.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Financial support to village halls is available under a number of schemes, including the strategic development scheme, the capital grants to voluntary youth services, village halls and community centres programme, and the social grants scheme operated by the Development Board for Rural Wales. Expenditure incurred for the purposes of compliance with the Children Act and EC directives on food hygiene is eligible for consideration under these schemes; and is funded from within existing provision.

Decisions on resources available under these schemes for 1994-95 have not yet been taken.

Hospital Waiting Lists

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans he has to introduce measures enabling patients awaiting hospital treatment to transfer from hospitals with longer waiting lists for that particular treatment, to hospitals with shorter waiting lists.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: General practitioners already have the ability to refer patients to hospitals, or consultants, with the shortest waiting lists. The waiting times information service and Health Line Wales have been established to provide patients and GPs with accurate and up-to-date information on waiting times.

The decision to refer a patient to a particular hospital or consultant depends upon many factors, however. These include not only the length of the waiting list but also the suitability of the treatment available and the patient's own wishes. Where appropriate, I hope that general practitioners will seek to pursue the shortest waiting lists for their patients.

Pensioners

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many persons of pensionable age were revealed in the 1991 census in Wales.

Mr. Redwood: The 1991 census recorded 570,932 persons of pensionable age resident in Wales.

Secure Unit Report

Mr. Sweeney: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, pursuant to his answer of 8 July, *Official Report*, column *273*, whether the consultant's report on the proposed new secure unit in south Wales has now been received; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The joint Welsh Office and local authority working party has wholeheartedly adopted the feasibility report of its consultants, submitted to it at its meeting on 16 July. The report clearly recommended a site in west Glamorgan for the location of the proposed regional secure unit and it is now for that authority to consider the report before submitting a grant application to the Welsh Office. I very much hope that they come to an early decision to proceed so that work on the new unit can commence as quickly as possible.

Development Board for Rural Wales

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he intends to lay before Parliament regulations to govern the disposal of the housing stock owned by the Development Board for Rural Wales.

Mr. Redwood: The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 empowers me to make regulations to govern the disposal of housing stock owned by the Development Board for Rural Wales. I have today laid such regulations before the House.

In December 1991, draft regulations for this purpose were subject to public consultation. In framing these proposals, due consideration was given to existing provisions for disposal of new town housing in England, but also to the fact that the board owns houses in four different local authority areas; to the very sizeable proportion of the total social rented housing stock in Mid-Wales that the board's stock represents; to matters of timing; and to the likelihood of a continued role for the board in promoting development in its areas after the disposal of its housing stock.

Views were sought on the questions of the appropriate way to decide the outcome of any formal consultation, that is to say whether the outcome should reflect the majority view or the individual preference of all who vote.

All the responses to the public consultation have been carefully considered.

I have decided upon some changes to the draft regulations featured in that consultation, and to act upon certain comments through administrative means as and when appropriate.

A list of those who responded has been placed in the Library of the House. Most respondents who commented on the matter believed that the outcome of a formal consultation should reflect the majority view. Having considered this, I, too, am now persuaded by arguments that this will be appropriate in the mid-Wales context, will be simple, and will encourage serious prospective landlords to come forward, thus giving tenants the greatest choice reasonably possible. The regulations which I have laid before Parliament provide for this.

I expect the disposal process to take approximately two years to complete and shall task the board to publish a proposed timetable.

Under the regulations, the board's housing will be sold to social landlords—housing associations or local authorities—and will be available for social renting. Housing associations will be able to meet the price by borrowing against the expected net income. Local authorities will be issued with supplementary credit approvals to cover the purchase price, if they are successful.

In all this, tenants' interests will be respected. Those who transfer to local authorities will remain secure tenants, benefiting from the rights described in my council tenants charter. Those who transfer to housing associations will become assured tenants, and benefit from the rights secured through the tenants guarantee issued by Housing for Wales. Existing tenants' right to buy will continue in each case.

The flexi-ownership scheme operated by the board will be discontinued. An earlier consultation on proposals to introduce a national rents-to-mortgages scheme for council tenants, sought views on whether it should extend to secure tenants who transfer to housing associations. Our conclusion in the light of the responses we received was that it should not, so the statutory scheme will apply only to tenants who transfer to local authorities.

I do not expect that all the board's stock will be disposed of to a single new landlord; its geographical spread makes this unlikely. Terms of all disposals will be subject to negotiations between board and prospective new landlords.

In the regulations, I have provided for tenants' views to be taken into account in drawing up the short-list of prospective landlords for each parcel of stock, and in deciding how the stock should be divided; and, of course, for their collective wishes to decide the outcome of any contest between prospective landlords. I propose to provide funds for the tenants to receive professional advice throughout the process of disposal to underpin the exercise of their legal rights.

The development board will have the responsibility, under the regulations, to transact the business of disposal, but all disposals will be subject to my consent, as the statute requires.

Subsequent disposals of stock by a new landlord will also be subject to my consent, other than exempt disposals such as to a sitting tenant with the right to buy. My consent for a subsequent disposal will be given only if there is good reason for it.

The board will remain able to promote mid-Wales development effectively after disposal of its housing. We shall continue to address requirements for new social housing in mid-Wales, primarily through Housing for Wales and locally active housing associations, whatever the outcome of the disposal process.

The provisions which I have laid before the House will ensure expeditious and appropriate disposal of the board's stock; will secure tenants' interests, offer them the greatest choice reasonably possible, and respect their collective wishes; and will permit continued effective promotion of mid-Wales development.

ENVIRONMENT

Composting Scheme, Kirklees

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make it his policy to monitor the composting scheme introduced by Kirklees council.

Mr. Baldry: The Kirklees scheme, which has been supported by my Department's supplementary credit approvals programme, is one of a number of imaginative composting schemes being run by local authorities and other organisations throughout the country.

We are currently reviewing our programme of work on monitoring pilot recycling collection schemes. As part of this review, we will consider whether to include composting schemes such as the one introduced by Kirklees council.

Council Rents

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what was the increase in average council rents between 1989-90 and 1993-94.

Mr. Baldry: The estimated average weekly unrebated rent for local authority dwellings in England in 1989-90 was £20·86 and the provisional figure for 1993-94 is £33·54, an increase of 61 per cent.

Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the local authorities which have written to his Department in support of a new public inquiry into any proposed discharge authorisation associated with the development of THORP.

Mr. Yeo: The information which the hon. Member requests is not readily available. I assure him, however, that all the relevant correspondence has been read and considered and the views expressed will be taken into account in the deliberations of my right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for the Environment and the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Disabled Facilities Grant

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to extend the scope of works covered by the disabled facilities grant.

Mr. Baldry: None. Disabled facilities grants are already available for a wide range of mandatory and discretionary adaptation works to benefit disabled people.

Outer-city Areas

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what research his Department has commissioned or conducted into the specific problems encountered by outer-city areas.

Mr. Baldry: In managing its sizeable research effort the Department recognises the need to identify problems wherever they occur. Much of the research it commissions on housing renewal and urban regeneration as well as land use planning is relevant to the various problems encountered in outer-city areas. Individual studies are listed in the Department's annual newsletters, which are available in the House of Commons Library.

Organochlorines

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what research has been undertaken by his Department upon the effect of organochlorines on aquatic ecosystems.

Mr. Yeo: Organochlorines have an extremely wide diversity of forms and uses and many occur naturally. Environmental concern about their aquatic effects relates to those substances which might be particularly toxic, persistent or bioaccumulative, as reflected in lists I and II of EC directive 76/464 on dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment and in the new north-east Atlantic convention.

The Department has a programme of research directed at establishing environmental quality standards for priority substances of this nature where these have not been suitably researched within the EC programme of work. This includes consideration of a variety of organnochlorines. Reports of the research studies are widely available through the Department Library.

Housing (Disabled People)

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what instruction will be issued by his Department to local authorities to meet the housing needs of disabled people in their arrangements for community care.

Mr. Baldry: My Department and the Department of Health jointly issued guidance to English local authorities about their role under the community care arrangements in circular 10/92, "Housing and Community Care", on 24 September 1992. A copy of the circular is in the Library of the House.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what action has been undertaken to date by his Department resulting from the Ernst and Young research report into the housing needs of disabled people; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: The study of the housing needs of elderly and disabled people commissioned by the Department from Ernst and Young management consultants has now been completed and a series of reports on discrete elements of the project are being prepared. The intention is to publish a summary report later this year and provide the individual reports on request. It is also proposed to produce guidance to local housing authorities on methods for assessing the housing needs of elderly people and the comparative costs of different housing and housing with care options to meet their needs.

My Department will also be publishing the findings from a separate but related study, to which Ernst and Young contributed, on the role of housing agency service in enabling disabled people to remain in the community or transfer out of institutions. It is planned to publish this report next month.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what additional resources have been made available to local authorities towards meeting the housing needs of disabled people resulting from the implementation of community care.

Mr. Baldry: Community care in itself creates no new category of entitlement to housing and housing needs

which are identified by community care planning and individual assessments should be considered alongside existing processess and local priorities. The resources available to authorities should allow the proper discharge of their responsibilities to all sections of the community.

City Grant

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list those projects in the west midlands region that have received city grant funding in each year since 1988.

Mr. Baldry: The information requested is shown:

	Approved Grant (£)
1988-89	
Birmingham	
Startpoint industrial units	283,000
Kings Norton business centre	1,260,000
The Bond office	361,355
Coventry	
Seven Stars industrial estate	1,627,000
Sandwell	
Windmill Lane housing	775,000
Total	4,306,355
1989-90	
Birmingham	
Bordesley village housing, phase 1	1,401,257
Waterlinks mixed development (Aston Cross)	6,200,000
Browning street housing	902,000
Constitution hill indian restaurant	67,933
Jewellery business centre	934,271
Arcadian centre mixed development	3,200,000
Garrison Lane industrial units	570,000
Coventry	
Hay lane offices and shops	624,000
Dudley	
Washington centre	3,500,000
Sandwell	
Batmans hill housing	1,399,431
Walsall	
Davenport warehouse and offices	110,000
Walsall chamber of commerce offices	68,377
Wolverhampton	
St Marks church offices	368,865
Total	19,346,134
1990-91	
Birmingham	
Holford phase II	6,329,000
Bordesley village housing	3,720,603
Europa distribution depot	175,000
Coventry	
Harnall lane housing	592,000
Dudley	
Sandhar's discount store	85,000
Bloomfield Park Tipton trading estate	1,660,000
Sandwell	
Kings hill business park	1,388,500
Wolverhampton	
Old Heath road units	154,421
Total	14,104,524
1991-92	
Birmingham	
Crosby works offices	126,350
Birmingham Cable Ltd. HQ	345,650
Scott house media workspace	800,000
Waterlinks house offices	1,133,000
Trafalgar road housing	595,985
Dudley	
Grazebrook industrial park	3,736,020
Colonial works industrial units	1,195,290
Waterfront Cophorne hotel	1,139,000
Waterfront west office development	899,500
Charlotte streets units	197,082
New road industrial units	475,885
Waterfront west offices phase II	705,870
Sandwell	
Sandwell Golf Centre	40,500
Regis court offices	60,000
Tipton office development	125,462
Walsall	
Tame works managed workspace	431,000
Wolverhampton	
Lanesfield drive industrial units	1,480,062
Tettenhall road offices	740,300
Wrekin	
Telford exhibition centre	371,000
Total	14,597,956
1992-93	
Birmingham	
Bordesley village housing Phase III	206,000
Coventry	
Parkside offices phase I	580,000
Dudley	
Waterfront point north offices	2,903,025
Waterfront west business park	2,432,420
Wollaston road housing	1,302,612
Wolverhampton	
Shaw park offices Mk 2	112,000
Springvale industrial units	2,282,000
Spring road industrial units	670,680
Wolverhampton racecourse redevelopment	3,037,000
Bushbury lane industrial units	113,000
Total	13,638,737
1993 to date	
Dudley	
Addison road housing	760,000
Kings court offices/shops	250,000
Wrekin	
Station road housing, Telford	434,000
Total	1,444,000
Grand Total	67,437,706

Building and Fire Advisory Committees

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will place in the Library copies of the minutes of meetings of the Buildings Regulations Advisory Committee and the Fire Advisory Panel.

Mr. Baldry: No. Both the Buildings Regulations Advisory Committee and the Fire Advisory Panel are appointed to advise my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on matters relating to the Building Regulations. Such advice is confidential, as are the minutes of their meetings recording the discussions leading to that advice.

Local Authority Housing

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many local authority-owned houses were empty at the last date at which figures were available; what information he has on the length of time they had been vacant; what is his estimate of the rent forgone for each local authority during the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: At 1 April 1992 the number of local authority owned properties in England that were empty and available for letting, either immediately or after minor works—that is, excluding dwellings awaiting major works or due to be sold or demolished—was 40,400, representing 1·1 per cent. of all local authority dwellings.

The available information on the length of time these dwellings had been vacant is as follows:

Time vacant	*Number of dwellings vacant*
Three weeks or less	15,400
Over three weeks but not more than six weeks	8,900
Over six weeks but not more than six months	10,600
Over six months but not more than one year	2,400
Over one year	3,200
Total	40,400

The number of empty local authority dwellings available for letting, either immediately or after minor works fell substantially between April 1990, when it stood at 51,500—1·3 per cent. of all dwellings—and April 1992 as a result of improved management performance by local authorities.

Estimates are not compiled centrally of the rent forgone while dwellings are vacant.

Accessible Housing

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what instructions will be issued to housing departments' building control and planning authorities by his Department to clarify their relationships and respective responsibilities with regard to the provision of accessible housing.

Mr. Baldry: The Building Regulations Advisory Committee is currently studying the desirability and practicability of extending part M of the Building Regulations, covering access for disabled people, to cover dwellings. Once I have received that advice I will consider what further guidance is given to local authorities.

Local Authorities (Gas Supplies)

Dr. Hampson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what information he holds as to how many local authorities in England now receive all or part of their gas supply from a supplier other than British Gas.

Mr. Baldry: None.

Councillors—Electors Ratio

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what guidelines have been given to the Commission reviewing local government about the optimum councillor/elector ratio.

Mr. Baldry: None. The ratio of councillors to electors must be as nearly as possible the same in every electoral division or ward in an authority. Beyond that, it is a matter for the commission's judgment in each review area.

Local Government Review, Durham

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will ensure the results of the MORI poll commissioned by the Local Government Commission in relation to Durham are published immediately upon completion of the poll.

Mr. Baldry: Decisions on publication are for MORI and the Local Government Commission.

Council Tax

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the environment (1) what is his latest estimate of the total number in each council tax band in England of *(a)* dwellings, *(b)* exempt dwellings, *(c)* chargeable dwellings that are subject to a disabled reduction, *(d)* diplomats dwellings, *(e)* chargeable dwellings entitled to a single discount for the purposes of council tax, *(f)* chargeable dwellings that are entitled to two discounts for the purposes of council tax and *(g)* total equivalent number of dwellings after discounts, exemptions, and disabled relief;

(2) what is his latest estimate of the number of band D equivalents in each council tax band in England;

(3) what is his latest estimate of the number of dwellings on the valuation list in England that were exempt in each class A to Q.

Mr. Gummer: The statistical returns from local authorities which contain the information requested are currently being processed. I will provide the information as soon as it is available.

Rent-a-room Scheme

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) how many rooms have been let under the rent-a-room scheme; and how many of these rooms have come into letting since the scheme began;

(2) if he will identify the cost of the rent-a-room scheme in its first year of operation; and what the anticipated cost is for 1993-94.

Mr. Baldry: Information about the number of rooms let under the rent-a-room scheme can only be obtained from housing surveys. Information about the cost of the scheme can only be obtained from a special analysis of tax returns. Data are not available from either source yet.

There are no forecasts of the costs in either 1992-93 or 1993-94.

City Challenge

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many city challenge projects he has visited.

Mr. Baldry: Since he took up office, the Secretary of State has visited a number of city challenge projects. City challenge partnerships also receive regular visits from the sponsor Minister and other Ministers in this Department.

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many city challenge authorities have now initiated exit strategies.

Mr. Baldry: Many city challenge partnerships have begun to plan their exit strategies. My Department will be issuing guidance on this in due course, and we expect partnerships to consider their strategies in the light of that.

Social Housing

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what are the space and standard requirements for new social housing development schemes.

Mr. Baldry: There are no space requirements for new social housing development schemes. Other standards, which the Housing Corporation requires as a condition of grant or loan to housing associations, are set out in part 4 of the Housing Corporation's procedure guide. A copy of this guide has been placed in the Library.

Housing Corporation

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he expects to be able to respond to the recommendations made by the Environment Committee in its second report of Session 1992-93 on the Housing Corporation, HC 466.

Mr. Baldry: My right hon. Friend is currently considering the Select Committee's report and expects to produce a full response shortly after the summer recess.

Nuclear Waste

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what estimates have been made of the health risks to the United Kingdom population from the proposal by British Nuclear Fuels for substitution of wastes equivalent to quantities of high-level waste.

Mr. Yeo: The Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee's views were sought on the likely radiological and environmental impact for the United Kingdom of British Nuclear Fuels' proposals for waste substitution. As I have said in the answer I gave on 28 June to the hon. Member for Islington, South and Finsbury (Mr. Smith), *Official Report*, columns *387-88*, RWMAC has been asked to do further work.

Water Prices

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) what has been the increase in water prices in England in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms since water privatisation;

(2) what has been the increase in water prices in England in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms since 1979.

Mr. Yeo: Between 1979-80 and 1989-90 the average domestic water rate bill increased nationally by 187 per cent. in cash terms—a real terms increase of 45·2 per cent.

Since privatisation, the weighted average increase in water charges in England in cash terms has been 52·1 per cent.—a real terms increase of 21·2 per cent.

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what has been the increases in water prices in the areas served by *(a)* the Mid Kent Water Company and *(b)* the West Kent Water Company in (i) cash and (ii) real terms since water privatisation.

Mr. Yeo: Since privatisation, the increase in water charges in Mid Kent Water Company's area in cash terms has been 55·3 per cent.—a real terms increase of 24·2 per cent. The increase in water charges in West Kent Water Company's area in cash terms has been 84·9 per cent.—a real terms increase of 49·8 per cent.

Local Government Reorganisation

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to change the guidelines for the current review of local government structure; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: We are always ready to consider whether the guidance which we have issued to the Local Government Commission needs updating or clarifying.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the timetable for implementing local government reorganisation in the first tranche of local authorities.

Mr. Baldry: We have announced that any new structure for the Isle of Wight would be implemented on 1 April 1995. The timing of implementation in other first tranche areas will depend on the nature of the final recommendations.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the future of the review and reorganisation of local government in Cleveland.

Mr. Baldry: The Local Government Commission is currently preparing its final report on the review of Cleveland and Durham, which is due to be submitted by 21 November. The Secretary of State will then consider whether the recommendations should be implemented. The final decision on any changes rests with Parliament.

Water Quality

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list each of the items of EC legislation concerning the cleanliness of water that the United Kingdom is legally bound to implement; and if he will list for each item whether the United Kingdom supported or opposed it at a vote in the EC.

Mr. Yeo: With one exception, the directives relating to water quality listed below were adopted by unanimity under the provisions of the treaty of Rome. The titanium

dioxide directive (92/112/EEC) was adopted by a qualified majority with United Kingdom support. In many, if not all, cases, changes will have been made in negotiation at the request of the United Kingdom.

Water Directives (July 1993)

1. Detergents (73/404/EEC of 22 November 1973)
2. Testing of anionic surfactants (73/405/EEC of 22 November 1973)
3. Quality of surface water abstracted for drinking (75/440/EEC of 16 June 1975)
4. Quality of bathing water (76/160/EEC of 8 December 1975)
5. Discharges of dangerous substances (76/464/EEC of 4 May 1976)
6. Exchange of information on surface water quality (as amended) (77/795/EEC of 12 December 1977, and 86/574/EEC of 24 November 1986)
7. Waste from TiO_1 industry (78/176/EEC of 20 February 1978)
8. Quality of fresh waters for fish life (78/659/EEC of 18 July 1978)
9. Methods of measurement etc, of surface water for drinking (79/869/EEC of 9 October 1979)
10. Quality of shell fish waters (79/923/EEC of 30 October 1979)
11. Protection of groundwater (80/68/EEC of 17 December 1979)
12. Exploitation and marketing of natural mineral waters (80/777/EEC of 15 July 1980)
13. Quality of water for human consumption (80/778/EEC of 15 July 1980)
14. Methods of testing the biodegradability of anionic surfactants (82/243/EEC of 31 March 1982)
15. Methods of testing the biodegradability of non-ionic surfactants (82/242/EEC of 31 March 1982)
16. Mercury from the chlor-alkali electrolysis industry (82/176/EEC of 22 March 1982)
17. On the major accident hazards of certain industrial activities [Seveso] (82/501/EEC of 5 August 1982)
18. Titanium dioxide monitoring (82/883/EEC of 3 December 1982)
19. Titanium dioxide (timetable) (83/29/EEC of 24 January 1983)
20. Limit values and quality objectives for cadmium discharges (83/513/EEC of 26 September 1983)
21. Laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations (83/189/EEC of 28 March 1983)
22. Limit values and quality objectives for mercury discharges—sectors other than the chlor-alkali electrolysis industry (84/156/EEC of 8 March 1984)
23. Limit values and quality objectives for HCH discharges (84/491/EEC of 9 October 1984)
24. Second amendment of 73/404/EEC—detergents (86/94/EEC of 10 March 1986)
25. Use of sewage sludge in agriculture (86/278/EEC of 12 June 1986)
26. Limit values and quality objectives for discharges of certain dangerous substances included in List I of the Annex to Directive 76/464/EEC [CTC, DDT, PCP] (86/280/EEC of 12 June 1986)
27. Prevention and reduction of environment pollution by asbestos (87/217/EEC of 28 March 1987)
28. Amending annex II to directive 86/280/EEC: discharges of drains, HCB, HCBD, chloroform (88/347/EEC of 16 June 1988)
29. Titanium dioxide (harmonisation of programmes)—annuled by decision of the ECJ 11 June 1991 and replaced by 92/112/EEC (89/428/EECf 21 June 1989)
30. On the freedom of access to information on the environment (90/313/EEC of June 1990)
31. Amending annex II to directive 86/280/EEC: discharges of EDC, TRI, PER, TCB (90/415/EEC of 27 July 1990)
32. Concerning urban waste water treatment (91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991)
33. Concerning the protection of fresh, coastal and marine waters against pollution caused by nitrates from diffuse sources (91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991)
34. On standardising and rationalising reports on the implementation of certain directives relating to the environment (91/692/EEC of 23 December 1991)
35. On procedures for harmonising the programmes for the reduction and eventual elimination of pollution caused by waste from the titanium dioxide industry (92/112/EEC of 15 December 1992)

Companies (Local Authority Interests)

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what proposals he has to take powers to regulate companies in which local authorities have interests under part V of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Mr. Baldry: My right hon. Friend will be going out to consultation shortly on proposals designed to implement the provision of part V of the 1989 Act on this subject.

Local Government Commission

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to amend the terms of reference, working methods or personnel of the Local Government Commission.

Mr. Baldry: The Local Government Commission's terms of reference are laid down in the Local Government Act 1992. In carrying out its reviews, the commission must have regard both to the requirements of section 15 of the Act, and of the procedural guidance which we have issued to it. It is otherwise free to determine its own working methods. The commission is responsible for making its own staffing arrangements. We have no current plans to make fresh appointments to the commission.

Wild Birds

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representations he has received from the French authorities regarding any relaxation of controls on the hunting and trapping of wild birds.

Mr. Yeo: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave to him earlier today.

Cornwall (Storm Damage)

Mr. Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will provide financial assistance to local authorities in Cornwall to compensate them for emergency work undertaken as a result of damage caused by storms and floods during the period 9 to 12 June.

Mr. Baldry: Yes. My right hon. Friend is satisfied that financial relief under the Bellwin scheme would be justified in this case because of the exceptional nature of the flooding in Cornwall. Accordingly, the Secretary of State has decided, with the consent of the Treasury, to establish a scheme of assistance under section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in respect of expenditure relating to damage caused by the storms and floods in Cornwall in June 1993. Grant will be paid to reimburse local authorities for 85 per cent. of eligible costs incurred above threshold. North Cornwall district council had advised the Department that it has incurred expenditure above its threshold. It is expected that grant to that authority is likely to be in the region of £16,000.

Crown Office Buildings, Edinburgh

Mr. Raymond S. Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to sell, or otherwise dispose of, the Crown Office building, the Old Royal high school, in Edinburgh.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 9 June 1993]:* The future use of the Old Royal high school in Edinburgh is being given active consideration by Property Holdings which is in discussion with the Scottish Office on the possibility of its continued use by the Scottish Grand Committee. No decision has yet been taken.

DEFENCE

Infantry Battalions

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future location of the two additional infantry battalions he announced on 3 February, *Official Report*, column *320*.

Mr. Hanley: A number of options for providing sufficient accommodation to house the two additional infantry battalions have been examined. I am pleased to announce I have decided that Sir John Moore barracks, Shorncliffe, which would otherwise have been disposed of as a result of the cessation of infantry junior leaders training there, will be retained in the Army estate as one of the two new permanent infantry barracks required.

Possible locations for a second infantry barracks are still under review.

Training

Mr. Ian Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made on improving provision for Army special-to-arm and service, and career, training.

Mr. Hanley: My right hon. Friend the Member for Epsom and Ewell (Mr. Hamilton) announced on 16 December 1992, *Official Report*, column *335-36*, the principles for further restructuring the training organisation and improving provision for special to arm and service and career training. It is our intention, where possible, that such training will be concentrated in single centres with any further training done at the minimum number of wings. This part of the review is nearly complete and we now need to begin detailed planning.

We propose that the training of the Royal Armoured Corps should be concentrated at Bovington, although gunnery training would continue to be carried out at Lulworth and Castlemartin. Training of the Royal Artillery would be concentrated at Larkhill, with firing training being carried out, as at present, at the ranges at Manorbier and the Hebrides. Training of the Royal Engineers would be concentrated at Chatham with a wing at Minley and some minor facilities at Chattenden. Training of the Royal Signals would, as outlined on 16 December 1992, be concentrated at Blandford and as a result the operational signals regiment currently located there would transfer to Bramcote and the defence automatic data processing training centre would move in the short term to the Royal College of Military Science at Shrivenham. The transfer of the Royal Signals from Catterick would allow the infrantry to concentrate special to arm training there with subsequent career and instructor training being carried out at both Warminster and Brecon.

Training of the Royal Logistic Corps would be mainly done at Deepcut, with apprentice and catering training at Aldershot. The training of drivers would be concentrated at Leconfield. Training of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers would be concentrated at Arborfield with a wing at Bordon. This would also include the relocation of the School of Aeronautical Engineering from Middle Wallop to Arborfield. The training of Army medical services would be carried out at Mytchett. Further work is in hand on the location of training for the Adjutant Generals Corps and of adventurous training.

Changes resulting from earlier measures to rationalise Army training at a smaller number of centres, thus reducing overheads, are already under way and we propose that this next phase should begin in early 1994. It is planned that some barracks affected by these proposals would pass to the Field Army, but the training facilities at Harrogate, Ouston, Strensall and Church Crookham and parts of Chattenden, Netheravon and Deepcut would no longer be required. We will be examining the potential for alternative defence uses for these establishments. It is not therefore possible at this stage to say what the detailed implications for civilian staff might be.

Full consultation with the trade unions on the above proposals will take place in the normal way before final decisions are taken.

AWE Aldermaston

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research AWE Aldermaston is conducting into methods for decommissioning radioactive plant and buildings on site.

Mr. Aitken: AWE has a continuing research and development programme to define and improve techniques and equipment for decommissioning radioactive plant and buildings on site. The work ranges from developing decontamination and size reduction techniques through to applications involving equipment for waste classification.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list all the toxic chemicals used and discharged into the environment by AWE Aldermaston that appear on the AEC black list and the United Kingdom Government's Red List of toxic chemicals.

Mr. Aitken: Of the toxic chemicals included in the black and red lists, AWE Aldermaston discharges into the environment cadmium and its compounds and mercury and its compounds. The amounts discharged are within the limits prescribed by the relevant regulatory authorities using approved waste disposal routes.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to this answer of 25 June, *Official Report*, columns *307-8*, if he will place copies in the Library of the annual revisions of AWE Aldermaston decommissioning and radioactive waste management policies and programmes of work.

Mr. Aitken: The documents referred to are confidential management publications and cannot therefore be made available to the Library.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether AWE Aldermaston has disposed of any waste thought to contain plutonium contaminated material to *(a)* the British Nuclear Fuels disposal site at Drigg, *(b)* the Atomic Energy Authority low-level waste pits at Dounreay or *(c)* the Atomic Energy Authority intermediate-level waste store at Dounreay.

Mr. Aitken: Under a management certificate of authority, AWE Aldermaston sends plutonium contaminated, low-level waste in the form of solidified sludge to the disposal site at Drigg. This constitutes approximately 20 gms per annum. No plutonium contaminated waste is sent to the other two sites referred to.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much radioactive waste is at present stored at the former royal dockyards HMS Chatham or HMS Gillingham; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: No radioactive waste is currently stored at the former Chatham dockyard.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research AWE Aldermaston is conducting into *(a)* the updating of the WE177, Chevaline or Trident and *(b)* a warhead for a tactical air-to-surface missile.

Mr. Aitken: A continuing research programme is maintained at the Atomic Weapons Establishment which is applied to specific warhead programmes as necessary. As regards a warhead for a tactical air-to-surface missile, I have nothing to add to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Leyton (Mr. Cohen) on 12 November 1992, *Official Report*, col *882*.

Hunting–BRAE

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the role and powers of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution concerning the company Hunting–BRAE in respect of the Atomic Weapons Establishment.

Mr. Aitken: HMIP regulates activities at the four AWE sites—Aldermaston, Burghfield, Foulness and Cardiff—in precisely the same manner as it would for any other premises that are subject to relevant legislation, primarily the Radioactive Substances Act 1960 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It has the power of access to all AWE sites and can take action to require compliance. Its powers include the ability to bring prosecutions against those formally authorised to make discharges and disposals; in the case of AWE this would be Hunting–BRAE.

Red Arrows

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what communications he had with the Dutch defence ministry on its request to the Red Arrow display team to curtail their appearance at an air show in Eindhoven on safety grounds; and what Dutch safety guidelines would have been broken if they had participated.

Mr. Hanley: There were no such communications. The invitation for the Red Arrows to display at Eindhoven was accepted as it was understood that the Netherlands authorities were planning to waive some aspects of their regulations on display flying to enable the team to perform their standard display routine. This routine involves a small number of overflights of the spectators at a minimum height of 1,000 feet, but no aerobatic manoeuvres towards or above the crowd. It is understood that it is this aspect of the display routine that does not accord with the Netherlands regulations. The waiver was not granted, so the team withdrew from the event.

Nuclear Tests

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his plans in regard to future nuclear tests.

Mr. Aitken: I refer the hon. Member to the response that I gave to the hon. Member for South Shields (Dr. Clark) on 13 July, *Official Report*, column *470*.

Weather Conditions

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list for each region of the United Kingdom the *(a)* highest, *(b)* lowest and *(c)* average annual precipitation for each of the last three years, and also show how many days there was precipitation in each region, on how many days snowfall was recorded and on how many days there was snow cover on arable land and land below the 500 ft contour.

Mr. Aitken: This is a matter delegated to the Meteorological Office under its framework document. I have therefore asked the chief executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Letter from J. C. R. Hunt to Mr William Ross, dated 19 July 1993:

The information requested in your Parliamentary Question concerning weather conditions in the United Kingdom is attached.

The following information has been extracted from the Monthly Weather Report for the latest three years for which complete data are available:

District	*Wettest mm*	*Average mm*	*Driest mm*	*Days of rain*	*Days of snow fall*	*Days of snow cover*
1989:						
0	2,988	1,452	544	250	40	12
1	1,373	620	385	190	22	9
2	1,289	584	342	140	13	2
3	642	522	433	135	9	2
4	1,659	639	522	140	10	3
5	902	644	450	130	5	1
6	2,537	1,427	748	205	25	7
7	2,353	1,018	628	175	11	4

District	Wettest mm	Average mm	Driest mm	Days of rain	Days of snow fall	Days of snow cover
8	1,843	878	614	155	5	2
9	1,605	960	652	200	10	5
1990:						
0	3,307	1,812	795	250	40	16
1	1,829	854	603	195	30	10
2	1,797	682	414	150	17	5
3	598	464	367	130	12	1
4	1,781	578	431	160	15	4
5	882	629	381	130	6	1
6	3,326	1,817	958	225	15	8
7	2,540	1,083	633	195	9	3
8	2,147	912	609	160	6	2
9	1,825	1,044	775	230	18	9
1991:						
0	2,663	1,278	501	220	25	15
1	1,367	733	503	175	20	14
2	1,725	673	391	150	17	13
3	636	484	385	145	14	10
4	1,590	564	394	155	13	12
5	891	643	486	145	9	8
6	2,580	1,467	775	200	18	16
7	2,276	996	472	170	15	6
8	1,559	857	691	160	11	6
9	1,585	1,012	670	205	18	10

Key to Districts:
0 Scotland North
1 Scotland East
2 Scotland East and North East
3 East Anglia
4 Midland Counties
5 England South East and Central South
6 Scotland West
7 England North West and Wales North
8 England South West and Wales South
9 Northern Ireland

Notes: Figures given for days of rain, snowfall, etc. are estimates based on figures from a range of stations.

Precipitation

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much precipitation fell in each month of 1985, 1990, 1991 and 1993 to the latest available date; what is the long-term average for each month; and what was the number of days recorded as having no precipitation in each of these months.

Mr. Aitken: This is a matter delegated to the Meteorological Office under its framework document. I have therefore asked the chief executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Letter from J. C. R. Hunt to Mr. William Ross, dated 19 July 1993:

Information on rainfall for Belfast Airport is attached. Further information can be supplied if requested.

The only place in Northern Ireland for which a complete set of data is readily available is Belfast (Aldergrove) Airport

Month	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993
Monthly Rainfall in mm at Aldergrove					
January	58·8	104·3	88·3	57·3	98·2
February	30·3	132·0	46·4	61·9	28·4
March	58·8	38·8	74·4	97·2	52·3
April	58·2	50·6	81·7	92·4	103·3
May	87·3	47·5	7·5	32·5	130·9
June	55·8	117·6	75·9	43·2	76·4
July	90·3	50·3	72·9	67·4	—
August	128·4	91·4	29·1	149·9	
September	131·5	37·3	54·1	71·9	—
October	38·0	164·7	106·1	58·1	—
November	73·8	73·4	109·4	89·7	—
December	72·8	74·8	78·3	68·7	—
Monthly Number of Days Without Rain at Aldergrove					
January	8	0	6	9	3
February	12	1	4	3	4
March	4	4	10	0	2
April	2	3	8	2	8
May	9	12	8	11	6
June	5	5	3	11	5
July	0	11	7	5	—
August	1	1	8	2	—
September	4	9	11	3	—
October	14	3	4	8	—
November	3	10	0	3	—
December	2	6	9	8	—

Long-term average monthly rainfall in mm at Aldergrove

Month	
January	85·8
February	57·8
March	68·8
April	52·9
May	59·9
June	62·6
July	63·9
August	79·8
September	84·8

Month	
October	87·6
November	77·8
December	77·8

Note: The Average has been calculated over the period 1961 to 1990.

RAF Leeming

Mr. Robert Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his future plans for RAF Leeming in North Yorkshire.

Mr. Hanley: There are three Tornado F3 squadrons, an Air Defence RAF Regiment squadron, an Air Experience Flight and a University Air Squadron at RAF Leeming. As announced, in the 1993 Statement on the Defence Estimates "Defending Our Future (CM 2270) the Tornado F3 force will be reorganised into six squadrons, rather than seven as at present. As a result one of the Tornado F3 squadrons (No. 23 Squadron) at RAF Leeming will disband on 1 April 1994.

There are no current plans for further changes at RAF Leeming.

Jaguar Aircraft

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 14 July, if he will set out the numbers and tasks of ground crew associated with deployment of Jaguars to Italy; where in Italy the Jaguars will be based; at what annual cost; which department will meet the cost; under whose operational command *(a)* the Jaguars and *(b)* the RN Sea Harriers will fall; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: 188 ground crew have deployed with the Jaguars to Gioia del Colle. The annual extra costs associated with the deployment of these aircraft are estimated to be £30,000,000, and will be met from defence votes. The Jaguars will be under the operational command of Air Officer Commander-in-Chief Strike Command. The Royal Navy Sea Harriers will be under the operational command of Commander-in-Chief United Kingdom Land Forces. Operational control of both Jaguar and Sea Harrier aircraft involved in close air support operations will be delegated to the appropriate NATO commander.

Army Air Corps

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the additional works required for occupation by the Army Air Corps of RAF Wattisham, showing separately all those costing over £1 million; which RAF facilities will not be used by the AAC, and associated engineering and support units, and why; what additional works are required for the operation or the support of the two search-and-rescue helicopters; what the total cost of the works will be; how much of the construction to date at Dishforth for the Army Air Corps will be required; what has been the cost of works at Dishforth to date; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: I will write to the hon. Member.

RD57 Site, Rosyth

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are his plans for the future of the RD57 site; what would be the cost of reinstating the site if no alternative use can be made of it; and what would be the cost of finishing work at the site to render it safe and useable for another purpose.

Mr. Aitken: Options for the future of RD57 remain under consideration. We estimate the cost of reinstating the site to be in the order of £15 million; this was taken into account in the comparative assessment of the nuclear facility proposals. The cost of converting the site to another purpose would depend on the purpose.

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what volume and tonnage of material has been excavated from the site of the RD57 facility.

Mr. Aitken: The total volume of material excavated from the RD57 site amounted to 185,000 cu m of silt, clay and rock. We do not maintain records of tonnage.

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish a summary of the costs incurred on the RD57 facility at Rosyth, showing expenditure in each year since the project started.

Mr. Aitken: This is as follows:

	£ million
1985-86	0·405
1986-87	2·530
1987-88	3·900
1988-89	4·095
1989-90	15·785
1990-91	17·896
1991-92	25·422
1992-93	27·386
[1]1993-94	0·507
	[2]3·657

[1] To end of June 1993.
[2] Committed but not yet paid.

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many cubic metres of concrete have been poured for the development of the RD57 site.

Mr. Aitken: A total of 105,415 cubic metres.

Army Personnel Centre

Mr. Brandreth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will make an announcement about the proposed new Army personnel centre.

Mr. Hanley: The consultation period on our proposals for the establishment of an integrated Army personnel centre ended only on 9 July. I have seen a number of delegations about our proposals, including one last week, and a large number of representations and comments have been received. I shall be considering all these representations very carefully indeed. This will take a little time, but I hope to make a decision in the first half of September.

OSEX 93

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what live ammunition is being used during the OSEX 93 war games manoeuvres in mid-Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The Offensive Support Exercise took place in mid-Wales from 12 to 16 July. Attacks against inflatable targets were simulated and therefore no ammunition was used. Sorties were conducted at the MOD ranges at Pembrey Sands where 3 kg practice bombs were used and at Sennybridge where 3 kg practice bombs and 30 mm practice ammunition was fired.

Low-flying Aircraft

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many representations he has received regarding low-flying aircraft in the mid-Wales area in each of the last five months; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The numbers of representations about low-flying training which my Department has received in each of the last five months from addresses in the county of Powys are as follows:

Month	*Number*
February	4
March	8
April	9
May	13
June	17

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many incidents of low-flying aircraft were recorded by the RAF in the area between Dolgellau and Llandovery in each of the last five months; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The United Kingdom low-flying system is divided into 19 low-flying areas for administrative purposes. All military aircraft wishing to fly in the system must first book into each LFA in which they intend to operate. Records are not maintained, however, of the exact route flown.

Nimrod

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will set out the number of Nimrod aircraft *(a)* in each of the three squadrons at RAF Kinloss, *(b)* in the Operational Conversion Unit at RAF Kinloss, *(c)* in 51 Squadron at RAF Wyton and *(d)* in store or in maintenance facilities; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The Royal Air Force currently has 33 Nimrod aircraft. At RAF Kinloss there are seven Nimrod MR2 aircraft in each of the three squadrons, three aircraft in the operational conversion unit, and two in-use-reserves. At RAF Wyton there are three Nimrod R1 aircraft. Four Nimrod aircraft are in store.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what report he has received of an incident on Sunday 10 July involving British forces serving in Bosnia-Herzegovina being stopped by middle eastern mujaheddin; how many mujaheddin were involved; what action British forces took; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: I have received no report of any such incident.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) pursuant to his answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, column *720*, if he will detail the media reports he is aware of which indicate the presence of *(a)* Serbian regular forces and *(b)* Croatian regular forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina;

(2) what reports he has received from British forces serving in Bosnia-Herzegovina of the sighting of *(a)* Serbian regular forces and *(b)* Croatian regular forces operating within the terrority of Bosnia-Herzegovina; on how many occasions there have been sightings of (i) Serbian regular forces and (ii) Croatian regular forces; and what estimates of the size of each of these forces have been made;

(3) what reports he has received from British forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina of atrocities having been carried out by Muslim forces within the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina; and what representations have been made to the Bosnian presidency.

Mr. Hanley: There have been a wide variety of media reports. Information gathered by British and other UNPROFOR troops about force composition is passed on to the United Nations. The United Nations Secretary General forwards situation updates to the Security Council. Example copies are available in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, column 720, what information he has received from UNPROFOR on the presence of *(a)* Serbian regular forces and *(b)* Croatian regular forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina; if he will list what those reports have claimed; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: My noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Defence will write to the hon. Member.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will estimate the number of sites of special scientific interest within his Department's estate which will cease to be operational within the next five years.

Mr. Hanley: It is my Department's policy to seek to maximise the return for the taxpayer when disposing of surplus sites. This is normally best achieved through open market competitive sale once the full planning potential of the property has been explored.

Service Units

Dr. David Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the approximate number of personnel deployed with each of the units listed in Cm. 2270, page 22, table 3.

Mr. Hanley *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The exact number of personnel deployed at any time will depend upon the task being performed by, and the readiness state of, the unit in question. Approximate peacetime personnel establishments, which do not include the supporting and logistic units needed to sustain operational deployments, for the force elements listed are as follows:

Force element	Number of personnel
Aircraft carriers	[1]680—1,200
Destroyers and Frigates	[2]163—260
Amphibious ships	[3]54—540
Mine countermeasures vessels	[2]30—42
Royal Fleet auxiliary vessels	[2]40—116
RM Commandos	[4]530—660
Strategic deterrent submarines	[2]124—147
Nuclear-powered fleet submarines	[2]129—137
Army Air Corps regiments[5]	119—309
Armoured and reconnaissance regiments	465—470
Artillery regiments (regular)[6]	172—589
Artillery regiments (TA)	495—512
Engineer regiments (regular)[7]	39—488
Engineer regiments (TA)	17—743
Infantry battlions (regular)	193—806
Infantry regiments (TA/Royal Irish Home Service)	508—1,156
Reconnaissance regiments (TA)	357—470
Transport, tanker and SAR aircraft	[8]2,630
Airborne early warning	[8]165
Canberra PR9	[8]103
Harrier	[8]416
Jaguar	[8]446
Nimrod R & MR	[8]551
Rapier fire units	[8]500
Tornado F3	[8]930
Tornado GR1	[8]1,455

[1] 1,200 when the carrier's Air Group is embarked.
[2] Numbers vary depending on class of vessel.
[3] Excludes any embarked forces.
[4] Includes Comacchio group.
[5] Including sub-units in Northern Ireland.
[6] Includes Kings Troop RHA.
[7] Includes Military Survey, Military Works forces and Command Engineer Squadron.
[8] Figures relate to squadron personnel for each aircraft fleet, but do not include Operational Conversion Unit/Tornado Weapons Conversion Unit personnel.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Machine Tools

Mr. Henderson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what were the sales of machine tools in the United Kingdom in *(a)* 1990 and *(b)* 1992.

Mr. Sainsbury: Sales of machine tools in the United Kingdom, estimated from CSO figures for sales by United Kingdom manufacturers minus exports plus imports, were *(a)* £1,304 million in 1990 and *(b)* £944 million (provisional estimate) in 1992.

However these figures include sales of machine tools, parts and associated equipment. The Machine Tools Technologies Association estimates that sales of machine tools alone were *(a)* £974 million in 1990 and *(b)* £675 million in 1992.

Warren Spring Laboratory

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the reasons for the timing of the publication of the fact that he had called for a review of Warren Spring Laboratory in relation to his announcement of his decision to *(a)* review his Department's laboratories and *(b)* close Warren Spring Laboratory.

Mr. McLoughlin: I have nothing to add to the earlier announcements which my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade made and to which the hon. Member refers.

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the future of competition among environmental technology establishments following the closure of Warren Spring Laboratory.

Mr. McLoughlin: I expect competition amongst the many public and private sector environmental technology establishments to remain vigorous.

Hearing Aid Council

Mr. Hendry: To ask the President of the Board of Trade who may nominate candidates for appointment to the Hearing Aid Council.

Mr. McLoughlin: Anyone may make a nomination who has a genuine involvement whether as a dispenser, as a medical or audiological specialist, or as a hearing aid user. Nominations are also welcome from their representative organisations, relations and advisers.

Those appointed as trade members must be capable of representing the interests of those registered with the Hearing Aid Council and either be so registered or directors or managers of a registered employer. Those appointed as medical/technical members must have specialised medical knowledge of deafness or audiological technical knowledge and must not be eligible for appointment as trade members. Those appointed as consumer members must be capable of representing the interests of persons with impaired hearing and must not be eligible for appointment as trade or medical/technical members.

Nomination forms for the 1994 appointments are available from:

Anne Scrope
Consumer Affairs Division 3b
Department of Trade and Industry
Room 411
10-18 Victoria Street
LONDON SW1H ONN

and should be returned by 26 August 1993.

Accounts Services Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what targets he has set his Department's Accounts Services Agency for 1993-94.

Mr. Sainsbury: I congratulate the chief executive amd his staff on the improvements in performance they have made since the agency was established. It is essential that the agency sustains these improvements and builds on them. I have therefore set the agency the following performance targets for 1993-94:

to recover the full costs from income for customer work:

to fulfil its operational commitments within a net cash requirements in Vote terms of £90,000 or less;

to achieve a 4·8 per cent. unit cost reduction over last year based on a mix of services;

to make 97 per cent. of all payments within three working days of receipt of the authorisation to pay;

to bank all cheques within 36 hours of receipt by the agency, with at least 75 per cent. of them being banked within eight hours of receipt;

at the end of each month to ensure that all notified transactions are properly recorded on the Departments

financial management information system by the start of the fifth working day of the following month; that operating statements are produced and despatched by the start of the sixth working day of the following month.

In addition, I have set the chief executive of the agency the targets of replying within 10 working days to letters from Members of Parliament delegated to him for reply; and producing auditable commercial-style accounts for the agency for 1993-94.

Insolvency Service

Mr. Pickles: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement about the future of the Insolvency Service.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The Insolvency Service became an executive agency of the DTI in March 1990. I am now undertaking a review to consider the scope for improving the way in which the Insolvency Service performs its functions, and achieving better value for money, by making more use of the private sector in the work currently carried out by the Insolvency Service and its official receivers. In particular, the review will look at ways in which official receivers can concentrate more on their important investigatory role by involving the private sector to a larger extent in mechanical processing work in insolvencies.

I will be asking independent consultants to consider: the extent to which official receivers' functions and tasks could be carried out in the private sector; the extent to which official receivers could withdraw from these functions and tasks and the consequences of such withdrawal; whether a market exists to carry out the work and what are the risks; value for money; how the division of work might be organised; and quality control. A number of consultancy firms have been invited to submit proposals. Once the chosen firm has identified the options I shall decide which, if any, to pursue, and will report to the House on my conclusions.

Bank of Credit and Commerce International

Mr. Vaz: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has received the report of the elections to the statutory committee of the creditors of BCCI; and if he will publish the results.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: My officials have received a copy of Mr. Morris's letter of 23 June 1993 which was sent to all creditors of BCCI and which enclosed his report of the creditors meeting held on 27 May together with a report from Electoral Reform Ballot Services on the election of the liquidation committee.

Further publication is a matter for the liquidators.

Mr. Vaz: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he last met the liquidators of BCCI.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: There have been no meetings between my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade and the joint liquidators of BCCI.

Shipbuilding

Mr. Hutton: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is his Department's estimate of the total EC expenditure on aid to the European shipbuilding industry under the seventh directive in each of the last three years; and what is the United Kingdom's share of this expenditure.

Mr. Sainsbury: The latest figures available from the European Community on aid to the European shipbuilding industry relate to 1991 and earlier and are incomplete, as shown in the table.

	1989 (Mecu)	*1990 (Mecu)*	*1991 (Mecu)*
Total expenditure on aid to european shipbuilding by EC member states	[1]547·7	[2]1,303·3	[3]534·1
United Kingdom expenditure on aid to shipbuilding	42·9	50·5	47·6

[1] Excluding Italy, Portugal and Greece.
[2] Excluding Greece.
[3] Excluding Italy and Greece.

Small Businesses

Sir Anthony Grant: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what help the Government are giving to small firms to recover debts due to them; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. McLoughlin: The Government are actively addressing the problem of late payment to small firms. We have initiated a wide range of measures including:

(a) providing financial support for three trade associations to operate pilot prompt payment initiatives;

(b) new Government contracting terms have been introduced requiring companies awarded Government contracts to pay their subcontractors promptly, normally within 30 days;

(c) Government Departments are monitoring the percentage of their bills which are paid within the agreed contract period and we will publish performance;

(d) promoting improvements to court procedures for debt recovery;

(e) in his spring Budget, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, my right hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont), announced a reduction in the waiting time for VAT bad debt relief; an increase in the threshold for VAT cash accounting and changes to the VAT penalties and surcharge regime;

(f) consulting on proposals to require large companies to state in their reports and accounts how quickly they pay;

(g) distributing the DTI publication: "Making the Cash Flow" which contains advice for small firms on credit management.

Furthermore, my noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Consumer Affairs and Small Firms has given her personal commitment to take up on their behalf complaints small firms have of experiencing late payment by large companies or public bodies.

Sir Anthony Grant: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what study his Department has made of the principle of statutory right to interest on debts due to small firms; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. McLoughlin: The Government are very aware of the difficulties faced by small firms who suffer from late payments and has initiated a wide range of measures to help with the problem. My Department has examined information from other countries on the operation of legislation designed to effect prompt payment and keeps in close touch with the view of representative organisations in

this country. We remain to be convinced that legislation to introduce a statutory right to interest would be effective in combatting late payment.

We continue to be interested in views on how an effective legislative framework might operate while through action and example working to impress the message of prompt payment to businesses of all sizes.

Patent Office

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is his latest estimate of the cost of the consultants' examination of the Patent Office that is now taking place.

Mr. McLoughlin: The consultants' contract for the Patent Office study is commercially confidential. It is not, therefore, appropriate to disclose the estimated cost.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will set out the timescale for the work of the consultants on the Patent Office, including the date when the consultants expect to *(a)* conclude and *(b)* publish their report.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave him on 20 July 1993, Official Report, column *136*, and the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Norwich, North (Mr. Thompson) on 30 June 1993, *Official Report*, column *512*.

Mr. Paul Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if he will list those groups and individuals in the Patent Office who were offered assistance from consultancies in the current market testing exercise.

Mr. McLoughlin: Consultancy help was offered to, and accepted by, the in-house reprographics team, which received assistance from a firm of management consultants in formulating its bid.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will set out the arrangements he made for in-house bids for the market testing programme at the Patent Office.

Mr. McLoughlin: The terms of reference of the market test were set out in a notice to all staff on 6 November 1992, following consultation with the local trade unions. This drew specific attention to the opportunity for making in-house bids.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade which categories of work at the Patent Office are *(a)* currently being market tested and *(b)* being considered for future market testing.

Mr. McLoughlin: The current programme which is nearing completion, having entered the consultation phase, includes reprographics, messenger and post despatch services, file repository, stationery, trade marks data capture and trade marks referencing. Market testing will be applied in due course to other Patent Office work, but no decisions have been taken on the context of next year's programme.

Japanese Companies (Turnover)

Mr. Hunter: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, what has been the annual turnover of Japanese companies in the United Kingdom each year since 1983.

Mr. Sainsbury: Estimates of turnover of Japanese manufacturing companies based in the United Kingdom for 1983-90 are shown in the table. No reliable information is available for Japanese companies outside the manufacturing sector.

Total value of sales and work done by Japanese enterprises based in the United Kingdom classified to manufacturing 1983-90

	Value of sales £ million
1983	193·0
1984	321·6
1985	447·8
1986	595·5
1987	1,040·0
1988	1,788·3
1989	2,916·3
1990	4,631·6

Source: Report on the Annual Census of Production. PA 1002. Central Statistical Office. Various issues.

Notes:

(i) The table refers to enterprises controlled by companies incorporated in Japan.
(ii) Manufacturing refers to activities in Divisions 2 to 4 of the Standard Industrial Classification.
(iii) 1990 is the most recent published estimate.
(iv) All data are expressed in current prices.

Home Contents Insurance

Mr. Bayley: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what estimate he has as to what proportion of state pensioners in *(a)* Great Briatin and *(b)* York have home contents insurance.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The Department does not collect data on the take-up of insurance policies. The latest Family Expenditure Survey indicates that 77·3 per cent. of those households in Great Britain whose heads are of pensionable age have household contents insurance. The equivalent figure for Yorkshire and Humberside is 76 per cent. The figure for the city of York cannot be isolated.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what discussions he is proposing to hold with foreign customers or Governments regarding the return of waste arising from the lifetime operation of THORP.

Mr. Eggar: The arrangements for the return of waste are primarily for British Nuclear Fuels plc and its customers in accordance with the contracts between them. These are supported by intergovernmental letters exchanged at the appropriate time.

Environmental Technology Centre

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the reasons for preferring the creation of the National Environmental Technology Centre to the relocation of Warren Spring Laboratory to the Welwyn Garden City site acquired in July 1992.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 13 July 1993]:* The reasons were given in the reply which my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Blaby (Mr. Robathan) on 10 June, *Official Report*, columns *303-4*. A copy of the PA report has since been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Regional Aid

Mr. Milburn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many firms that have received regional selective assistance in the northern region in each of the last five years have ceased trading; and how many jobs were lost as a consequence.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* I refer the hon. Member to my reply of 12 July 1993, *Official Report*, columns *346-47*. Figures on firms ceasing to trade and jobs lost are not available. However, the number of firms in the Northern region having received RSA and which are known to have become subject to insolvency proceedings, are given below.

	Number of firms
1988-89	21
1989-90	29
1990-91	23
1991-92	15
1992-93	3

Note: The firms are included in the year in which grant was last paid.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Secure Training Orders

3. **Mr. Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proposals he has for implementation of the secure training orders proposal.

Mr. Howard: I intend to bring legislative proposals before the House as soon as possible.

Crime

14. **Dr. Spink:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new initiatives his Department is taking to tackle crime; and if he will make a statement.

21. **Mr. Hendry:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new initiatives he will be taking to tackle crime; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: We are strengthening the powers of the courts to deal with offenders. We are setting up the National Board for Crime Prevention and expanding the safer cities programme. We shall also be issuing shortly a new good practice guide to help local communities develop their own crime prevention strategies.

Metropolitan Police

15. **Mr. Gapes:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government have for changes in the structure and functions of the Metropolitan police; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: There are no plans for any change in the function of the Metropolitan police. Our proposals for the Metropolitan police are set out in chapter 11 of the White Paper on police reform, published on 28 June.

Remand in Custody

17. **Mr. Pike:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in reducing the time spent on remand in custody awaiting trial.

Mr. Maclean: The average time spent in custody on remand, from the prisoner's first appearance in the magistrates court to his arraignment before the Crown court, was 125 days in 1992. This compares with 119 days in 1991.

Policing Decisions (Devolution)

18. **Mr. Kynoch:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he intends to devolve responsibility for policing decisions to local level.

Mr. Charles Wardle: We intend to abolish unnecessary central controls on police manpower and capital expenditure. Stronger local police authorities will set clear local objectives. Chief constables will then be free to decide how to deploy the available resources to meet the policing needs of their area.

Lenient Sentences

16. **Mr. Jessel:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received regarding lenient sentences; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: I receive a number of letters on lenient sentences.

The Attorney-General can now refer lenient sentences to the Court of Appeal and the courts now have powers to impose longer sentences on violent and sexual offenders.

19. **Mr. Mark Robinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the measures allowing an appeal against lenient sentencing; and if he will make a statement.

28. **Mr. Moss:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what view he has formed of the effectiveness of the power of appeal against lenient sentences; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: The power for the Attorney-General to refer to the Court of Appeal sentences which he considers to be unduly lenient is both important and necessary. The discerning use of this power has repeatedly demonstrated the wisdom of the Government's decision to introduce it.

Independent Criminal Cases Review Authority

20. **Mr. Bennett:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the Independent Criminal Cases Review Authority to be in place; when he expects it to start dealing with cases; and if this will involve existing prisoners, or only newly convicted people.

Mr. Maclean: We are considering urgently and carefully all the recommendations of the Royal Commission on criminal justice, including those relating to appeals and miscarriages of justice; and will decide in due course what action is needed and in what time scale.

Drink-driving

24. **Mr. Matthew Banks:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action his Department is taking to deal with drink-driving.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The enforcement of the law on drinking and driving is an operational matter for individual chief officers of police.

Burglary

25. **Mr. John Townend:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what priority he attaches to bringing forward new measures for dealing with burglary.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Chief officers of police attach a high priority to measures aimed at tackling burglary. The Home Office will continue to encourage police forces to develop effective anti-burglary initiatives and will support the police through its crime prevention training, publicity and research programmes.

Police Staff Associations (Elected Officers)

26. **Mr. Shersby:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will maintain the present arrangements whereby police officers are regarded as being on duty when attending meetings and conferences connected with their duties as elected officers of police staff associations.

Mr. Charles Wardle: My right hon. and learned Friend will consider whether this facility should continue in the light of comments which he receives in response to recommendation 143 of the report of the inquiry into police responsibilities and rewards.

Young Offenders

22. **Mr. Duncan Smith:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the efficacy of current measures to deal with persistent juvenile offenders.

Mr. Maclean: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Ludlow (Mr. Gill) on 24 June, *Official Report*, column *255*.

27. **Mr. Win Griffiths:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement about measures he is taking to deal with offenders under the age of 18 years.

Mr. Maclean: I refer the hon. Member to the statement made to the House by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke) on 2 March, *Official Report*, columns 139-50, in which he announced the Government's intention to provide courts with a new sentence, provisionally entitled a secure training order, to assist them in dealing with persistent juvenile offenders. Further measures are under consideration to bring the necessary legislation before the House as soon as possible.

Racist Attacks (London)

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the policing of racist attacks in London.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The policing of racial attacks in London is the responsibility of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, who has made it clear that eliminating racial attacks is one of his priorities. The Government fully support the efforts of the police in London, and throughout the country, to tackle racially motivated crime, and to provide support to the victims of it.

Derek Bentley

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to give a posthumous pardon to Derek Bentley; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: My right hon. and learned Friend is considering the recent judgment of the divisional court and will announce his conclusions shortly.

Crossbows

Sir John Hannam: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will seek to make it a criminal offence to own a crossbow.

Mr. Charles Wardle: My right hon. and learned Friend has no plans to extend the existing restrictions on the sale and possession of crossbows.

Bail

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of suspects failed to answer (i) police bail, (ii) bail before magistrates courts and (iii) bail to appear in the Crown court in the latest year for which figures are available.

Mr. Maclean: The information requested is published annually in "Criminal statistics, England and Wales", chapter 8. In 1991, 7 per cent. of persons bailed by the police, 7 per cent. of those bailed by magistrates courts and 9 per cent. of those bailed to appear at the Crown court, failed to appear.

Immigration

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many representations he has received concerning immigration cases from hon. Members since his appointment.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Nearly 1,200 written representations have been received over that period.

Firearms

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will detail the notifiable offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used by offence group for the years 1979, 1990, 1991 and 1992.

Mr. Maclean: Figures for notifiable offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used, by offence group, for the years 1979, 1990 and 1991 are published in "Criminal Statistics, England and Wales", Table 3.1. Figures for 1992 are not yet available.

Copies of these publications can be found in the Library.

Maritime Detention

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the policy towards the use of maritime detention facilities for category C prisoners; what consideration he has given to the location of such facilities; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Martime detention facilities are one of the options being considered as part of a Prison Service contingency planning exercise. This exercise is intended to identify options for coping with levels of prisoner population that exceed the available prison accommodation. A number of sites with the necessary docking facilities are being considered, but no final decision has been taken on the feasibility of this option.

Security Services

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is now his policy on parliamentary accountability of the security services.

Mr. Howard: I would refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to a similar question from him on 24 June, *Official Report*, column *255*.

Raves

Mr. Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received regarding illegal raves; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Following events last year, in particular at Castlemorton Common, Malvern and Newtown, Powys, we have received many representations about the powers which are available to deal with illegal rave parties on land.

On 31 March, my right hon. and learned Friend the then Home Secretary announced our proposals to give the police new powers to prevent illegal rave parties on land.

Welsh Boundary Commission

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will announce who will be deputy chairman of the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Wales.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The Lord Chancellor has appointed the Hon. Sir Malcolm Pill to serve as deputy chairman of the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Wales. This appointment is effective until 31 December 1996.

European Constituencies Committees

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will announce the membership of the European parliamentary constituencies committees for England and Wales.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: I have appointed the following people to serve on the European parliamentary constituencies committees:

ENGLAND

Chairman:
Miss Sheila Cameron, QC

Members:
Mr. David Macklin, CBE
Mr. Michael Lewer, QC

WALES

Chairman:
The Honourable Sir Malcolm Pill

Members:
Mr. Peter Davey, CBE
Mr. Murray McLaggan, JP, DL, MA

The appointments will be effective until February 1994.

Fire Precautions

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps have been taken to implement the recommendation in the Bickerdike Allen report of 1990 that a national network of professional development courses be established in universities and colleges of higher education targeted at the various professionals concerned with fire precautions.

Mr. Charles Wardle: A national core curriculum in fire safety studies by design has been developed by the fire safety studies group which comprises representatives of the concerned professional bodies and Government Departments. The curriculum provides a common body of knowledge from which each profession can take what is needed for its members' development in fire safety studies. The curriculum was formally launched at the Palace of Westminster on 21 June. It has already been adopted as part of the entrance examinations of some of the professional bodies. Courses, up to degree level, based on the curriculum are already running in a number of institutions. These, with others, will form the national network recommended by the Bickerdike Allen report. I have arranged for copies of the national core curriculum in fire safety studies to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Prison Facilities

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in how many prisons in England and Wales inmates have not had the opportunity to shower and receive a change of clean kit at least once a week during the last six months; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated July 1993.

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the number of prisons in England and Wales, where in the last six months, inmates have not had the opportunity to shower and receive a change of clean kit, at least once a week.

Standing Orders require that inmates be given the opportunity of a shower or bath at least once a week and that adequate supplies of clean clothing are supplied. In very many cases baths or showers and changes of clothing are available more frequently than once a week. I regret that detailed information on frequency at individual establishments is not currently held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Immigration Quota Vouchers

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were waiting for special quota vouchers in *(a)* India, *(b)* east Africa and *(c)* the rest of the world in (i) May 1992 and (ii) December 1992; when those issued with vouchers on those dates had applied; how many vouchers were issued in (1) India, (2) east Africa and (3) the rest of the world in (A) 1992 and (B) the first quarter of 1993; when those applying now can expect to receive vouchers; and how many applicants there were for vouchers in *(v)* India, *(w)* east Africa and *(x)* the rest of the world in *(y)* 1992 and *(z)* the first half of 1993.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information which is currently available is given in the tables.

Table 1. Persons applying for a special voucher for entry to the United Kingdom

Country	Application newly received[1]		Vouchers issued		Applications awaiting a decision at end of	
	1992	1993 1st quarter	1992	1993 1st quarter	Quarter 2 1992	Quarter 4 1992
India	320	50	490	70	270	200
Kenya	220	60	200	50	550	540
Tanzania	20	[2]—	10	[2]—	60	60
Malawi	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	—
Zambia	20	[2]—	20	[2]—	[2]—	10
Rest of the world	10	—	10	[2]—	—	[2]—
Total	580	120	730	130	890	820

[1] Including applications subsequently withdrawn or lapsed.
Figures rounded to nearest ten.
[2] Fewer than five.

Table 2. Waiting times for persons applying for a special voucher

Months

Country	Waiting time to main interview for Persons interviewed at end of			Persons applying at end of
	Quarter 2 1992	Quarter 4 1992	Quarter 1 1993	[1]Quarter 1 1993
India	4·00	4·00	3·00	3·00
Kenya	n/a	n/a	n/a	2·00
Tanzania	1·00	3·00	1·50	1·50
Malawi	0·25	0·25	0·25	0·25
Zambia	1·00	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rest of the world	—	—	—	—

[1] Data relates to expected waiting time.
[2] Data relates to non-priority appliants. Priority applicants—widows with child in United Kingdom, heads of household aged 65 or over and compassionate cases—are interviewed within three months.
n/a = Not available.

Immigration Offences

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons were detained under Immigration Act powers for a period of more than two months on completion of a custodial sentence during 1992.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Thirty-nine people who completed a custodial sentence in 1992 were detained for more than two months under deportation powers. This figure does not include those subject to removal as illegal entrants, in relation to whom the information is not readily available. The same caveat should have applied to the replies given to similar questions from the hon. Member for Edinburgh Central (Mr. Darling) on 14 October 1991, column *21* and 13 July 1992 column *492*. I regret that this was not made clear at the time.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the *(a)* passengers in total and *(b)* persons treated as illegal entrants who were granted temporary admission/release in 1992 subsequently absconded; and how many (i) later reported voluntarily to the immigration authorities and (ii) were rearrested.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information relates to the number of persons who absconded, either from detention or by failing to respond to the terms of temporary admission/release, and is given in the table. The other information requested is not available.

Absconders in 1992

Category of person	Numbers of persons
Passengers[1]	530
Illegal entrants	223

[1] May include some absconders recorded as "illegal entrants"

Hong Kong

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for naturalisation made under the provisions of the British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1990 were *(a)* decided, *(b)* granted, *(c)* refused and *(d)* withdrawn, under each class and category of the scheme, in each quarter since January 1992 and in total throughout the existence of the scheme; and how many of these applications were from (i) heads of households or (ii) family members.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Information about family members is not available for refusals or withdrawals of applications. The remaining information requested is shown. The equivalent information I gave last year is answer to a question from the hon. Member for Edinburgh, Central (Mr. Darling) on 13 July 1992, columns *477-80*, omitted grants of citizenship to "other teaching personnel" in the period April-June 1992. I regret this omission, which has been corrected in the following tables.

Class	Decided	Granted		Refused
	Principal beneficiaries	Principal beneficiaries	Dependents	Principal beneficiaries
January-March 1992				
General occupation				
Managers and administrators	430	12	26	418
Business professionals	297	0	0	297
Business and administration associate professionals	0	0	0	0
Accountants and auditors	861	0	0	861
Accounting associate professionals	309	0	0	309
Engineers and related professionals	0	0	0	0
Architects, planners and surveyors	0	0	0	0
Engineering associated professionals	0	0	0	0
Information science professionals	24	24	41	0
News editors and journalists	120	35	55	85
Medical doctors	505	57	128	448
Physical & life science	98	25	44	73
Nurses and midwives	885	527	967	358
Other medical professionals	120	0	0	120
Health associated professionals	0	0	0	0
Legal professionals	10	10	23	0
Legal associate professionals	109	0	0	109
Teaching professionals	206	96	162	110
Educational adminstrators	232	73	143	159
Other teaching personnel	758	0	0	758
Approved occupations				
Computing equipment controllers	0	0	0	0
Life science technicians	0	0	0	0
Physical science technicians	0	0	0	0
Social work professionals	29	29	60	0
Statistical assistants	0	0	0	0
Translators/Interpreters	3	3	7	0
Disciplined Services				
Correctional Services Department	332	332	711	0
Customs and Excise Service	59	59	121	0
Fire Services Department	386	386	869	0
Immigration Service	22	22	45	0
Operation Department, ICAC	0	0	0	0
Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force	0	0	0	0
Royal Hong Kong Police Force	31	31	82	0
Garrison (Army)	83	83	193	0
Garrison (Navy)	0	0	0	0
Entrepreneurs	25	25	48	0
Sensitive Service	309	290	535	19

Class	Decided	Granted		Refused
	Principal beneficiaries	Principal beneficiaries	Dependents	Principal beneficiaries
April June 1992				
General occupational				
Managers and administrators	775	38	80	737
Business professionals	775	315	459	460
Business and administration associated professionals	2,133	0	0	2,133
Accountants and auditors	1,896	409	731	1,487
Accounting associate professionals	576	0	0	576
Engineers and related professionals	2,900	0	0	2,900
Architects, planners and surveyors	1,088	171	325	917
Engineers associated professionals	2,894	63	121	2,831
Information science professionals	1,778	834	986	944
News editors and journalists	207	15	19	192
Medical doctors	748	21	50	727
Physical & life science	125	0	0	125
Nurses and midwives	939	440	788	499
Other medical professionals	205	0	0	205
Health associate professionals	481	0	0	481
Legal professionals	928	17	35	911
Legal associate professionals	213	0	0	213
Teaching professionals	217	38	65	179
Educational adminstrators	326	0	0	326

Class	Decided Principal beneficiaries	Granted Principal beneficiaries	Granted Dependents	Refused Principal beneficiaries
Other teaching personnel	1,247	108	197	1,139
Approved occupations				
Computing equipment controllers	9	0	0	49
Life science technicians	17	0	0	17
Physical science technicians	92	0	0	92
Social work professionals	435	19	35	416
Statistical assistants	76	0	0	76
Translators/Interpreters	214	0	0	214
Disciplined Services				
Correctional Services Department	322	246	482	76
Customs and Excise Service	126	22	44	104
Fire Services Department	442	174	429	268
Immigration Service	588	74	133	514
Operation Department, ICAC	105	0	0	105
Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force	3	0	0	3
Royal Hong Kong Police Force	402	402	906	0
Garrison (Army)	471	31	85	440
Garrison (Navy)	36	0	0	36
Entrepreneurs	42	8	9	34
Sensitive Service	92	92	166	0

Class	Decided Principal beneficiaries	Granted Principal beneficiaries	Granted Dependents	Refused Principal beneficiaries
July-September 1992				
General occupational				
Managers and administrators	1,617	1,600	2,780	17
Business professionals	112	110	151	2
Business and administration associated professionals	324	308	557	16
Accountants and auditors	219	216	401	3
Accounting associate professionals	50	49	81	1
Engineers and related professionals	203	188	407	15
Architects, planners and surveyors	144	141	227	3
Engineering associate professionals	152	148	317	4
Information science professionals	144	138	175	6
News editors and journalists	4	2	3	2
Medical doctors	39	37	31	2
Physical & life science	4	4	5	0
Nurses and midwives	79	76	135	3
Other medical professionals	44	43	61	1
Health associate professionals	41	41	90	0
Legal professionals	2	0	0	2
Legal associate professionals	14	13	25	1
Teaching professionals	38	36	62	2
Educational administrators	26	25	48	1
Other teaching personnel	276	264	522	12
Approved occupations				
Computing equipment controllers	46	45	96	1
Life science technicians	19	18	31	1
Physical science technicians	11	11	22	0
Social work professionals	18	18	36	0
Statistical assistants	0	0	0	0
Translators/Interpreters	0	0	0	0
Disciplined Services				
Correctional Services Department	83	80	180	3
Customs and Excise Service	0	0	0	0
Fire Services Department	36	34	55	2
Immigration Service	162	161	260	1
Operation Department, ICAC	0	0	0	0
Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force	0	0	0	0
Royal Hong Kong Police Force	1,453	1,453	2,877	0
Garrison (Army)	11	11	33	0
Garrison (Navy)	8	8	12	0

Class	Decided Principal beneficiaries	Granted Principal beneficiaries	Granted Dependents	Refused Principal beneficiaries
Entrepreneurs	19	19	18	0
Sensitive Service	341	197	333	144

Class	Decided Principal beneficiaries	Granted Principal beneficiaries	Granted Dependents	Refused Principal beneficiaries
October-December 1992				
General occupational				
Managers and administrators	2,309	2,227	3,115	82
Business professionals	121	119	105	2
Business and administration associate professionals	738	725	1,128	13
Accountants and auditors	114	112	163	2
Accounting associate professionals	46	44	68	2
Engineers and related professionals	510	504	1,019	6
Architects, planners and surveyors	20	18	42	2
Engineering associate professionals	213	211	450	2
Information science professionals	218	213	158	5
News editors and journalists	27	25	35	2
Medical doctors	29	29	53	0
Physical and life science	1	1	1	0
Nurses and midwives	105	103	200	2
Other medical professionals	51	50	87	1
Health associate professionals	177	177	355	0
Legal professionals	40	30	46	10
Legal associate professionals	24	23	31	1
Teaching professionals	49	48	80	1
Educational administrators	35	33	82	2
Other teaching personnel	351	351	638	0
Approved occupations				
Computing equipment controllers	0	0	0	0
Life science technicians	0	0	0	0
Physical science technicians	6	6	12	0
Social work professionals	7	7	16	0
Statistical assistants	6	6	12	0
Translators/Interpreters	7	4	6	3
Disciplined services				
Correctional Services Department	105	104	172	1
Customs and Excise Service	73	73	144	0
Fire Services Department	131	131	235	0
Immigration Service	136	135	209	1
Operational Department, ICAC	3	3	11	0
Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force	7	7	15	0
Royal Hong Kong Police Force	1,071	1,053	1,571	18
Garrison (Army)	9	0	0	9
Garrison (Navy)	17	13	31	4
Entrepreneurs	2	0	0	2
Sensitive Service	82	77	137	5

Class	Decided Principal beneficiaries	Granted Principal beneficiaries	Granted Dependants	Refused Principal beneficiaries
January-March 1993				
General occupation				
Managers and administrators	2,603	2,527	3,433	76
Business professional	150	150	157	0
Business and administration associate professionals	850	749	955	101
Accountants and auditors	150	148	188	2
Accounting associate professionals	77	77	122	0
Engineers and related professionals	400	399	733	1
Architects, planners and surveyors	57	57	104	0
Engineer associate professionals	185	185	387	0
Information science professionals	150	141	98	9

Class	Decided	Granted		Refused
	Principal beneficiaries	Principal beneficiaries	Dependants	Principal beneficiaries
News editors and journalists	3	3	6	0
Medical doctors	2	2	6	0
Physical & life science	4	4	6	0
Nurses and midwives	30	30	70	0
Other medical professionals	23	22	42	1
Health associate professionals	116	116	195	0
Legal professionals	8	8	9	0
Legal associate professionals	20	20	27	0
Teaching professionals	12	11	21	1
Educational administrators	14	14	24	0
Other teaching personnel	439	434	815	5
Approved occupations				
Computing equipment controllers	61	52	70	9
Life science technicians	0	0	0	0
Physical science technicians	0	0	0	0
Social work professionals	9	8	21	1
Statistical assistants	6	5	6	1
Translators/Interpreters	8	8	9	0
Disciplined Services				
Correctional Services Department	17	17	36	0
Customs and Excise Service	21	21	51	0
Fire Services Department	35	35	61	0
Immigration Service	18	18	38	0
Operational Department, ICAC	11	11	28	0
Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force	0	0	0	0
Royal Hong Kong Police Force	133	126	233	7
Garrison (Army)	19	18	39	1
Garrison (Navy)	20	16	41	4
Entrepreneurs	59	50	78	9
Sensitive Service	146	141	240	5

Class	Decided	Granted		Refused
	Principal beneficiaries	Principal beneficiaries	Dependents	Principal beneficiaries
April—June 1993				
General occupation				
Managers and administrators	2,683	2,659	3,983	24
Business professional	103	96	101	7
Business and administration associated professionals	969	945	1,001	24
Accountants and auditors	120	112	169	8
Accounting associate professionals	60	60	90	0
Engineers and related professionals	421	408	657	13
Architects, planners and surveyors	25	16	35	9
Engineering associate professionals	199	198	404	1
Information science professionals	222	215	188	7
News editors and journalists	12	0	4	12
Medical doctors	8	5	34	3
Physical & life science	3	2	5	1
Nurses and midwives	66	66	149	0
Other medical professionals	7	5	12	2
Health associate professionals	94	93	134	1
Legal professionals	11	4	21	7
Legal associate professionals	11	11	15	0
Teaching professionals	28	26	51	2
Educational adminstrators	14	14	23	0
Other teaching personnel	505	504	878	1
Approved occupations				
Computing equipment controllers	33	33	27	0
Life science technicians	7	7	16	0
Physical science technicians	5	5	11	0
Social work professionals	19	18	34	1
Statistical assistants	2	2	9	0
Translators/Interpreters	13	4	6	9
Disciplined Services				
Correctional Services Department	9	9	33	0

Class	Decided Principal beneficiaries	Granted Principal beneficiaries	Granted Dependents	Refused Principal beneficiaries
Customs and Excise Service	13	13	40	0
Fire Services Department	28	28	80	0
Immigration Service	17	16	36	1
Operation Department, ICAC	5	5	17	0
Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force	0	0	0	0
Royal Hong Kong Police Force	28	18	89	10
Garrison (Army)	6	6	20	0
Garrison (Navy)	2	2	9	0
Entrepreneurs	15	15	22	0
Sensitive Service	64	50	119	14

Class	Decided Principal beneficiaries	Granted Principal beneficiaries	Granted Dependents	Refused Principal beneficiaries
Cumulative total up to 30 June 1993				
General occupational				
Managers and administrators	10,455	9,101	13,500	1,354
Business professionals	1,558	790	973	768
Business and administration associate professionals	5,014	2,727	3,641	2,287
Accountants and auditors	3,360	997	1,652	2,363
Accounting associate professionals	1,118	230	361	888
Engineers and related professionals	4,434	1,499	2,816	2,935
Architects, planners and surveyors	1,334	403	733	931
Engineering associate professionals	3,643	805	1,679	2,838
Information science professionals	2,536	1,565	1,646	971
News editors and journalists	431	138	210	293
Medical doctors	1,605	425	938	1,180
Physical & life science	235	36	61	199
Nurses and midwives	2,104	1,242	2,309	862
Other medical professionals	450	120	202	330
Health associate professionals	909	427	774	482
Legal professionals	1,108	178	311	930
Legal associate professionals	391	67	98	324
Teaching professionals	593	298	492	295
Educational administrators	671	183	366	488
Other teaching personnel	3,576	1,661	3,050	1,915
Approved occupations				
Computing equipment controllers	189	130	193	59
Life science technicians	43	25	47	18
Physical science technicians	114	22	45	92
Social work professionals	517	99	202	418
Statistical assistants	124	47	92	77
Translators/Interpreters	266	40	68	226
Disciplined Services				
Correctional Services Department	868	788	1,614	80
Customs and Excise Service	493	389	810	104
Fire Services Department	1,210	940	2,058	270
Immigration Service	943	426	721	517
Operation Department, ICAC	181	76	184	105
Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force	13	10	22	3
Royal Hong Kong Police Force	3,118	3,083	5,758	35
Garrison (Army)	599	149	370	450
Garrison (Navy)	83	39	93	44
Entrepreneurs	193	143	199	45
Sensitive Service	2,258	2,071	3,817	187

Applications withdrawn up to 30 June 1993

Class	Principal beneficiaries
General occupational	
Managers and administrators	421
Business professionals	29
Business and administration associate professionals	137
Accountants and auditors	38
Accounting associate professionals	10
Engineers and related professionals	71
Architects, planners and surveyors	10

Class	Principal beneficiaries
Engineering associate professionals	49
Information science professionals	102
News editors and journalists	9
Medical doctors	10
Physical and life science	1
Nurses and midwives	53
Other medical professionals	7
Health associate professionals	28
Legal professionals	1
Legal associate professionals	3
Teaching professionals	15
Educational administrators	10
Other teaching personnel	98
Approved occupations	
Computing equipment controllers	8
Life science technicians	0
Physical science technicians	1
Social work professionals	2
Statistical assistants	4
Translators-Interpreters	4
Disciplined Services	
Correctional Services Department	25
Customs and Excise Service	4
Fire Services Department	30
Immigration Service	8
Operation Department, ICAC	1
Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force	0
Royal Hong Kong Police Force	94
Garrison (Army)	6
Garrison (Navy)	2
Entrepreneurs	4
Sensitive Service	28

Immigration (DNA Tests)

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many DNA tests to prove a family relationship for immigration purposes have been carried out under the Home Office-funded scheme during *(a)* 1992 and *(b)* the first quarter of 1993, listed by country of origin; what was the average waiting period for the test and for its results; and in how many of those tests the family relationships were proved to be as claimed by the applicants.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information for 1992 and the first quarter 1993 is given in the table.

The average waiting time from the taking of a blood sample to a decision being made on the result of a DNA test is six to eight weeks.

DNA tests on children under the Government scheme, results received and outcomes 1991-92

Number of children

Country/post where application made	Number of tests carried out	Tests offered but not taken	Number awaiting results at end of period	Number of results received	Outcomes: Related as claimed to both parents	Outcomes: Related as claimed to one parent but not other	Outcomes: Not related as claimed to either parent
1992							
Indian sub-continent[1]							
Bangladesh (Dhaka)	1,043	8	465	889	741	64	84
Pakistan (Islamabad, Karachi)	[2]578	98	389	429	348	49	32
India (Bombay, New Delhi)	19	1	38	9	9	—	—
Outside of Indian sub-continent							
Ethiopia (Addis Ababa)	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ghana (Accra)	18	..	..	..	..	..	..
Nigeria (Lagos)	20	..	..	..	..	..	..
Philippines (Manilla)	25	..	..	..	..	..	..
United Arab Emirates (Dubai)	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yemen (Sana'a)	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Zambia (Lusaka)	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
1993 Quarter 1							
Indian sub-continent[1]							
Bangladeshi (Dhaka)	253	4	435	283	249	11	23
Pakistan (Islamabad, Karachi)	[2]151	4	426	110	97	8	5
India (Bombay, New Delhi)	6	—	41	3	3	—	—
Outside of Indian sub-continent[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

[1] Four tests were carried out in Calcutta in 1992. There have been no tests in Madras.
[2] Statistics for tests in Pakistan are mainly for Islamabad: There were six tests carried out in Karachi in 1992 and a further four tests there in the first quarter of 1993.
[3] There were no DNA tests carried out outside the ISC in the first quarter of 1993.
.. not available.
— nil.

Working Holidaymakers

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for variation of grant of leave to remain as working holidaymakers have been *(a)* received, *(b)* granted and *(c)* refused in relation to nationals of (i) India, (ii) Bangladesh, (iii) Pakistan, (iv) Australia, (v) Canada, (vi) Ghana, (vii) Nigeria, (viii) Malaysia and (ix) in total, during 1992 and 1993.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information is given in the table.

Working holidaymaker variation of leave decisions, excluding dependants

Citizens of	1992 Grants	1992 Refusals	1993 Quarter 1 Grants	1993 Quarter 1 Refusals
All countries	11,410	790	2,600	230
of which:				
India	280	30	70	10
Bangladesh	140	10	40	[1]—
Pakistan	540	50	110	10
Australia	2,120	20	500	10
Canada	270	[1]—	50	[1]—
Ghana	1,140	90	220	20
Nigeria	1,650	280	240	60
Malaysia	750	40	140	10

[1]— Five or fewer.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for entry clearance as working holidaymakers have been *(a)* received, *(b)* granted and *(c)* refused in (i) India, (ii) Bangladesh, (iii) Pakistan, (iv) Australia, (v) Canada, (vi) Ghana, (vii) Nigeria and (viii) Malaysia, during 1992 and 1993.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested is not available centrally.

Prisoners (Restraints)

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the number of times that restraints have been used on inmates during the 12 months from 1 July 1992, in each prison in England and Wales.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from P. Drew to Mr. Tom Cox, dated July 1993:

Restraints used in Prison Service Establishments

The Home Secretary has asked me, in the absence of the Director General from the office, to reply to your Question about the number of times that restraints have been used on inmates during the 12 months from 1 July 1992 in each Prison Service establishment in England and Wales.

The number of applications of restraints under Rule 46 of the Prison Rules 1964 and Rule 49 of the Young Offender Institution Rules 1988 are given in the table.

Restraints[1] applied to violent or refractory inmates of Prison Service establishments in England and Wales: by establishment, July 1992-July 1993

Establishment and type	Number of applications[2]
Local prisons/remand centres	
Belmarsh	4
Birmingham	2
Bristol	1
Brixton	19
Bullingdon	1
Canterbury	1
Chelmsford	1
Elmley	3
Feltham	18
Gloucester	1
Highdown	1
Highpoint	3
Holme House	3
Hull	4
Leicester	1
Lewes	1
Lincoln	3
Liverpool	6
Pentonville	18
Preston	2
Reading	2
Rochester	5
Shrewsbury	3
Woodhill	5
Wormwood Scrubs	10
Training Prisons	
Acklington	1
Albany	2
Camp Hill	2
Downview	1
Frankland	4
Full Sutton	28
Garth	9
Long Lartin	2
Maidstone	3
Nottingham	2
Stafford	1
Standford Hill	1
Swaleside	3
Wakefield	2
Wayland	2
Wellingborough	1
Whitemoor	6
Closed Young Offender Prisons	
Aylesbury	1
Castington	2
Deerbolt	1
Onley	2
All establishments	194

[1] Loose canvas jacket, body belt, handcuffs, ankle straps and leather wrist straps.
[2] Provisional figures.

Vagrancy Act

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to repeal the Vagrancy Act 1824.

Mr. Maclean: None.

Immigration (Medical Examinations)

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people during 1992 and the first quarter of 1993 were *(a)* required to undergo a medical examination and *(b)* refused entry clearance abroad, in which countries, for (i) settlement and (ii) other purposes on medical grounds; and what are the most common medical grounds for refusal.

Mr. Charles Wardle: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Immigration (Extension Refusal)

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* husbands, *(b)* wives and *(c)* dependent children have been refused (i) extension of stay and (ii) settlement in the United Kingdom on the grounds that he is not satisfied that they can be maintained and accommodated without recourse to public funds, in each quarter since January 1992, and in total.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The available information relating to after entry cases is given in the table. Information on dependent children is not readily available.

Refusals[1], on grounds of maintenance and accommodation, of after-entry applications by husbands and wives (numbers of persons)

	Refusals to grant probationary year on grounds of:			
	Accommodation	*Maintenance*	*Maintenance and accommodation*	*Refusals of settlement after probationary year[2]*
1992				
Quarter 1				
Husbands	1	—	—	8
Wives	1	1	1	12
Quarter 2				
Husbands	1	1	1	4
Wives	—	—	1	4
Quarter 3				
Husbands	—	—	—	6
Wives	—	3	1	13
Quarter 4				
Husbands	—	1	3	12
Wives	1	2	2	12
1993				
Quarter 1				
Husbands	—	1	—	14
Wives	—	1	—	17

[1] Excluding dependents.
[2] Refusals of settlement after probationary year on general considerations, including recourse to public funds.

Prison Governors

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what checks are made by his Department to ensure that governor grades in prisons in England and Wales spend time within wings and are regularly available to be seen by inmates.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the Prison Service who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from D. Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about checks made by his Department to ensure that governor grades in prisons in England and Wales spend time within wings and are regularly available to be seen by inmates.

Governor grades are expected to maintain a regular presence on prison wings to provide access for prisoners in the exercise of their management and supervisory role. There is no set period of time during which governors are obliged to be present on the wings, and their attendance will depend upon day to day circumstances and the priorities at the time. In many prisons, though, a governor will be based in an office on each wing and in all prisons a governor grade is available usually on a daily basis, to hear applications from prisoners.

The way in which governors carry out their duties is monitored in a number of ways: their accessibility to prisoners will be one of the many aspects which area managers will seek to cover during their frequent visits to establishments.

Mrs. Bridgit Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female, Metropolitan police officers have suffered (i) violent injury and (ii) death while performing their professional duties, for each year from 1980 to 1992; and how many in each case were stationed in Lewisham.

Mr. Maclean: The information is readily available from 1984 and is contained in the table.

Fatal and serious assaults on Police by Sex of Victim 1984 to 1992

Year	*1984*		*1985*		*1986*		*1987*		*1988*		*1989*		*1990*		*1991*		*1992*	
Sex	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*
Lewisham																		
Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	[1]—	[1]—	0	0	0	0	0	0
Serious Injury	0	0	3	0	2	0	1	1	2	0	[1]—	[1]—	2	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	3	0	2	0	1	1	2	0	[1]—	[1]—	2	0	0	0	0	0

Year	1984		1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992	
Sex	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Metropolitan Police District																		
Fatal	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	[1]—	[1]—	1	0	3	0	0	0
Serious injury	47	1	77	2	73	3	46	5	67	5	[1]—	[1]—	46	4	86	8	64	5
Total	47	2	78	2	73	3	47	5	67	5	[1]—	[1]—	47	4	89	8	64	5

[1] Not currently available
Figures prior to 1991 include attacks on prison officials etc. by prisoner in custody

Asylum

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what third countries are expected to participate in meetings of common interest referred to at item 10 of the recent report of the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on Asylum.

Mr. Charles Wardle: No decisions have yet been made on participation by third countries.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library the detailed analysis of the use by member states of terms to express definite concepts of asylum statistics referred to in the recent report of the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on Asylum.

Mr. Charles Wardle: No.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what are the funding implications for the Government of participation in the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on Asylum.

Mr. Charles Wardle: None, apart from travelling and subsistence allowances.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library the documents on compilation of texts on European asylum practice, the schedule for the purpose of an improved oral exchange of data at the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on Asylum meetings, the principles for the dissemination of information from CIREA, and reports on the context of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees database which are referred to in the recent report of the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on Asylum.

Mr. Charles Wardle: I am placing in the Library copies of the compilation of texts on European asylum practice and the schedule for the purpose of an improved oral exchange of data. The other material requested has not been made public.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library all joint reports from the local diplomatic representations of the European countries referred to at item 6 of the recent report of the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on Asylum.

Mr. Charles Wardle: No.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many passengers seeking political asylum in *(a)* 1992 and *(b)* 1993 to the nearest available date were granted temporary admission;

(2) if he will provide a breakdown by nationality of the number of people seeking political asylum who were detained under Immigration Act powers in 1992 and 1993 to the latest convenient date in *(a)* prison department establishments and *(b)* immigration detention accommodation, for (i) under a week, (ii) one to four weeks, (iii) one month to six months, (iv) six months to a year and (v) over a year.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested on temporary admission is not available centrally.

The information on detention is not available in the form requested, but the tables provide relevant information on people seeking asylum who, on 19 July 1993, had been detained for seven days or more.

Asylum seekers[1] detained as at 19 July 1993 by length and place of detention

	Prison detention	IS detention	Total
Asylum seekers detained for one to four weeks			
Algeria	3	—	3
Afghanistan	—	1	1
Angola	—	1	1
Columbia	1	3	4
Ecuador	1	—	1
Ethiopia	—	1	1
Ghana	2	6	8
India	9	3	12
Iran	3	—	3
Kenya	—	1	1
Liberia	1	—	1
Nigeria	1	7	8
Pakistan	2	1	3
Romania	4	—	4
Sierra Leonne	1	—	1
Somalia	—	1	1
Sri Lanka	—	1	1
Tanzania	—	1	1
Turkey	1	—	1
Uganda	—	3	3
Zaire	—	1	1
Total	29	31	60
Asylum seekers detained for one to six months			
Algeria	11	5	16
Angola	4	7	11
Bangladesh	1	1	2
Cameroon	—	1	1
China	4	—	4
Columbia	—	5	5
Congo	—	1	1
Egypt	1	1	2
Gambia	—	1	1
Ghanaian	6	11	17
India	50	11	61
Iran	1	—	1
Iraq	1	—	1
Ivory Coast	—	5	5
Kenya		3	3
Lebanon	1	1	2
Liberia	—	1	1
Libya	1	—	1
Malawi	—	1	1

	Prison detention	IS detention	Total
Morocco	2	—	2
Niger	—	1	1
Nigeria	9	5	14
Pakistan	3	3	6
Peru	1	—	1
Somali	—	1	1
Romania	6	1	7
Sierra Leonne	1	7	8
Sudan	1	—	1
Tanzania	1	2	3
Tunisia	—	1	1
Turkey	7	2	9
Uganda	1	2	3
Zaire	11	12	23
Nationality doubtful	1	1	2
Total	125	93	218
Asylum seekers detained for six to 12 months			
Algeria	1	2	3
Angola	—	1	1
Columbia	1	—	1
Egypt	—	1	1
Ghana	1	3	4
India	5	6	11
Lebanon	1	—	1
Nigeria	3	2	5
Pakistan	—	2	2
Sierra Leonne	2	—	2
South Africa	1	—	1
Sri Lanka	1	—	1
Tanzania	—	1	1
Zaire	2	1	3
Total	18	19	37
Asylum seekers detained for more than one year			
India	1	—	1
Zaire	1	—	1
Total	2	—	2
Total asylum seekers detained as at 19 July 1993			
Total	174	143	317

[1] Persons detained solely under the powers contained in schedule 2 or 3 to the Immigration Act 1971. In some cases the asylum application will have been lodged subsequent to the application being detained. The figures include both detained asylum applicants who applied at ports and those detained in the course of after-entry enforcement work or prior to deportation or removal as an illegal entrant.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on Asylum is funded.

Mr. Charles Wardle: There is no specific funding for CIREA. Its activities are supported by a small number of officials in the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Communities, who also have other duties, and accommodation is provided within the offices of the Council.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Benefit Claimants (Savings)

Ms Gordon: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what interest rate is assumed by his Department when calculating income from claimants's for social security benefits.

Mr. Burt: None. In all the income-related benefits, capital up to £3,000 is ignored. Deductions from benefit of £1 a week are made for each £250, or part of £250, of capital between £3,000 and the upper capital limit for the particular benefit. This formula does not imply any particular rate of investment. It is designed to ensure that help is targeted on those who need it most, while not denying benefit to those with only a moderate amount of capital. The rules are kept under review, but we have no plans for change.

Dementia

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will make it his policy to secure statutory protection of pension rights for those developing dementia while at work.

Mr. Hague: National insurance contribution credits are awarded to those submitting evidence of incapacity to safeguard their entitlement to the basic state pension. Additionally, members of occupational pension schemes who leave with at least two years pensionable service already benefit from the statutory right to a preserved pension. Those with less than two years pensionable service in a scheme which is contracted out of the state earnings-related pension scheme can be reinstated in SERPS for that period. We have no plans to change these arrangements.

Invalid Care Allowance

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many carers have been in receipt of invalid care allowance in Wales in each year since 1986; and what percentage of total carers within Wales have been successful claimants in each year.

Mr. Scott: The information is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Social Fund (Hospital Visit Grants)

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many applications have been made by parents for social fund grants towards the cost of visiting children in hospital to each social fund office in Wales in the latest year for which information is available; how many grants and loans were made; and what was the average level of grants and loans.

Mr. Scott: I understand from Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency, that the information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Invalidity Benefit

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many people are in receipt of invalidity allowance in the Seaham and Peterlee areas; and what were the numbers of recipients in 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92.

Mr. Scott: I understand from Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency, that the information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Boarder's Premium

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what plans he has to reintroduce boarder's premium for people currently housed in bed-and-breakfast accommodation.

Mr. Burt: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Caernarfon (Mr. Wigley) on 21 July at col. *205*.

Lone Parents

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many lone parents there are in Darlington; and how many and what proportion of income support claimants are lone parents in Darlington.

Mr. Burt: A provisional estimate of the number of lone parent families in the local government district of Darlington in 1991 is 3000.[1]

Data on the number of lone parent families in receipt of income support in individual locations are not available. However, the total number of lone parents on income support in Great Britain in 1992 was 985,000[2], representing 19 per cent. of all income support claimants.

[1] 1991 Population Census, provisional estimate.

[2] 1992 Income Support Annual Statistical Enquiry.

The definition of lone parents used excludes the temporarily separated.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many and what percentage of single parents had social security payments as their main source of income in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991 in (i) Strathclyde and (ii) Scotland as a whole.

Mr. Burt: The administration of income support is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Dr. Norman Godman, dated 21 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many and what percentage of single parents had social security payments as their main source of income in (a) 1979 and (b) 1991 in (i) Strathclyde and (ii) Scotland as a whole.

The complete range of information requested is not available as statistics that reflect the number of single parents in receipt of each Social Security benefit are not routinely collected. It is also likely that many of the relevant records will have been routinely destroyed since 1979.

Below I have given the number of single parents in Scotland who were in receipt of Supplementary Benefit in 1979 and Income Support in 1991.

This information is obtained from an annual statistical sampling exercise. It is not possible to provide figures separately for Strathclyde.

(1) Single parents in Scotland in receipt of Supplementary Benefit at November 1979—34,000

(2) Single parents in Scotland in receipt of Income Support at May 1991—102,000

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy of this letter will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is *(a)* the number of lone parents, *(b)* the number of income support claimants who are lone parents and *(c)* the proportion of income support claimants who are lone parents in each region.

Mr. Burt: The information requested is in the table.

Thousands

	England	*Scotland*	*Wales*	*Great Britain*
(a) Total number of lone parents, provisional 1991	1046	130	67	1240
(b) Total number of lone parents on income support, 1992	823	106	57	985
(c) Proportion of IS claimants who are Lone Parents per cent. 1992	19	20	20	19

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source: *(a)* 1991 Population Census, provisional estimates.

(b) and *(c)* 1992 Income Support Annual Statistical Enquiry. The definition of lone parents used excludes the temporarily separated.

Benefits

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the regional expenditure on *(a)* retirement pensions, *(b)* sickness and invalidity benefits, *(c)* housing benefits, *(d)* unemployment benefit, *(e)* family credit, *(f)* income support, *(g)* social fund and *(h)* child benefit as (i) a total and (ii) per head for each of the last five years for which figures are avaialble.

Mr. Scott: Information is not available in the form requested. Such information as is available has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the value of unclaimed *(a)* income support, *(b)* housing benefit, *(c)* family credit and *(d)* invalidity benefit, giving the estimated number of non-claimants involved; and the proportion of each benefit entitlement unclaimed, for each of the last three years for which figures are available.

Mr. Burt: Estimates of the take-up of income support, family credit and the new unified housing benefit were published in "Income Related Benefit Estimates of Take-up in 1989" in January this year. Take-up estimates for the income-related benefits that were available before the 1988 benefit reforms are for 1985 and 1987 and are provided in Social Security Statistics 1990 (Table 48) and Social Security Statistics 1991 (Table H.5) respectively. Copies of these publications are in the Library.

Information for invalidity benefit is not available.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what effect steepening the housing benefit taper from 65 per cent. to 80 per cent. would have on the proportion of income retained per £1 a week increase in

gross earnings for *(a)* a lone parent earning £136 per week, *(b)* a single adult earning £132 per week and *(c)* a two adult family earning £196 per week, paying an average weekly rent of £48 per week.

Mr. Burt: Such an increase would have the effect of increasing the proportion of each £1 a week increase in gross earnings retained from 23p to 66p—that is, £1 less tax and national insurance contributions—in cases *(b)* and *(c)* but would take people in these circumstances out of housing benefit entitlement. For case *(a)* housing benefit entitlement would be retained and the proportion of income retained per £1 a week increase in gross earnings would reduce from 7p to 4p.

Note: Figures provided from tax benefit model 1993. The benefit rates are as at April 1993. Assumptions are for *(a)* lone parent with one child; *(b)* single adult over age 25; *(c)* two adult family with two children aged 4 and 6.

Bus Passes

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if his Department has now concluded discussions with Walsall council over the bus pass concession for blind people in receipt of the disability living allowance; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Scott: On 8 July, the council wrote to the Department with its further observations. The Department is considering the points made and remains in discussion with the council.

Mortgage Costs

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what measures are being taken against people in Wales receiving benefit to cover their mortgage costs who failed to inform his Department when their payments dropped; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Burt: The administration of social security is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Mr. Rod Richards, dated 21 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security, asking what measures are being taken against people in Wales receiving benefit to cover their mortgage costs who failed to inform his Department when their payments dropped; and if he will make a statement.

I acknowledge that administrative difficulties have arisen for some customers who have chosen to obtain a mortgage which is reviewed annually. Such 'annual review' mortgages are arranged by the mortgage lender so that, although the interest being charged to the borrower's account may change in the course of the year, the repayments that the borrower is required to make are not adjusted to reflect this until the end of the lender's accounting year.

Although Income Support (IS) may include an amount to cover mortgage interest payments, it is calculated with reference to the rate of mortgage interest being charged to the customer's loan account.

Since mortgage interest payments on 'annual review' mortgages are not calculated on this basis there can, in certain circumstances, be a difference between the amount of IS paid compared with what the lender would expect to receive under the annual review arrangement. The Benefits Agency has held meeting with the Council of Mortgage Lenders about this difficulty. In the meantime, mortgage lenders will normally look sympathetically at requests from customers to be taken off the annual review arrangement. My advice to customers who find themselves in difficulty would be to immediately contact their mortgage lender to discuss the situation.

However, it remains the responsibility of the customer to inform the Benefits Agency of any changes in their circumstances. This includes any change in the rate of interest charged to their mortgage account.

A customer residing in any part of Great Britain, who fails to inform the Department of a decrease in their rate of mortgage interest can be asked to repay the IS overpaid.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy of this letter will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 23 July 1993

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Knutsford Crown Court

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will give Mr. Ray Veal the opportunity to tender for the cleaning and caretaking facilities at Knutsford Crown court; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. John M. Taylor: It is not the policy of the Lord Chancellor's Department to employ caretakers for court buildings. In accordance with Government policy of securing value for money, cleaning contracts are awarded by competitive tender and the contract for Knutsford has already been let.

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will make a statement concerning the compulsory redundancy of Mr. Ray Veal, the court keeper at Knutsford Crown court.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Mr. Ray Veal is an employee of Cheshire county council and his redundancy is a direct result of the county council's decision to sell Sessions house to the Lord Chancellor's Department. Negotiations with Cheshire county council for the freehold purchase of Sessions house proceeded on the basis of full vacant possession and it was clearly understood that Cheshire county council would identify suitable alternative accommodation for Mr. and Mrs. Veal. Further, the Lord Chancellor's Department made it clear to Cheshire county council that it would not be able to use the services of Mr. Veal as a caretaker. However, in an attempt to be helpful to both the county council and Mr. and Mrs. Veal, the Government property lawyers have been instructed to investigate and conclude an appropriate occupancy agreement to enable Mr. and Mrs. Veal to remain in their present accommodation.

Legal Aid

Mr. Alton: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department how many applications for legal aid have been made by solicitors acting on behalf of clients suffering from tranquilliser addiction and seeking to sue drug companies in the past 10 years; how much money has been paid to solicitors' firms over that period; how many such cases have been concluded in a court of law; and how many legal aid certificates have been issued, cases begun and legal aid subsequently withdrawn.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The only significant tranquilliser action to have received funding from the Legal Aid Board is the current Benzodiazepine action, for which 17,000 legal aid applications were made. These applications cover actions against the companies manufacturing the drugs together with the authorities prescribing them. The generic legal aid expenditure on all the Benzodiazepine drugs in the litigation amounts to approximately £3 million, though further, as yet unquantified, costs have also been incurred. In view of the numbers of individual cases involved, these costs may be considerable. None of the Benzodiazepine cases has yet been concluded. A total of 13,168 legal aid certificates were issued. The position on these is constantly changing, but at present more than 7,000 certificates have been discharged and several hundred are awaiting decisions on appeal. There have also been approximately 20 tranquilliser cases where legal aid was granted, but which were not part of the Benzodiazepine litigation. These have all been discharged and none of the cases was concluded in court.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Meacher: asked the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will list each of the executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by the Lord Chancellor's Department; to whom these bodies are responsible; whether the public bodies or their members in each case are subject to *(a)* surcharge, *(b)* investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner, *(c)* scrutiny by the National Audit Office, *(d)* statutory provisions for open Government, *(e)* performance indicators and *(f)* provisions under the citizens charters; and whether the chairpersons and members of the boards of each of these bodies are required to declare an interest.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Of the executive NDPBs listed in Public Bodies 1992, the Authorised Conveyancing Practitioners Board, which is responsible to the Lord Chancellor, was established to develop competition in the provision of conveyancing services and to supervise the provision of those services by authorised practitioners. In response to a parliamentary question on 13 March the Lord Chancellor announced that, due to a lack of demand to become authorised practitioners, he was postponing implementation of those provisions of the 1990 Act necessary to allow the board to begin the process of authorisation.

Answers to specific questions:

(a) No
(b) Yes
(c) Yes
(d) Not applicable
(e) No. The decision to postpone the authorised practitioner scheme was taken before the board's performance indicators had been finalised.
(f) Yes. The chairman and the members of the board would be required to declare an interest.

Legal Aid Board

The responses for the Legal Aid Board, which is responsible to the Lord Chancellor are as follows:

(a) No
(b) Yes
(c) Yes
(d) Not applicable
(e) Yes
(f) Yes. The board is shortly to publish a statement of its charter standards.

Before appointing a person to be a member of the board, the Lord Chancellor satisfies himself that the individual's financial and other interests will not prejudice his or her functions as a member of the board. The Lord Chancellor also from time to time satisfies himself as to the members continuing interests. In addition, a member must declare an interest at any time throughout their tenure

when a conflict of interest arises. The provisions governing members' interests are covered by schedule 1 of the Legal Aid Act 1988.

TRANSPORT

Road and Railway Schemes

Mr. Rowe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is the average percentage difference in time taken for *(a)* roads and *(b)* railways between the initial consultative plan and the finally approved scheme.

Mr. Freeman: Road schemes completed in 1992-93 took on average 13·9 years to complete. We are currently looking at ways to reduce this figure and my right hon. Friend hopes to make an announcement shortly.

Applications for orders for new rail schemes are now governed by the Transport and Works Act, which came into force on 1 January 1993. We have not yet received any applications regarding railway schemes under the provisions of this Act; it is not therefore possible to make comparisons with road schemes. The time scale between receipt of draft orders and approval would depend on the size of the scheme and the degree of controversy surrounding it.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Norris: Since November 1991, the Department of Transport and its agencies have engaged 55 computer consultancy companies. The tasks on which they were employed range from strategic analysis to systems review. The cost of the commissions is approaching £7 million.

A550

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the M53/M56 alternative to the A550 improvement scheme was evaluated before or after the public consultation exercise; and if he will publish the results of the evaluation, including projected traffic flows.

Mr. Key: We do not believe that a route via the M53 and M56 presents a viable alternative. Although the question of this alternative was considered carefully prior to the preferred route announcement, no detailed evaluation is available.

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment will be made of the traffic generated as a result of stages 1 and 2 of the A550 improvement scheme in considering whether to proceed with stage 3.

Mr. Key: This scheme is now being progressed in two stages. The technical appraisal for stage 2 (Ledsham to the M53) makes allowance for any additional traffic using the route as a result of the stage 1 improvement to the south.

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment was made of the extent to which road usage on the Friday afternoon of a bank holiday weekend represented typical road usage for the purposes of photographs included in consultation on the A550 road improvement scheme.

Mr. Key: The photograph was used as an illustration of congestion that can occur. The A550 improvements have been evaluated against forecast annual average daily traffic flows in the design year 2012.

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reason a question asking for views on whether a new road was required did not form part of the public consultation for the A550 improvement scheme.

Mr. Key: To gauge the level of public support for a major improvement.

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will provide full details of the rail schemes assessed as an alternative to the A550 improvement scheme, including the routes assessed, their cost, and the projected changes in rail traffic associated with each alternative.

Mr. Freeman: No rail schemes have been assessed as possible alternatives to the A550 improvement scheme. Rail would not be a practicable option given the alignment of existing track in the area, which does not run in parallel with the A550 to Ledsham and beyond.

Road Fuel Duties

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what reduction in road traffic volumes is expected to result from the increase in road fuel duties announced on 16 March.

Mr. Key: The increase in road fuel duties announced on 16 March is aimed at contributing toward the Government's commitment to return overall CO_2 emissions from the United Kingdom in the year 2000 to the level recorded in 1990. By 2000, the increase in fuel duties is expected to have reduced road transport emissions of CO_2 by about 1.5 million tonnes of carbon (mtC), roughly one-seventh of the required savings. That increase in duties will have a greater effect on fuel consumption (and thus CO_2) than on traffic levels. This is because the reduction in traffic is just one of the effects likely to follow from higher fuel prices. We would also expect a variety of improvements in fuel economy to come about—for example, improved driver technique, changes in speed, choice of smaller cars and improvements in vehicle design. Under the minimum duty increases announced, the level of traffic (all motor vehicles) in 2000 would be about 500 bn vehicle km instead of the 510 bn vehicle km forecast using the mid-point of the National Road Traffic Forecasts—a 2 per cent. reduction.

Public Transport

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to his answer of 24 May, *Official Report*, column *418*, how many passenger miles are expected to transfer from private car to public transport as a result of the public transport initiatives described.

Mr. Freeman: It is not possible to estimate the number of passenger miles likely to transfer from private car to public transport. In the case of buses, much of the success of the measures depends on action being taken by local authorities.

Diversions

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is the average diversion in road miles over original routes provided by trunk road bypasses of motorway or express road standard over the past five years and planned for the next five years.

Mr. Key: This information is not readily available, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

M53

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Hooton spur of the M53, north of junction 5, was built as part of a road scheme linking the M53 to a projected Dee barrage.

Mr. Key: The spur at junction 5 of the M53 was constructed in the 1970s for a possible link with the M56 to the west of Ellesmere Port.

Wirral-North Wales Corridor

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish details of the public transport schemes currently being assessed for the Wirral-North Wales corridor as part of the public transport initiatives contained in his answer of 24 May, *Official Report*, column *418*.

Mr. Freeman: Improvements to public transport will in many cases be the responsibility of the operators concerned; but it is open to local authorities to bring forward proposals for public transport improvements in their area. The Government can assist by making resources available to local authorities where appropriate. For example, we have made £6·4 million available to Merseyside PTA and Cheshire county council for railway electrification between Hooton, Chester and Ellesmere Port; £2·2 million to Merseyside PTA in 1993-94 for city challenge schemes some of which are in Wirral; and £300,000 to Wirral borough council in 1993-94 for bus priority measures. Local authorities have been invited to put forward further proposals in their transport policies and programmes.

Road Accidents

Mr. Lester: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to publish details of the highway engineering measures his Department is taking to achieve the trunk road share of the national target of reducing road accident casualties by one third by the year 2000.

Mr. Key: I am arranging for copies of the departmental trunk road safety plan to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament, along with copies of the regional safety plans that are separately produced in the Department's regional offices.

These plans detail the many actions and resources the Department is putting into highway engineering measures to reduce accident casualties on trunk roads. I am pleased to say that these measures are reducing deaths and injuries and are working towards meeting our share of the national target.

Amesbury-Berwick Down Improvements

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received objecting to *(a)* the yellow route and *(b)* the grey route for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down improvement scheme.

Mr. Norris: I have received various representations supportng or opposing the yellow route and grey route options for this improvement scheme near Stonehenge. We are now considering responses to the recent public consultation.

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what would be the cost of putting the yellow route for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down improvement scheme in a cutting rather than a tunnel.

Mr. Norris: The Department did not offer at the recent public consultation an option for a scheme in cutting along the line of the present A303 as we considered such an option to be unacceptable environmentally, given the importance of Stonehenge. No estimate of cost is available, comparable with those of options offered.

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what response he is giving to the National Trust's request for more information on alternative routes for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down improvement scheme; and if he will make a statement about the effect of his plans of the inalienability of National Trust land involved.

Mr. Norris: The Department is seeking clarification of what further information the National Trust requires. One main purpose of both the Department's consultation options near Stonehenge is to improve conditions for Stonehenge and its surrounding monuments. The tenure of National Trust land and the terms on which it might be made available are matters for the National Trust.

Criminal Offences

Sir Richard Body: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what criminal offences he has introduced in the last five years under delegated legislation.

Mr. Norris: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Jubilee Line Extension

Sir Michael Neubert: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is the total expenditure incurred on the Jubilee line extension project to date; what obstacles now remain before the principal construction works can be started; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: Around £180 million. Leaving aside the exit from administration of the Olympia and York Company, before we can give authorisation for construction work to begin the precise terms of the funding agreement between London Underground Limited and London Transport and the parties involved with the financing of Canary wharf must be satisfactorily settled.

Aircraft Ventilation

Ms Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what discussions he has held with United Kingdom airline operators about the quality of air in ventilation systems during flights;

(2) what discussions he has held with the Civil Aviation Authority about the quality of cabin air on board British airlines; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: The European joint aviation authorities' airworthiness standards include requirements for minimum fresh air ventilation flows expressed in terms of fresh air quantity per minute per person. These minimum flows must be provided in the event of a failure in the air supply system; normal flow rates would be appreciably higher. The Civil Aviation Authority sees no reason to review these standards.

Channel Tunnel Rail Link

Sir Keith Speed: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish the advice he has received from the merchant banker retained by his Department about finance for the channel tunnel rail link.

Mr. Freeman: The independent review of Union Railways' work on the rail link was published in March 1993. We shall make an announcement in due course on the Government's conclusion following the consultation on private sector involvement, taking into account the advice provided by Samuel Montagu.

DVOIT Swansea

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has for representatives of the work force of DVOIT Swansea to meet each of the five bidders in the privatisation process before a final choice has been made by his Department.

Mr. Key: Representatives of the DVOIT staff have been offered the opportunity of meeting the prospective purchasers of the agency once a shortlist has been selected. This stage is likely to be reached in the second half of August.

Motor Vehicle Licensing Applications

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what considerations govern the number of sub-post offices permitted to conduct motor vehicle licensing applications.

Mr. Key: The aim is to provide an across-the-counter service within reasonable travelling distance for motorists with an option to relicense by post if this is more convenient.

Vehicle licences are issued by 4,000 of the 20,000 post offices in Great Britain. For this service the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)—effectively the taxpayer—pays a substantial sum of money to Post Office Counters Ltd. (POCL). Any increase in the number of licence-issuing post offices would increase the cost of collection without increasing the overall sum paid into the Exchequer.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Immigration Offences

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were received into prison department establishments under Immigration Act powers during *(a)* 1992 and *(b)* 1993 to the latest convenient date, by individual prison establishment; what was the average daily population of persons so detained in each of those years; what was the average length of time spent in detention by persons so detained in each of those years; and whether he will give a breakdown by nationality of persons so detained for each of those years.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The number of detainees received into Prison Service establishments in England and Wales under the Immigration Act 1971 is given by establishment of initial reception in table 1 for the first half of 1992. Information for receptions for the second half of 1992 and for 1993 is not yet available.

The average population in 1992, including persons originally received for a criminal offence, was 227. The average for January to May in 1993 is 382. A breakdown of the prison population by nationality is given for June 1992 and May 1993 in table 2.

The average period of detention for detainees released in the first half of 1992 is provisionally estimated as nearly 12 weeks. No later information for discharges is yet available.

Table 1

Receptions of persons detained under the Immigration Act 1971 into Prison Service establishments in England and Wales: by establishment 1 January to 30 June 1992

Establishment	*Number of persons*[1,2]
Remand centres	
Brinsford	2
Dorchester	8
Exeter	1
Feltham	13
Glen Parva	1
Haslar	179
Low Newton	3
Moorland	1
Local prisons	
Bedford	3
Belmarsh	7
Birmingham	55
Bristol	8
Brixton	4
Bullingdon	4
Canterbury	14
Dorchester	9
Durham	2
Exeter	12
Elmley	1
Gloucester	3
Holloway	23
Hull	6
Leeds	13
Leicester	15
Lewis	8
Lincoln	5
Liverpool	4
Norwich	3
Pentonville	158
Preston	17
Pucklechurch	1
Shrewsbury	2
Winchester	2
Wormwood Scrubs	11
Closed training prisons	
Full Sutton	1
All establishments	599

[1]The figures are those recorded centrally and are approximate: detailed checking of individual cases would involve disproportionate cost.
[2]Provisional figures.

Table 2
Population of persons detained under the Immigration Act 1971 in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales on 30 June 1992 and 31 May 1993: by nationality

Nationality	Number of persons[1] [2] 30 June 1992	31 May 1993
Afghanistan	—	1
Algeria	8	15
Angola	7	13
Argentina	—	1
Ascension Islands	—	1
Australia	1	—
Bangladesh	5	13
Belgium	—	1
Brazil	—	1
Canada	1	2
Cape Verde	—	1
Central African Republic	—	2
Chile	1	1
China	2	5
Colombia	1	3
Congo	1	—
Cyprus	2	3
Egypt	1	3
Ecuador	—	1
France	3	6
Gambia	1	1
Germany	—	3
Ghana	7	28
Guyana	1	3
Hong Kong	1	1
Hungary	1	1
India	43	99
Indonesia	—	1
Irish Republic	3	1
Israel	2	2
Italy	—	1
Ivory Coast	1	4
Iran	2	2
Jamaica	10	20
Jordan	—	1
Kenya	1	4
Lebanon	6	2
Liberia	3	5
Libya	—	1
Malaysia	1	1
Morocco	3	3
Mauritius	1	1
Mexico	—	1
Namibia	1	—
Netherlands	2	1
Nepal	1	—
New Zealand	—	1
Nicaragua	1	1
Niger	1	—
Nigeria	36	54
Pakistan	12	14
Peru	—	3
Philippines	1	—
Poland	—	2
Portugal	1	—
Romania	—	9
Saudi Arabia	1	—
Sierra Leone	1	5
Somalia	—	1
South Africa	2	1
Spain	—	1
Sri Lanka	1	2
St. Lanka	—	1
St. Vincent and Grenadines	1	—
Sudan	1	2
Tanzania	—	3
Trinidad and Tobago	1	—
Turkey	9	24
Uganda	1	2
United States of America	3	3
Vietnam	1	—
Yugoslavia	1	1
Zambia	1	1
Zaire	25	17
Zimbabwe	—	1
Nationality not recorded	42	30
Refusal	1	2
All establishments	268	441

[1]The figures are those recorded centrally and are approximate: detailed checking of individual case would involve disproportionate cost.
[2] Provisional figures.

Doctors (Work Permits)

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many overseas doctors have been issued with notices to leave the country; how many of them are waiting for their appeals to be heard; and what are the reasons for asking them to leave.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested is not available.

Civil Defence Grant Aid

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department has any plans to relax the current rules concerning the effect on local authorities' civil defence grant aid allocations of authorities' success in obtaining income from emergency planning activities.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Officials are considering ways in which local authorities can retain any such income obtained and a further announcement will be made shortly.

Probation and Bail Hostels

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list *(a)* the bail hostels and *(b)* the combined probation and bail hostels in England and Wales at present; how many places there are in each hostel; and how many additional places the Government aims to provide (i) in each of these hostels and (ii) elsewhere by 1995.

Mr. Maclean: There are currently 30 approved bail hostels in England and Wales, as follows:

Bail hostels in England and Wales in 1993

Probation Area	Hostel	Beds
Cheshire	Bunbury House	22
Cheshire	Linden Bank	22
Cleveland	South Bank	24
Devon	Dudley Centre	22
Greater Manchester	Chorlton Hostel	27
Gloucestershire	Ryecroft	16
Hampshire	Dickson House	28
Hampshire	Southampton	22
Kent	Dover Bail	18
Lancashire	Blackburn	18
Leicestershire	Howard House	20

Probation Area	Hostel	Beds
London Inner	Canadian Avenue	23
London Inner	Kelley House	28
London Inner	Tulse Hill	27
London Middlesex	Corfton Road	20
London South West	Kew	14
Merseyside	Merseybank	28
North Wales	Ty Newydd	12
Northumbria	Cuthbert House	22
Northumbria	Pennywell	22
Oxfordshire	Clarks House	27
Staffordshire	Lichfield Road	20
West Glamorgan	Emroch House	15
West Midlands	Marshall House	22
West Midlands	Stonnall Road	12
West Midlands	Sycamore Lodge	32
West Midlands	Welford	26
South Yorkshire	Town Moor	25
West Yorkshire	Howden House	27
West Yorkshire	Walmer Villas	18
	Beds	659
	Hostels	30

There are currently 84 approved probation/bail hostels in England and Wales as listed below:

Probation/bail hostels in England and Wales 1993

Probation Area	Hostel	Beds
Avon	Ashley House	20
Avon	Brigstocke Road	29
Avon	Bridge House	15
Bedfordshire	Bedford	25
Bedfordshire	Napier Road	23
Berkshire	Elizabeth Fry	20
Berkshire	Manor Lodge	27
Berkshire	St. Leonards	23
Berkshire	Wellesley House	18
Buckinghamshire	Milton Keynes	16
Cambridgeshire	Peterborough	26
Cheshire	Bewsey Street	20
Cleveland	The Crescent	25
Cornwall	Meneghy House	18
Cumbria	Bowling Green	24
Derbyshire	Burdett Lodge	25
Devon	Lawson House	20
Dorset	Bournemouth	25
Dorset	Weston	27
Durham	Fir Tree Grange	28
East Sussex	Brighton	15
Essex	Basildon	32
Essex	Windyridge	30
Greater Manchester	Bradshaw	27
Greater Manchester	Hopwood	18
Greater Manchester	Ascot House	22
Greater Manchester	St. Josephs	29
Greater Manchester	Wilton Place	29
Greater Manchester	Withington Road	37
Hampshire	The Grange	18
Hereford and Worcester	Braley House	23
Hertfordshire	St. Albans	26
Humberside	Queens Road	19
Kent	Fleming House	23
Kent	Hollywood Manor	30
Lancashire	Highfield House	18
Lancashire	Hoole House	24
Leicestershire	Charnwood House	18
Leicestershire	Kirk Lodge	35
Lincolnshire	Wordsworth House	28
London Inner	Bedford/Shenley	30
London Inner	Camden House	29
London Inner	Ellison House	25
London Inner	KPH	19
London Inner	St. Edmunds	25
London Inner	St. Mungo	25
London Inner	St. Vincents	24
London Inner	West Park	22
London Middlesex	Seafield Lodge	14
London North East	Westbourne House	40
London South East	Beckenham Road	20
Merseyside	Adelaide House	22
Merseyside	Canning House	27
Merseyside	Southwood	23
North Wales	Plas-y-wern	12
Norfolk	John Boag House	29
Northants	Bridgewood	23
Northants	Stone House	24
Northumbria	Ozanam House	27
Northumbria	St. Christophers	22
Nottinghamshire	Astral Grove	15
Nottinghamshire	Southwell House	16
Nottinghamshire	Trent House	22
Oxfordshire	Abingdon Road	22
South Glamorgan	Mandeville House	26
Somerset	Glogan House	16
Staffordshire	Wenger House	42
Suffolk	Lightfoot House	22
Suffolk	The Cottage	18
Surrey	St. Catherines	19
West Midlands	Bilston	15
West Midlands	Carpenter House	16
West Midlands	Crowley House	18
West Midlands	Stoke Green	22
Warwickshire	Kenilworth Road	18
Warwickshire	McIntyre House	18
South Yorkshire	Centre 45	36
South Yorkshire	Norfolk Park	49
South Yorkshire	Rookwood	37
West Yorkshire	Albion Street	24
West Yorkshire	Cardigan House	23
West Yorkshire	Elm Bank	17
West Yorkshire	Ripon House	17
West Yorkshire	St. Johns House	28
	Beds	1,993
	Hostels	84

The approved hostel expansion programme aims to provide 1,365 additional places between April 1988 and March 1996. Of these, 914 are already on stream and are included in the tables. The remaining places have been provisionally allocated, but until the appropriate properties or sites are identified the precise numbers cannot be determined.

Sheehy Report

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many copies of the executive summary of the Sheehy report on police responsibilities and rewards have been produced; to whom they have been circulated; and at what total cost.

Mr. Charles Wardle: A total of 170,000 copies of the executive summary of the Sheehy report on police responsibilities and rewards were produced. A copy was circulated by the inquiry to every police officer in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland; to the clerk to the police authority for each force in the United Kingdom; and to the organisations and individuals who gave oral evidence to the inquiry. The cost of production and distribution was £25,965.

Youth Organisations

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will institute an independent evaluation into the performance of the Weston Spirit,

Drive for Youth, Fairbridge and other similar charitable organisations specialising in diverting young people from crime; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: A number of local diversionary projects run by charitable organisations, including Fairbridge, receive Home Office funding. Those projects are therefore subject to monitoring and evaluation.

Deportees

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women have been deported from the United Kingdom in each of the last three years.

Mr. Charles Wardle *[holding answer 5 July 1993]:* The numbers of those deported from the United Kingdom are as follows:

	1990	*1991*	*1992*
Male	1,693	1,968	2,008
Female	470	601	568

The figures include those who made a supervised or voluntary departure having been served with a notice of the intention to deport them, as well as those who were the subject of a deportation order.

EMPLOYMENT

Disability

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for employment what assessment he has made of the net Exchequer flowback of the personal reader service.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The most recent assessment of net Exchequer costs for the personal reader service was published in the consultative document "Evaluation of Special Schemes for People with Disabilities: Summary Paper" in November 1990. The figures are shown in the following table:

	Assessment
Gross costs (1988-89) (£000s)	387
Number helped (1988-89)	472
Gross cost per person helped (£s)	820
Estimated range of costs to Exchequer (£000s)	370-510
Estimated range of net costs per person helped (£s)	700-1,000

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the percentage level of employment of *(a)* blind people and *(b)* all disabled people.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The Labour Force Survey (LFS) asks people of working age if they currently have any health problem or disability which limits the kind of paid work they can do. Estimates based on answers to this question will include people with short-term health problems and disabilities as well as those registered as disabled.

LFS estimates for winter 1992-93, not seasonally adjusted, show that in Great Britain 38·2 per cent. of working age people with such health problems and disabilities were in employment. Of those who reported that their main health problem was with difficulty in seeing, 45·2 per cent. were in employment.

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what assessment he has made of the extent to which employers take account of the cost of special equipment in deciding whether to employ *(a)* blind workers or *(b)* people with other disabilities.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: An assessment of the extent to which employers take account of the cost of special equipment was published in the consultative document "Evaluation of Special Schemes for people with disabilities: Summary Paper", in November 1990. The paper provided details of employer responses to a question which asked whether they would have taken or kept their disabled employees on, without help from the special schemes for people with disabilities. The question was asked in relation to all disabled people, regardless of disability although one third were classified as totally blind. The following table shows employer responses with reference to the special aids to employment scheme:

'Would you have taken/kept him/her on without help from the scheme?'

Base—175

Response	*Per cent.*
Definitely	75
Possibly	16
No	9

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the average cost of equipment given under the special aids to employment schemes *(a)* for all recipients and *(b)* for blind workers.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The average cost of equipment supplied under the special aids to employment scheme is *(a)* £906 for all recipients and *(b)* £1,373 for blind workers.

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what plans he has for the personal reader service scheme.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The assistance currently provided by the personal reader service will continue to be available under access to work from April 1994, and will be extended to include support beyond reading.

Employment Agency

Mr. Roger Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what were the main results of the work of the employment service as a next steps agency in 1992-93; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: I am pleased to announce that the Employment Service achieved excellent results in 1992-93. It placed over 1·42 million unemployed people into jobs, of whom 24 per cent. had been out of work for six months or more. It also exceeded its targets for paying benefit accurately and promptly to those entitled to it. The Chief Executive of the Employment Service has provided my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State with the annual report and accounts for 1992-93. Copies have been placed in the Library today.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

Football

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what visits have been made by Ministers in his Department since April 1992 to *(i)* Premier League football grounds and *(ii)* Football League grounds.

Mr. Brooke: Ministers have made official visits to one Premier League and two Football League grounds since April 1992.

Angling

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heriage what grants from public funds have been made to the sport of angling since April 1991.

Mr. Brooke: Most of my Department's funding for sport is made through the Sports Council. In 1991-92 it paid grant of £71,749 to angling bodies, including £20,660 to the National Angling Council which was disbanded at the end of that year. In 1992-93 grant paid by the Sports Council to angling's remaining governing bodies was £46,800.

PRIME MINISTER

Foreign Heads of State (Visits)

Mr. William Ross: To ask the Prime Minster whether the itinerary of a foreign head of state on an official visit to the United Kingdom is set by Her Majesty's Government.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 13 July 1993]:* For an official visit to Britain by a foreign head of state the itinerary is agreed between the British Government and the visitor.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Tourism

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much his Department invested in marketing and promoting Northern Ireland as a tourist destination during 1991 and 1992; how much his Department intends to have spent on marketing and promotion by the end of the current financial year; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: Funded by the Government, the Northern Ireland tourist board has spent the following amounts (excluding salary and wages costs) on the marketing and promotion of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination:

	£000's
1990-91	2,797
1991-92	1,821
1992-93	3,515
1993-94	[1]3,410

[1] Budget.

Increased Government funding for tourism has enabled the tourist board to run a major television campaign in parts of Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland in addition to its normal marketing activities.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many visitors to Northern Ireland in 1992 stated holiday as their main reason for visiting; and what proportion of the total number of visitors that represented during the year.

Mr. Atkins: In 1992, 247,200 pure holiday visitors came to Northern Ireland. This represents 20 per cent. of the total visitors.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which of the target numbers set out in the corporate plan 1992-95 by the Northern Ireland tourist board were achieved in 1992 in respect of *(a)* visits to friends and relatives, *(b)* holidays and *(c)* businesses; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: The number of business visitors to Northern Ireland in 1992 achieved and significantly exceeded the target, with 380,000 visitors as against a target of 336,000. In a difficult year for international tourism and despite achieving a 6 per cent overall increase in visitors, which produced the fourth successive record year for Northern Ireland tourism, the other two targets were not reached.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proportion of tourists visiting Northern Ireland in 1992 also visited the Republic as a component part of their trip; what proportion of those were from *(a)* EC countries, *(b)* the United States of America and *(c)* elsewhere; and what was the average length of stay in both the north and the Republic.

Mr. Atkins: An estimated 21 per cent. of the visitors to Northern Ireland in 1992 also visited the Republic of Ireland. The form of the tourist data collected is such that the information requested about origin and length of stay is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what was the total expenditure by Northern Ireland residents on *(a)* leisure day trips and *(b)* domestic vacations during 1992; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: The total expenditure by Northern Ireland residents on domestic vacations in 1992 was £44·63 million. Expenditure on leisure day trips is not collected on a regular basis although experimental surveys are being pursued to assess methodology of collection and the value of such data.

Strategic Planning Unit

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what work is carried out by the strategic planning unit in the Department of Economic Development.

Mr. Atkins: The unit, which includes the Department's economists and statisticians, has responsibilities which include the provision of strategic advice on all aspects of economic development policy, policy evaluation, economic research and the collation and interpretation of statistics.

EDUCATION

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Boswell: The Government continue to place a high priority on helping businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

Measures operated by the Department to assist small business include encouragement of small firms to tender for its contracts; each contract also includes a requirement to ensure sub-contractors are paid promptly.

The Department monitors both the number and value of its contracts let to small firms. In the first four months of 1993-94, 43 per cent. of contracts were placed with such firms (28 per cent. by value); the corresponding figures for the previous 12 months are 39 per cent. and 29 per cent.

Open University (Tuition Fees)

Mr. Robert Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many students studying with the Open University have had their tuition fees grant-aided by North Yorkshire county council in each of the last five years.

Mr. Boswell: This information is not collected centrally. Under the Education Act 1962, it is entirely for local education authorities to determine how much to spend on discretionary awards and which students to support.

Elton Report

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make a statement outlining the progress made to date by his Department on implementing the recommendations of the Elton report.

Mr. Forth: The report of the committee of inquiry into discipline in schools chaired by Lord Elton was published in March 1989 and copies were sent by the Department to all schools and local education authorities in England. The report contained recommendations not only to the Government, but also to local education authorities, governing bodies, head teachers, teacher training institutions and other bodies. For its part, the Department has:

supported through education support grants (ESG) 24 LEA projects designed to improve support services for the most difficult pupils (expenditure of £7·3 million over a three year period ending March 1993);

supported through ESG 31 projects designed to improve school attendance (£7·4 million over a three-year period ending March 1993). Similar projects to a value of some £9·6 million are being supported in 71 LEAs under the grants for education support and training (GEST) scheme 1993-94;

monitored permanent exclusions at maintained schools over a two-year period, starting with summer term 1990, under the national exclusions reporting system (NERS). The key findings from the two-year exercise were published on 23 April 1993;

supported research at Sheffield university designed to identify good practice in relation to discipline in inner-city schools and further work on the evaluation of intervention strategies used to combat bullying;

required that all initial teacher training courses should include separate, compulsory elements of practical training in how to manage pupil behaviour, and that these skills should be a key factor in assessing a student's performance and competence to teach.

Youth Services

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to impose a statutory obligation on local authorities to develop youth services.

Mr. Boswell: Local education authorities already have a duty under section 41 of the Education Act 1944 as substituted by section 11 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 to secure provision for further education. Further education is defined as including vocational training, social physical and recreational training and organised leisure time occupation. Section 53 of the 1944 Act also provides that the facilities provided by an LEA for primary, secondary and further education must include adequate faclities for recreation, social and physical training.

These provisions cover the youth service and it is for individual authorities to decide how they fulfil their duty.

Pupil Exclusions

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will publish figures showing the number of pupil exclusions in *(a)* the primary sector and *(b)* the secondary sector within each local education authority in England in each year since 1987; and what has been the percentage of excluded pupils within the general school population in each local authority area in each year.

Mr. Forth: Information on fixed term and indefinite exclusions has not been collected centrally. Information on permanent exclusions from maintained schools in England was collected by the Department over a two year period, starting with summer term 1990, under the national exclusions reporting system (NERS). The results of the survey were published on 23 April 1993 and showed that a total of 6,743 permanent exclusions had been reported with 2,910 in year one and 3,833 in year two. Exclusions in the primary phase accounted for 13 per cent. of the total in year one and 14 per cent. in year two. The information was gathered for purposes of national aggregation and it is not possible to provide a breakdown of the figures by area because of assurances given as to confidentiality.

Grant-maintained Schools

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many ballots in England on grant-maintained status have resulted in participation rates *(a)* above 79 per cent., *(b)* between 70 and 79 per cent., *(c)* between 60 and 69 per cent., *(d)* between 50 and 59 per cent. and *(e)* below 50 per cent.

Mr. Robin Squire: The information requested is as follows, correct as of 21 July.

Participation rates	*Number of ballots*
80 per cent. or over	126
70 per cent. to less than 80 per cent.	294
60 per cent. to less than 70 per cent.	456

Participation rates	Number of ballots
50 per cent. to less than 60 per cent.	332
Less than 50 per cent.	33

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his answer of 6 November 1992, *Official Report*, column *478*, how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each local education authority in England are or have been eligible to apply for grant-maintained status; how many in each case have held ballots under section 61 of the Education Act 1988; how many ballots in each case resulted in votes to seek grant-maintained status, and how many of these have been subject to section 12 or 13 notices; and how many ballots in each case resulted in votes against seeking grant-maintained status.

Mr. Robin Squire: The information requested is listed in the table. Column 2 gives the total number of maintained schools in each LEA in January 1992 (other than special schools and nurseries). Column 5 gives the number of schools which were subject to section 12 or 13 proposals when they published proposals for self-governing (GM) status. Information on schools subject to section 12 or 13 proposals which have voted against self-governing (GM) status, or which have voted in favour of self-governing (GM) status but not yet published proposals is not held centrally.

Table of the SG(GM) Voting Patterns by Local Education Authority
Primary Schools (As at 21 July 1993)

LEA	Total Number of schools in LEA[1] (LEA or SG(GM))	Number of ballots held	Number of ballots that resulted in "yes" votes		votes
201 Corporation of London	1	—	—	—	—
202 Camden	41	—	—	—	—
203 Greenwich	77	1	1	—	—
204 Hackney	70	1	1	1	—
205 Hammersmith	39	1	1	1	—
206 Islington	57	—	—	—	—
207 Kensington	27	2	2	—	—
208 Lambeth	78	3	3	—	—
209 Lewisham	74	1	1	—	—
210 Southwark	77	3	3	—	—
211 Tower Hamlets	73	—	—	—	—
212 Wandsworth	70	5	3	1	2
213 Westminster	42	—	—	—	—
301 Barking	54	—	—	—	—
302 Barnet	89	5	2	—	3
303 Bexley	67	3	2	—	1
304 Brent	65	2	2	1	—
305 Bromley	78	4	3	—	1
306 Croydon	99	1	1	—	—
307 Ealing	92	4	4	2	—
308 Enfield	69	3	1	—	2
309 Haringey	77	—	—	—	—
310 Harrow	53	—	—	—	—
311 Havering	74	—	—	—	—
312 Hillingdon	73	11	11	—	—
313 Hounslow	63	—	—	—	—
314 Kingston on Thames	36	1	1	—	—
315 Merton	49	1	—	—	1
316 Newham	67	—	—	—	—
317 Redbridge	56	—	—	—	—
318 Richmond on Thames	40	—	—	—	—
319 Sutton	42	3	3	—	—
320 Waltham Forest	61	—	—	—	—
330 Birmingham	337	10	5	—	5
331 Coventry	110	1	—	—	1
332 Dudley	83	1	1	—	—
333 Sandwell	112	—	—	—	—
334 Solihull	70	1	1	—	—
335 Walsall	106	3	2	—	1
336 Wolverhampton	103	1	—	—	1
340 Knowsley	64	—	—	—	—
341 Liverpool	186	—	—	—	—
342 St. Helens	73	1	1	1	—
343 Sefton	94	—	—	—	—
344 Wirral	106	—	—	—	—
350 Bolton	107	1	1	—	—
351 Bury	72	2	1	—	1
352 Manchester	174	—	—	—	—
353 Oldham	101	—	—	—	—
354 Rochdale	76	5	4	—	1
355 Salford	89	—	—	—	—

LEA	Total Number of schools in LEA[1] (LEA or SG(GM))	Number of ballots held	Number of ballots that resulted in "yes" votes		votes
356 Stockport	110	—	—	—	—
357 Tameside	83	—	—	—	—
358 Trafford	78	—	—	—	—
359 Wigan	124	—	—	—	—
370 Barnsley	98	1	1	1	—
371 Doncaster	127	4	3	2	1
372 Rotherham	116	—	—	—	—
373 Sheffield	181	14	12	5	2
380 Bradford	165	2	1	—	1
381 Calderdale	94	3	3	—	—
382 Kirklees	161	2	—	—	2
383 Leeds	224	3	1	—	2
384 Wakefield	131	1	1	1	—
390 Gateshead	85	—	—	—	—
391 Newcastle	85	1	—	—	1
392 North Tyne	62	2	1	—	1
393 South Tyne	61	—	—	—	—
394 Sunderland	106	—	—	—	—
420 Isles of Scilly	4	—	—	—	—
901 Avon	369	4	—	—	4
902 Bedfordshire	218	3	3	—	—
903 Berkshire	275	9	7	—	2
904 Buckinghamshire	287	8	6	—	2
905 Cambridge	264	9	7	—	2
906 Cheshire	460	7	5	3	2
907 Cleveland	202	—	—	—	—
908 Cornwall	250	1	1	—	—
909 Cumbria	312	19	17	—	2
910 Derbyshire	450	13	7	—	6
911 Devon	444	5	2	1	3
912 Dorset	199	2	1	—	1
913 Durham	297	—	—	—	—
914 East Sussex	218	—	—	—	—
915 Essex	579	69	65	—	4
916 Gloucestershire	264	10	9	—	1
917 Hampshire	581	20	18	7	2
918 Hereford and Worcester	288	2	—	—	2
919 Hertfordshire	440	11	8	—	3
920 Humberside	354	5	3	—	2
921 Isle of Wight	46	—	—	—	—
922 Kent	575	22	20	2	2
923 Lancashire	601	3	2	—	1
924 Leicester	331	—	—	—	—
925 Lincolnshire	293	27	24	—	3
926 Norfolk	398	18	14	—	4
927 North Yorkshire	395	2	—	—	2
928 Northamptonshire	270	13	10	—	3
929 Northumberland	143	—	—	—	—
930 Nottinghamshire	423	1	—	—	1
931 Oxfordshire	240	1	1	—	—
932 Shropshire	216	3	3	2	—
933 Somerset	233	4	2	—	2
934 Staffordshire	412	2	2	—	—
935 Suffolk	255	—	—	—	—
936 Surrey	373	19	17	8	2
937 Warwickshire	244	—	—	—	—
938 West Sussex	244	—	—	—	—
939 Wiltshire	295	12	10	—	2
Totals	18,926	438	348	39	90

[1] January 1992 totals.

Table of the SG(GM) Voting Patterns by Local Education Authority
Secondary Schools (As at 21 July 1993)

LEA	Total Number of schools in LEA[1] (LEA or SG(GM))	Number of ballots held	Number of ballots that resulted in "yes" votes		votes
201 Corporation of London	—	—	—	—	—
202 Camden	11	3	2	—	1
203 Greenwich	15	1	—	—	1
204 Hackney	10	1	—	—	1
205 Hammersmith	9	1	1	—	—
206 Islington	9	—	—	—	—
207 Kensington	4	1	1	1	—
208 Lambeth	10	5	5	—	—
209 Lewisham	14	2	—	—	2
210 Southwark	15	5	5	1	—
211 Tower Hamlets	14	2	1	—	1
212 Wandsworth	10	8	7	1	1
213 Westminster	8	—	—	—	—
301 Barking	8	—	—	—	—
302 Barnet	20	11	10	1	1
303 Bexley	17	5	4	—	1
304 Brent	14	11	9	2	2
305 Bromley	17	13	12	1	1
306 Croydon	20	8	6	—	2
307 Ealing	13	8	6	6	2
308 Enfield	17	6	5	—	1
309 Haringey	9	—	—	—	—
310 Harrow	10	2	1	—	1
311 Havering	18	5	4	—	1
312 Hillingdon	17	15	14	2	1
313 Hounslow	14	2	2	—	—
314 Kingston on Thames	10	4	4	—	—
315 Merton	11	1	—	—	1
316 Newham	14	1	1	1	—
317 Redbridge	14	2	1	—	1
318 Richmond on Thames	8	—	—	—	—
319 Sutton	14	8	8	—	—
320 Waltham Forest	16	2	2	—	—
330 Birmingham	79	24	17	—	7
331 Coventry	19	—	—	—	—
332 Dudley	22	9	7	1	2
333 Sandwell	23	3	1	1	2
334 Solihull	14	2	1	—	1
335 Walsall	22	11	7	—	4
336 Wolverhampton	20	6	5	2	1
340 Knowsley	11	3	1	—	2
341 Liverpool	36	4	3	—	1
342 St. Helens	12	1	—	—	1
343 Sefton	22	1	—	—	1
344 Wirral	22	4	2	—	2
350 Bolton	16	3	3	1	—
351 Bury	14	—	—	—	—
352 Manchester	28	1	—	—	1
353 Oldham	15	1	—	—	1
354 Rochdale	14	3	1	—	2
355 Salford	18	4	1	—	3
356 Stockport	14	2	—	—	2
357 Tameside	18	5	3	1	2
358 Trafford	16	6	4	—	2
359 Wigan	22	1	1	1	—
370 Barnsley	15	2	—	—	2
371 Doncaster	34	1	—	—	1
372 Rotherham	17	—	—	—	—
373 Sheffield	32	7	5	2	2
380 Bradford	87	8	6	—	2
381 Calderdale	17	7	6	2	1
382 Kirklees	36	5	3	1	2
383 Leeds	97	1	1	—	—
384 Wakefield	38	—	—	—	—
390 Gateshead	13	1	—	—	1
391 Newcastle	22	1	—	—	1
392 North Tyne	27	3	2	1	1
393 South Tyne	11	—	—	—	—
394 Sunderland	17	—	—	—	—
420 Isles of Scilly	1	—	—	—	—

LEA	Total Number of schools in LEA[1] (LEA or SG(GM))	Number of ballots held	Number of ballots that resulted in "yes" votes		votes
901 Avon	60	4	2	1	2
902 Bedfordshire	71	16	10	1	6
903 Berkshire	59	12	10	1	2
904 Buckinghamshire	45	11	10	—	1
905 Cambridge	44	25	17	1	8
906 Cheshire	69	11	4	2	7
907 Cleveland	44	3	—	—	3
908 Cornwall	31	—	—	—	—
909 Cumbria	43	13	13	4	—
910 Derbyshire	61	22	14	1	8
911 Devon	69	9	6	—	3
912 Dorset	59	14	13	4	1
913 Durham	44	1	—	—	1
914 East Sussex	34	1	—	—	1
915 Essex	105	72	69	1	3
916 Gloucestershire	42	33	27	2	6
917 Hampshire	94	20	17	2	3
918 Hereford and Worcester	76	7	5	—	2
919 Hertfordshire	88	27	22	2	5
920 Humberside	60	3	—	—	3
921 Isle of Wight	21	—	—	—	—
922 Kent	138	70	66	10	4
923 Lancashire	107	16	9	1	7
924 Leicester	79	9	5	1	4
925 Lincolnshire	63	27	27	2	—
926 Norfolk	52	16	12	—	4
927 North Yorkshire	59	2	—	—	2
928 Northamptonshire	65	20	14	3	6
929 Northumberland	61	3	1	—	2
930 Nottinghamshire	85	8	3	1	5
931 Oxfordshire	43	2	—	—	2
932 Shropshire	36	6	6	1	—
933 Somerset	39	1	1	—	—
934 Staffordshire	85	10	5	—	5
935 Suffolk	77	1	—	—	1
936 Surrey	51	13	13	2	—
937 Warwickshire	36	9	8	1	1
938 West Sussex	41	3	—	—	3
939 Wiltshire	44	20	15	—	5
Totals	3,731	803	615	73	188

[1] January 1992 totals excluding 6th Form Colleges.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education in how many ballots in England under section 61 of the Education Reforms Act 1988, where a simple majority of parents voted in favour of seeking grant-maintained status, the proportion of such parents was *(a)* above 69 per cent., *(b)* between 60 and 69 per cent., *(c)* between 50 and 59 per cent., *(d)* between 40 and 49 per cent., *(e)* between 30 and 39 per cent. and *(f)* below 30 per cent. of the number of parents eligible to vote.

Mr. Robin Squire: The information requested is as follows, correct as of 21 July.

Percentage of eligible parents voting "yes"	Number of ballots
70 per cent. or over	104
60 per cent.—less than 70 per cent.	138
50 per cent.—less than 60 per cent.	242
40 per cent.—less than 50 per cent.	287
30 per cent.—less than 40 per cent.	167
less than 30 per cent.	25

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list those grant-maintained schools which have been required to repay any or all of any grant under section 79 of the Education Reform Act 1988.

Mr. Robin Squire: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list, by local education authority, those grant-maintained schools for which the final budgets for the financial year 1993-94 were below the value of the proposed final annual maintenance grant, in each case stating *(a)* the proposed final AMG and *(b)* the final AMG.

Mr. Robin Squire: The information requested is given in the table.

GM AMG—1993-94

School	Proposed final AMG £	Final AMG £
Barnet		
Queen Elizabeth's GM School For Boys	2,685,434	2,675,943

School	Proposed final AMG £	Final AMG £
Bedfordshire		
Thomas Whitehead CE School	326,490	318,337
Manshead CE Upper School	1,819,281	1,804,759
Berkshire		
Southlands School	1,388,715	1,336,886
Desborough Comprehensive School	2,374,578	2,326,426
Whitelocke Infant and Nursery School	268,260	267,466
Bexley		
St. Columba's RC Boys School	1,728,391	1,598,267
St. Mary and St. Joseph's School	1,604,686	1,522,403
Bolton		
George Tomlinson School	1,502,743	1,340,663
Bradford		
Bingley Grammar School	2,107,250	2,078,799
Oakbank School	2,463,211	2,391,363
Cambridgeshire		
Bassingbourn Village College	902,676	858,366
Gamlingay Village College	415,101	412,435
The Queen's School, Wisbech	3,067,674	3,024,982
Sawtry Village College	1,354,921	1,291,906
Wheatfields Junior School	505,856	498,875
The King's School, Peterborough	1,834,790	1,782,920
Jack Hunt School	3,071,177	3,011,650
Longsands Community College	2,834,472	2,813,248
Sawston Village College	2,339,941	2,315,722
Derbyshire		
The Merrill Community School	2,296,888	2,142,353
John Port School	3,466,400	3,455,267
Murray Park Community School	2,020,900	1,961,579
Noel Baker School	2,772,186	2,691,008
Repton Primary School	286,568	272,386
Dudley		
Old Swinford Hospital School	1,353,932	1,333,690
Essex		
Beauchamps School, Wickford	1,632,598	1,500,912
King Edward VI Girls School, Chelmsford	1,668,285	1,645,444
King Harold School	1,654,751	1,611,949
North Crescent Primary School	331,361	309,353
Rickstones School	1,354,346	1,304,412
Torells Comprehensive School	1,348,562	1,323,256
The Appleton School	2,403,831	2,351,509
The Hedley Walter School	2,039,499	1,914,949
Westcliff High School For Girls	1,979,784	1,963,536
Belfairs Community College	2,668,155	2,601,882
Northwick Park County Infant School	331,619	329,561
The Eastwood School	1,772,834	1,748,207
Hampshire		
Abbotswood Middle School	844,731	826,691
Bay House Grant-maintained School	3,276,655	3,203,364
Blackfield Middle School	586,385	578,966
Hertfordshire		
Parmiters School	2,333,813	2,322,198
Christ Church CE JMI School, Chorley	319,139	311,975
Hertingfordbury School	244,250	240,010
Bushey Hall School	2,571,885	2,397,349
Hillingdon		
Hayes Manor School	1,747,694	1,727,799
Mellow Lane School	2,372,797	2,318,510
Northwood School	2,278,887	2,201,048
Swakeleys School	1,856,814	1,833,869
Vyners School	2,161,804	2,004,307
Hounslow		
Gumley House Convent School	2,251,140	2,220,884
Kent		
Thamesview School	2,280,985	2,254,247
Oakwood Park Grammar School	1,077,926	1,005,749
Sir Roger Manwood's School	1,505,123	1,451,715
Mascalls School	2,868,192	2,848,129
Meopham School	986,030	935,095
The Wildernesse School	1,456,554	1,389,844
Oldborough Manor High School	1,537,167	1,535,140
Kingston		
Richard Challoner School	1,569,710	1,534,475
Tiffin School	2,369,820	2,258,964
Lincolnshire		
Skegness Grammar School	1,505,727	1,482,438
The Kings School, Grantham	1,916,942	1,891,740
Carre's Grammar School	1,091,103	1,078,102
Yarborough High School	2,415,986	2,364,073
North Kesteven School	2,648,988	2,586,321
Robert Pattinson School	2,444,092	2,415,355
Ancaster High School	1,267,502	1,262,259
William Farr CE School	1,735,540	1,679,426
Gleed Girls School	1,208,925	1,130,082
Monks' Dyke School	1,504,824	1,504,382
Lacey Gardens Junior School	592,816	587,612
Norfolk		
Acle High School	1,175,358	1,144,641
Cromer High School	1,285,699	1,244,563
Great Yarmouth High School	1,616,159	1,585,705
St. Clements High School	1,196,556	1,170,746
West Flegg Middle School	678,538	660,604
Wymondham College	2,341,738	2,303,400
Gresham County Primary School	175,466	161,864
Heacham Middle School	390,702	363,868
Redgate Middle School, Hunstanton	309,338	289,155
Northamptonshire		
Lodge Park School	1,876,194	1,810,351
Windmill Primary School	617,400	578,154
Sandwell		
Manor High Schooi	1,848,555	1,789,513
Sheffield		
Clifford First School	144,612	120,602
Southwark		
London Nautical School	1,495,297	1,491,358
Surrey		
Gordon's School	787,666	756,557
Hawkedale First School	182,746	161,194
Manor First School	259,389	240,411
Send CE First School	243,980	232,999
Walsall		
Shire Oak Community School	1,459,790	1,400,817
The Steetly School	2,385,678	2,321,781
Warwickshire		
Avon Valley School	730,195	727,515
Ash Green School (Exhall)	1,111,820	1,103,673
Hartshill School	1,350,262	1,346,854
Queen Elizabeth School Atherstone	1,554,124	1,552,689
Myton School	2,235,952	2,226,965
Rugby High School For Girls	1,230,469	1,226,666

School	Proposed final AMG £	Final AMG £
Wiltshire		
Highbury School	1,158,555	1,093,707
Lavington School	[1]1,077,939	1,056,388

[1] Updated from previous answer to exclude adjustments in respect of 1992-93.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list, by local education authority, those schools which will be operating with grant-maintained status from September.

Mr. Robin Squire: The schools which have been approved for self-governing status as of 21 July, or which my right hon. Friend is minded to approve, and which will be operating as self-governing (GM) state schools in September are listed. Further applications with proposed start dates in September are still under consideration.

Avon
Oldfield School
Beechen Cliff School

Barnet
Queen Elizabeth's GM School for Boys
Mill Hill Grant-Maintained High School
St. Mary's CE High School
Hendon School

Bedfordshire
Lea Manor High School and Community College
Crawley Green Grant Maintained Infant School
Holywell School
Thomas Whitehead CE School
Ashcroft High School
Queensbury School
Ashton St. Peters (VA) Lower School
Sharnbrook Upper School
Icknield High School
Manshead School
Stopsley High School and Community College
Wootton Upper School
Lincroft Middle School (Grant Maintained)

Berkshire
Herschel Grammar School
Slough Grammar School (Formerly Upton Grammar)
The Downs School
Denefield School
Priory School
Cippenham Middle School (Grant Maintained)
Reading School
Whitelocke Infant and Nursery School
Langley Grammr School
Desborough Comprehensive School
Holy Family RC School
Castleview Combined School
St. Bartholomew's School
Westgate School
Southlands School

Bexley
St. Columba's RC Boys School
St. Catherine's RC School for Girls
Bexley Erith Technical High School for Boys
St. Mary & St. Joseph's Grant Maintained School
Barnehurst Infant Grant-Maintained School
Barnehurst Junior Grant-Maintained School

Birmingham
Handsworth Grammar School for Boys
King Edward VI Handsworth School
Ninestiles School
King Edward VI Aston School
Hall Green School
Baverstock Grant-Maintained School
King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls
Small Heath School
Great Barr Grant-Maintained School
The Fairfax School
Deanery Junior School
Deanery Infant School
King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Boys
King Edward VI Five Ways School

Bolton
George Tomlinson School
St. James' CE School
Canon Slade School
Crompton Fold Primary School

Bradford
Oakbank School
Bingley Grammar School
Laisterdyke Grant-Maintained Middle School
Thornton School
Hanson Grant-Maintained School
Killinghall School

Brent
Claremont High School (Grant-Maintained)
Kingsbury High School
Convent of Jesus and Mary GM High School
Queens Park Community School (GM)
Copland Community School and Technology Centre

Bromley
Beaverwood School for Girls
Crofton Junior School
Holy Innocents Roman Catholic Primary School
Newstead Wood School for Girls (GM)
Bullers Wood School for Girls
Hayes School
Charles Darwin School
St. John Rigby School
Ravens Wood School for Boys
Langley Park School for Boys
Coopers School
Kelsey Park School
St. Olave's and St. Saviour's Grammar School

Buckinghamshire
Castlefield Combined School
Hamilton Combined School
Bridgewater Hall School, Stantonbury Campus
Beaconsfield High School
Overstone Grant Maintained Combined School
Brindley Hall School
Wycome Royal Grammar School
Lord Grey School
Wing School
Beechview Middle School (Grant-Maintained)
The Chalfonts Community College (GM)
The Radcliffe School
Brookmead School
Brushwood Middle School

Calderdale
Rastrick High School
Salterlee Primary School
The North Halifax Grammar School
Holy Trinity CE Senior School (GM)
The Crossley Heath School

Cambridgeshire
Jack Hunt School, Peterborough
Deacon's School
The King's School (Peterborough Cathedral Sc)
Sawston Village College
Sawtry Village College GM School
St. John Fisher RC Comprehensive School
St. Peter's School
Longsands Community College

The Village College, Comberton
Gamlingay (Grant-Maintained) Village College
Bassingbourn GM Village College
Stanground College (Grant-Maintained)
Orton Wistow Primary School
Wheatfields Junior School
The Queen's School
St. Helen's Primary School
Crosshall Junior School
Ailwyn Community School
The Park Lane Primary School
Crosshall Infant School

Cheshire
Henbury County High School
Fallibroome High School
Bankfield High School (GM)
Mottram St. Andrew Primary School
Kettleshulme St. James CE G.M. Primary School

Croydon
St. Joseph's Colleage
Thomas More Grant Maintained School
Riddlesdown Grant-Maintained School
Edenham School

Cumbria
Hayton CE Grant-Maintained School
Appleby Grammar School
Warwick Bridge (GM) Primary School
Dallam School
Scotby CE Grant Maintained Primary School
Harraby School
Kirkby Stephen Grammar School
Parkview School
Queen Elizabeth Grammar School
Kirkbie Kendal School
Cartmel Priory CE School
The Queen Katherine School
Brampton Junior School
St. Aidan's County High School
Trinity School, Carlisle

Derbyshire
Murray Park Community School
The Pingle School
Chellaston School
Belper Grant-Maintained School
Heanor Gate School
Linton Primary School
Noel-Baker Community School (GM)
Repton Primary School
Netherthorpe School
West Park Community School
Lady Manners School
The Merrill Community School
Friesland School
Belmont Primary School
John Port School
The Ecclesbourne School
Chellaston Junior School
Borrow Wood Junior School

Devon
St. Boniface's College
Teign School
Knowles Hill School
Colyton Grammar School
Torquay Boys' Grammar School (GM)

Dorset
St. Peter's RC School
The Woodroffe School
Highcliffe Comprehensive School
Parkstone Grammar School
Budmouth School
St. Walburga's RC Primary School
Poole Technical High School (ex Henry Harbin)
Bournemouth School
Bournemouth School for Girls
Avonbourne School

Dudley
Alder Coppice Primary School
Old Swinford Hospital
The Ellowes Hall School
The High Arcal School
The Kingswinford Grant-Maintained School

Ealing
Wood End Middle School
Wood End First School
Greenford High School
Drayton Manor High School
Brentside High School
Northolt High School
The Ellen Wilkinson School for Girls

Enfield
The Latymer School
Albany School
Broomfield School

Essex
The Rickstones School
Beauchamps Grant-Maintained School
Colbayns High Grant Maintained School
Katherines Primary School
The King John School
Bromfords School, Wickford
King Harold Grant-Maintained School
The Greensward School
Rodings Central Primary School
St. Martin's Grant-Maintained School
Tendring High School
Torells Grant-Maintained School
St. Katherine's CE VA Primary School
Holland Haven Grant-Maintained Primary School
Rolph CE VA Primary School
Chelmsford County High School for Girls
Chelmer Valley High School (Grant Maintained)
St. Clare's RC Primary School
St. Helena School
Southend High School for Boys
Southend Girls High School
St. Clere's School
South Benfleet Primary School
Thurstable School
Hassenbrook School
Sir Charles Lucas School
Chalvedon School
Newlands Spring Grant Maintained School
Takeley Grant-Maintained Primary School
Cecil Jones High School
The Gilberd School
Newport Free Grammar School
Saffron Walden County High School
Westcliff High School for Girls
Holland Park County Primary School
Castle View School
The Grays School (Grant Maintained)
Great Totham Primary School, Essex
St. Osyth EC Aided Primary School
Colchester Royal Grammar School
Rainsford School
Gable Hall Grant-Maintained Comprehensive School
Anglo European School (Ingatestone)
Furtherwick Park School
Millfield County Primary School
The Plume School
St. Thomas More High School for Boys
Elmstead County Primary School
Davenant Foundation School
Belfairs Community College
Eastwood County High School & 6th Form Centre
Northwick Park Grant Maintained Junior School
Northwick Park Grant Maintained Infant School
Northlands Grant-Maintained Junior School
North Crescent Primary School
King Edward VI Grammar School (G.M.)

The Bramston School
The Appleton School
William Edwards School
William De Ferrers School
Westcliff High School for Boys
Westborough County Primary School
West Hatch High School
St. Thomas More RC Primary School
Thorpedene Infant School
The Boswells School
Clacton County High School
The Thorpe Bay School
The Philip Morant School
All Saints Church of England Primary School
The King Edmund School
Woodville County Primary School
St. Andrew's Grant Maintained CE Primary School
Jotmans Hall Primary School
The Fitzwimarc School, Rayleigh
The Elmwood Primary School
The Deanes School
The Cornelius Vermuyden School
The Hedley Walter High School (GM)
Coppins Green Grant Maintained School
St. Mary' CE Primary School

Gloucestershire
Katharine Lady Berkeley's School
Stroud High School
Balcarras School
Churchdown Gran-Maintained School
Chosen Hill School, Gloucester
Chipping Campden School
Cheltenham Bournside School and 6th form Centre
Tewkesbury Grant-Maintained School
Saintbridge GM Technology School
St. Benedict's RC School
Robinswood Primary School
The Cotswold School
Ribston Hall High School
Picklenash Junior School
Pate's Grant Maintained Grammar School
Andoversford Primary School
Wyedean School, Grant Maintained Status
Winchcombe Community School
Newent Community School
Marling School
The Rednock School
The Crypt School
Blue Coat CE Grant-Maintained Primary School
The Catholic School of St. Gregory the Great

Hammersmith
London Oratory School

Hampshire
The Arnewood School
Bohunt Community School
Testwood School
Testbourne Community School
All Hallows RC School
Hordle CE (C) Grant-Maintained Primary School
St. Joseph's RC Primary School
Hardley School (Grant-Maintained)
Applemore Technology School
Ringwood School (GM Comprehensive)
Blackfield Middle School (Grant Maintained)
Calmore Grant-Maintained Middle School
Front Lawn Middle School
Bay House Grant-Maintained School
Oaklands RC Comprehensive School
Burgate School
Abbotswood Grant Maintained Middle School
The Priory School
Crofton School, Fareham
The City of Portsmouth Boys' School

Havering
Abbs Cross School
The Frances Bardsley School for Girls
The Coopers' Company and Coborn (GM School)
The Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School

Hereford and Worcester
Blessed Edward Oldcorne RC High School
St. Bede's Catholic Grant Maintained School
St. Augustine's Catholic GM School
Prince Henry's Grant-Maintained High School
Bromsgrove CE Middle School

Hertfordshire
The Bishop's Stortford High School
Ashlyns Grant-Maintained School
Christ Church CE School
St. Mary's Catholic Primary School
Hertingfordbury Cowper JMI School
Watford Grammar School for Girls
Rickmansworth School
Goffs School
Queens' School
Francis Bacon School
Parmiters School
Parkside First School
Bushey Meads Grant-Maintained School
Bushey Hall School
Nicholas Breakspear Roman Catholic GM School
Mount Grace (GM) School
Watford Grammar School for Boys
Dame Alice Owen's School
Marlborough School
The Leventhorpe School
The John Henry Newman School

Hillingdon
Swakeleys School
Mellow Lane School
Bishopshalt School
Abbotsfield School
Haydon School
Grange Park Junior School
Grange Park Infant School
Queensmead School
Oak Farm Junior Mixed School (G.M.)
Oak Farm Infant School (Grant-Maintained)
Northwood School
Uxbridge High School
The Hayes Manor School
The Douay Martyrs School
Vyners School
Hillside Infant School

Hounslow
Gunnersbury Catholic School for Boys
Gumley House Convent School

Humberside
Wold Newton Grant-Maintained Primary School

Kensington
Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School

Kent
The Canterbury High School
The Bradbourne School
Borough Green Primary School
The Archbishop's CE Grant Maintained School
Thamesview School
Allington County Primary School
Sutton-at-Hone CE GM Primary School
Homewood School
St. Simon Stock School
Holy Trinity CE Primary School
Holy Family RC Grant Maintained Primary School
The Skinners' School, Tunbridge Wells
The Malling School
St. John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School
Hillview School for Girls
Cheyne Middle School
St. George's Church of England School
St. George's CE High School

St. Francis' RC Primary School
St. Edmund's RC Comprehensive School
St. Botolph's CE Primary School
Herne Bay Junior School (Grant Maintained)
Herne Bay High School
St. Anselm's RC School
Southlands Comprehensive School
Chatham Grammar School for Girls
Southfields School
Snodland CE Primary School
Sir Roger Manwood's School
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys
Senacre Technology School
Sandown Court Community College
Roseacre Junior School
Rochester Grammar School for Girls
Rainham Mark Grammar School
Queen Elizabeth's School
Fulston Manor School
Angley School
Oldborough Manor Community College
Oakwood Park Grammar School
Barton Court Grammar School
Wrotham School
Ditton CE Primary School
Dartford Grammar School
Wilmington Grammar School for Boys
Westlands High School
St. Gregory's Catholic Comprehensive School
Minster College
Dartford Grammar School for Girls
Meopham Grant-maintained School
Tonbridge Grammar School for Girls
Mascalls School
The Wildernesse School
The Thomas Aveling School
The Robert Napier Grant-Maintained School
The Maplesden Noakes School
Aylesford School
The Hugh Christie School
Cranbrook School
The Grammar School for Girls Wilmington
The Frank Montgomery School
The Folkestone School for Girls
The Cornwallis School
The Charles Dickens School
Chaucer Technology School

Kingston-upon-Thames
Holy Cross Convent School
Beverley School
Richard Challoner School
Tiffin School

Kirklees
Heckmondwike Grammar School
Castle Hall Grant-Maintained School

Knowsley
The St. Thomas Becket School

Lambeth
Bishop Thomas Grant School
St. Bernadette RC Junior Mixed School
Archbishop Tenison's School
Dunraven Grant-maintained School
La Retraite R.C. Girls, (G.M.) School
St. Martin-in-the-Fields High School

Lancashire
Clitheroe Royal Grammar School
Archbishop Temple School (Ex William Temple)
Newton Bluecoat C of E GM Primary School
Baines School
Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School
Lancaster Royal Grammar School
Lancaster Girls Grammar School

Leicestershire
South Wigston High School
Abington High School
Bushloe High School, Grant Maintained
Uppingham Community College
Long Field GM High School

Lewisham
Turnham Primary with Nursery G.M. School

Lincolnshire
The Ancaster High School, Lincoln
Huttoft County Primary School
Washingborough School
St. George's Grant-Maintained School
St. Andrews CE Primary School
Spalding County Primary School
Skegness Grammar School
Chapel St. Leonards County Primary School
The Malcolm Sargent Grant Maintained School
Robert Pattinson Grant-Maintained School
Carre's Grammar School
Rauceby School CE G.M.
Gleed Girls Grant Maintained School
Queen Elizabeth's GM Grammar School
Qheen Elizabeth's G.M. Grammar School
Caistor Grammar School
Ermine Junior Grant Maintained School
North Kesteven Grant-Maintained School
William Farr CE Comprehensive School
William Alvey CE Junior School
Monks' Dyke High School
The Magdalen School
Branston School and Community College
Yarborough High School
The Kings School Grantham
Lincoln Christ's Hospital School
Cranwell County Primary School
The Gartree Grant Maintained School
Lacey Gardens Junior School
Bourne Abbey Primary School
King Edward VI School
The Castle Hills GM School, Gainsborough

Liverpool
St. Francis Xavier's College

Newham
Stratford School

Norfolk
Cliff Park High School (Grant Maintained)
St. Clement's High School
Heacham Middle School (G.M.)
South Wootton Grant-Maintained Junior School
Sheringham High School
Gresham Village School (Grant-Maintained)
Robert Kett Grant-Maintained Middle School
Great Yarmouth High School
Redgate Grant-Maintained Middle School
Flegg High School
Norwich Road School
Wymondham College (GMS)
Downham Market High School-Grant-Maintained
Dereham Church CE Grant-Maintained School
West Flegg Middle School (G.M.)
Marshland High School
Lynn Grove VC High School
Cromer High School—Grant-Maintained
Acle High School
Loddon Middle Grant-Maintained School
Costessey High School, Grant-Maintained
Barnham Broom Primary School

Northamptonshire
Collingtree CE Primary School
Southfield School for Girls
Sir Christopher Hatton Grant-Maintained School
Beanfield Junior School (G.M.)
Queen Elizabeth (Grant-Maintained) School
Northampton (G.M.) School for Boys
Wrenn School

Woodnewton Way Junior School
Moulton Primary School (Grant-Maintained)
Weavers School
Montagu School
Millbrook Infant School
Danesholme Junior School
The Windmill County G.M. Primary School
Manor School, Northamptonshire
Lodge Park School
The King John School
Kingswood School
Kingsley Park Middle School

Nottinghamshire
Greenwood Dale School
Ravensdale Grant Maintained Middle School
The George Spencer School

Oxfordshire
Shenington CE Primary School

Redbridge
Chadwell Heath High School

Rochdale
St. James CE Primary School
Smithy Bridge Primary School
Wardle High School
Crossgates Primary School

Sandwell
Manor High School, Sandwell

Sheffield
Clifford CE Grant-Maintained School
St. John Fisher RC (VA) Primary School
Notre Dame School
All Saints RC Secondary School

Shropshire
Abraham Darby School
Holy Cross CE Junior School
Charlton School
Ercall Wood School
Adams' Grammar School
The Corbet Grant-Maintained School

Solihull
Hatchford Grant-Maintained Primary School

Somerset
Sexey's School
Bruton Primary School

Southwark
St. Michael's School
St. Francesca Cabrini Grant Maintained School
Notre Dame High School
The St. Thomas the Apostle GM College
London Nautical School

Staffordshire
St. Thomas More RC High School
Hollinsclough CE Primary School
Chasetown High School
Rising Brook Grant-Maintained School
Cardinal Griffin RC Comprehensive
Cannock Chase High School (G.M.)

Surrey
The Beacon School
Thamesmead School
Stoneleigh First School (Grant-Maintained)
St. Paul's Catholic School
Holy Trinity CE Middle School
St. John the Baptist School
Heathside Secondary School
Hawkedale First School
Send C of E First School (Grant-Maintained)
Guildford County School
Rosebery School
Gordon's Grant-Maintained School
Glyn School
Pewley Down County First School
Park Mead County First School
Epsom and Ewell High School
de Stafford School
The Manor County First School
Collingwood Grant-Maintained School

Sutton
Sutton Grammar School for Boys
St. Philomena's Catholic High School for Girls
Cheam High School
Nonsuch High School for Girls
Wilsons School
Wallington High School for Girls
Wallington High School for Boys
The John Fisher School
All Saints CE Primary School

Tameside
Fairfield High School
West Hill School
Audenshaw High School

Tower Hamlets
Raines Foundation School

Trafford
Ashton on Mersey School
Sale Moor School
New Wellington School
Blessed Thomas Holford School

Walsall
Streetly School
St. Thomas Moore RC Comprehensive G. M. School
Aldridge School
Shire Oak Grant-Maintained Community School
Queen Mary's High School
Queen Mary's Grammar School

Waltham Forest
Chingford School
Highams Park School

Wandsworth
John Paul II RC School
Hillbrook Primary School (Grant-Maintained)
Southfields School (GM)
Salesian College
Graveney School
Ethelburga Primary School (Grant-Maintained)
Elliott School (GM)
Burntwood School

Warwickshire
The Avon Valley Grant-Maintained School
Studley High School
Ash Green Grant-Maintained School
Hartshill Grant Maintained School
Alcester Grammar School
Rugby High School for Girls
Queen Elizabeth School, Atherstone
Myton School

Wiltshire
Highbury Secondary Boys' School
St. Augustine RC (G.M.) Comprehesnive School
Sheldon School
Pewsey Vale School (Grant Maintained)
Downton CE (VC) Primary School
Aloeric Grant-Maintained School
Lowbourne Grant Maintained Infants' School
Lavington Comprehensive School

Wirral
Calday Grange Grammar School, West Kirby
Wirral Grammar Schol for Boys

Wolverhampton
Wolverhampton Girls High School
Moseley Park GM School

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list in rank order those grant-maintained schools from which pupils have been permanently excluded, giving in each case *(a)* the number of such exclusions, *(b)* the pupil roll of the school and *(c)* the date it was incorporated as a grant-maintained school.

Mr. Forth: Information on permanent exclusions from maintained schools in England was collected by the Department over a two-year period, starting with summer term 1990, under the national exclusions reporting system (NERS). The results of the survey were published on 23 April and showed that a total of 6,743 permanent exclusions had been reported, with 2,910 in year one and 3,833 in year two. This information was collected for purposes of national aggregation and it is not possible to provide a breakdown of the figures by school or by sector because of assurances given as to confidentiality.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is the total number of schools from which his Department has received inquiries about acquiring grant-maintained status; how many ballots have now been held under section 61 of the Education Reform Act; and how many of these resulted in votes to seek grant-maintained status.

Mr. Robin Squire: The Department does not keep records of inquiries related specifically to the acquisition of self-governing status. The high overall level of interest is evident from the numbers of publications issued and attendance at conferences. To date, the Department has distributed 2·5 million publications, largely in response to requests for information. Some 3,500 heads and governors have attended the conferences on self-governing status since November 1992.

As of 21 July, 1,241 ballots on self-governing (GM) status have been held in England and 963 of these have resulted in votes in favour of applying for self-governing (GM) status.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his answer of 22 June, *Official Report*, columns *123 -34*, if he will list, by local education authority, those grant-maintained schools which still have yet to receive their final budgets for the 1993-94 financial year.

Mr. Robin Squire: The information requested is given in the table. The vast majority of all GM schools will have received their final budgets by the end of this month.

GM AMG—1993-94

SCHOOL

Avon
Beechen Cliff School
Oldfield School

Birmingham
Baverstock GM School
Small Heath School
Handsworth Grammar School for Boys
Great Barr School
Hall Green School
King Edward VI Aston School
King Edward VI Camp Hill Boys School
King Edward VI Camp Hill Girls School
King Edward VI Five Ways School
King Edward VI Handsworth School

Bradford
Hanson GM School

Brent
Claremont High School
Copland Community School
Convent of Jesus and Mary
Kingsbury High School
Queens Park Community School

Buckinghamshire
Bridgewater Hall School
Brindley Hall School
Beaconsfield High School
Brookmead County Combined Middle School
The Chalfonts School
Overstone Combined School
Beechview Middle School
Hamilton Combined School
Lord Grey School
The Radcliffe School
Wycombe Royal Grammar School

Cheshire
Bankfield High School
Kettleshulme CE Primary School
Fallibroome High School
Henbury County High School

Croydon
Riddlesdown High School
Edenham School

Cumbria
Kirbie Kendal School
Queen Elizabeth Grammar School
Hayton CE Primary school
St. Aidan's School
Trinity School
Scotby CE Primary School
The Queen Katharine School, Kendal
Appleby Grammar School
Dallam School
Harraby School
Kirkby Stephen Grammar School

Devon
Colyton Grammar School
Torquay Boys Grammar School
St. Boniface's College
Teign School

Ealing
Brentside High School
Drayton Manor High School
Ellen Wilkinson High School
Greenford High School
Northolt High School
Wood End First School
Wood End Middle School

Gloucestershire
Ribston Hall High School
Marling School
Pate's Grammar School
Stroud High School
Robinswood Primary School
Tewkesbury School
The Crypt School
Balcarras School
Chosen Hill School
Katharine Lady Berkeley School
Churchdown School
The Cotswold School
Newent Community School
Rednock School
Saintbridge School
Chipping Camden School

St. Gregory RC Primary School
Blue Coat CE Grant-Maintained School
Picklenash County Junior School
Wyedean School

Hammersmith
London Oratory School

Havering
Abbs Cross School
Coopers Company & Coborn School
Frances Bardsley School

Kensington
Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School

Kent
Southlands Comprehensive School

Lambeth
La Retraite School
St. Bernadette Junior School
Archbishop Tenison's School
Bishop Thomas Grant School
Dunraven GM School

Lewisham
Turnham Primary School

Nottinghamshire
Ravensdale Middle School
Greenwood Dale School
George Spencer School

Rochdale
Crossgates Primary School
Smithy Bridge Primary School
St. James CE Primary
Wardle High School

Shropshire
Adams' Grammar School
Corbet GM School

Southwark
St. Francesca Cabrini RC Primary

Staffordshire
St. Thomas More School
Cannock Chase High School

Sutton
Wilsons School
Nonsuch High School for Girls
John Fisher School
Cheam High School
Sutton Grammar School for Boys
St. Philomena's School
Wallington High School for Boys
Wallington High School for Girls

Waltham Forest
Highams Park School

Wandsworth
Graveney School
Burntwood School
Elliott School
Salesian College
Ethelburga Primary School
Hillbrook Primary School
John Paul II RC School
Southfields School

Wirral
Calday Grange Grammar School

as at 22 July 1993

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list, in date order, his Department's conferences for head teachers and governors on grant-maintained status, giving in each case *(a)* details of the venue, *(b)* the number of invitations issued, *(c)* the number of (i) head teachers and (ii) governors attending and *(d)* the cost.

Mr. Robin Squire: Conference invitations are issued in respect of a regional round of conferences in order to allow head teachers and governors to select the most convenient time and location. Schools are invited to send two representatives and generally nominate the head teacher and a governor. A precise breakdown of representatives between these two categories is not available. Further details are set out in the table.

Going GM Conferences

(a) Venue	Date	*(b)* Invitations	*(c)* Delegates	*(d)* Cost (£)
North West				
Leeds	16 Nov. 1992	—	95	6,202
Bolton	12 Dec. 1992	—	160	6,873
Sheffield	15 Jan. 1993	—	207	8,164
Manchester	30 Jan 1993	12,500	138	7,734
North East				
Newcastle 1	10 Feb. 1993	3,290	222	17,078
Newcastle 2	11 Feb. 1993		204	
Midlands				
Leicester	15 Feb. 1993	—	108	4,306
Nottingham 1	1 Mar. 1993	—	197	7,751
Birmingham	10 Mar. 1993	—	202	8,512
Nottingham 2	29 Mar. 1993	—	176	7,378
Daventry[1]	26 Apr. 1993	6,812	77	4,150
London and Home Counties				
Maidstone	4 May 1993	—	219	7,894
St. Albans	7 May 1993	—	198	9,772
Heathrow	13 May 1993	—	209	10,077
Esher	19 May 1993	—	209	8,019
Watford	27 May 1993	11,650	197	6,876
South and West				
Bournemouth	18 June 1993	—	180	6,669
Cheltenham	28 June 1993	—	194	6,263

(a) Venue	Date	(b) Invitations	(c) Delegates	(d) Cost (£)
Exeter	13 July 1993	6,426	173	7,638
Ad Hoc Events				
Taunton	8 Mar. 1993	—	90	3,491
Haydock	30 Apr. 1993	—	62	2,858
Total excluding ad hoc	—	—	3,270	141,356
Total	—	40,678	3,422	[1]147,705

[1] In addition, there is a contract for support services which for the 21 conferences has totalled £134,714.

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education which grant-maintained schools have been visited by Her Majesty's inspectors; and in each case *(a)* by how many inspectors, *(b)* for how long and *(c)* at what cost.

Mr. Robin Squire: In the period up to July 1992, HMI had visited the GM schools listed. I will write to the hon. Member with details of the schools visited in the period since July 1992.

School	Total HMI days	Cost (£)
Audenshaw	7·0	2,590
Bacup and Rawtenstall	4·0	960
Baverstock	29·0	7,260
Heckmondwike Grammar	13·5	3,840
London Oratory	9·0	2,890
Old Swinford Hospital	6·0	1,740
Queen Elizabeth Grammar	4·0	960
Queensbury	25·0	6,600
Skegness Grammar	4·0	960
Small Heath	11·0	3,370
St. James CE	8·0	2,220
Wilmington Girls' Grammar	24·0	8,360
King's Grantham	5·0	1,200
Wilson's Sutton	4·5	1,380
Castle Hall	5·0	1,330
Hendon	9·0	2,850
Queen Elizabeth's Barnet	7·0	1,940
Colyton Grammar	21·0	7,380
Bankfield High	24·0	6,060
St. Francis Xavier	8·0	2,650
Cardinal Vaughan	5·0	1,200
Claremont High	5·0	1,500
Lancaster Royal Grammar	2·0	610
London Nautical	27·0	9,630
Netherthorpe	1·0	240
Ribston Hall High	2·5	825
Southfield Girls	3·0	720
Southlands	3·0	1,000
Beechen Cliff	2·0	610
Long Field High	7·0	2,280
Adams' Grammar	4·0	1,350
Bishopshalt	2·5	795
Bournemouth Grammar	4·0	1,090
Bridgewater Hall	2·0	630
Brindley Hall	1·0	240
Carre's Grammar	3·0	720
Ecclesbourne	7·5	2,625
Guildford	2·0	610
Marling	2·0	630
Pate's Grammar	2·0	480
Rickmansworth	17·0	6,030
Stroud High	4·0	1,370
Wolverhampton Girls High	5·0	1,630
Bullers Wood Girls	3·0	1,020
Francis Bacon	3·0	850
Handsworth Grammar	6·5	2,385
Hardley	1·0	370
St. Georges (Lincolnshire)	2·0	740
Wymondham College	1·0	370
Chalvedon	2·0	740
Crossley Heath	4·0	1,520
Great Barr	4·0	1,520
Kingsley Park Middle	1·0	370
Lancaster Girls Grammar	3·0	1,150
North Halifax	3·0	1,130
Reading	1·0	370
Stratford	5·0	1,910
Clitheroe Royal Grammar	1·0	370
The Cornwallis	1·0	370
The Maplesden Noakes	2·5	925
Caistor Grammar	1·0	370
Dartford Grammar	1·0	370
Graveney	1·0	370
Moseley Park	1·0	370
Queensmead	1·0	370
St. Augustine's RC	2·0	740
Queen Elizabeth	2·0	780
Kings School, Lincoln	3·0	1,170
Southlands	1·0	390
Watford Boys' GS	2·0	780
Wilmington Boys' GS	2·0	780
King Edward VI, Lincoln	1·0	390
Watford Girls' GS	1·0	390
Vyners	1·0	390
Haydon	1·0	390
Homewood	1·5	585
Bourne County Primary	2·0	780
Moulton Primary	2·0	780
Kingswood	1·0	390
Manor High	1·5	585
Avon Valley	1·0	390
Christs Hospital	2·0	780
The Gartree Tattershall	1·0	390
Salterlee Primary	0·5	195
Bassingbourne Village College	1·0	390
Minster College	1·0	390
Myton	2·0	780

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list by local education authority those grant-maintained schools which are denominational in character, stating in each case which denomination and whether they were previously voluntary aided, voluntary controlled or special agreement schools.

Mr. Robin Squire: A list of denominational schools which are currently operating as self-governing (GM) schools is given in the table, together with their denominations and former status.

	Denomination	Former Status
Bedfordshire		
Thomas Whitehead CE School	CE	VA
Manshead School	CE	VC
Berkshire		
Holy Family RC School	RC	VA

	Denomination	Former Status
Bexley		
St. Mary and St. Joseph's Grant Maintained School	RC	VA
St. Columba's RC Boys School	RC	VA
Bolton		
St. James' CE School	CE	SA
Canon Slade School	CE	VA
Brent		
Convent of Jesus and Mary GM High School	RC	VA
Bromley		
St. Olave's and St. Saviour's Grammar School	CE	VA
Holy Innocents Roman Catholic Primary School	RC	VA
St. John Rigby School	RC	VA
Calderdale		
Holy Trinity CE Senior School (GM)	CE	VA
Cambridgeshire		
The King's School (Peterborough Cathedral School)	CE	VA
Cheshire		
Kettleshulme St. James CE G.M. Primary School	CE	VC
Cumbria		
Trinity School, Carlisle	CE	VC
Hayton CE Grant-Maintained School	CE	VC
Scotby CE Grant-Maintained Primary School	CE	VA
Devon		
St. Boniface's College	RC	VA
Dorset		
St. Walburga's RC Primary School	RC	VA
Essex		
St. Andrew's Grant Maintained CE Primary School	CE	VA
Rolph CE VA Primary School	CE	VA
Gloucestershire		
Blue Coat CE Grant Maintained Primary School	CE	VC
The Catholic School of St. Gregory the Great	RC	VC
Hammersmith		
London Oratory School	RC	VA
Hampshire		
St. Joseph's RC Primary School	RC	VA
All Hallows RC School	RC	VA
Hereford and Worcester		
St. Bede's Catholic Grant Maintained School	RC	VA
St. Augustine's Catholic GM School	RC	VA
Hertfordshire		
Hertingfordbury Cowper JMI School	CE	VA
Christ Church CE School	CE	VA
St. Mary's Catholic Primary School	RC	VA
Hillingdon		
The Douay Martyrs School	RC	VA
Hounslow		
Gunnersbury Catholic School for Boys	RC	VA
Gumley House Convent School	RC	VA
Kensington		
Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School	RC	VA
Kent		
The Archbishop's CE Grant Maintained School	CE	VA
Sutton-at-Hone CE GM Primary School	CE	VC
St. Simon Stock School	RC	VA
St. John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School	RC	VA
St. Gregory's Catholic Comprehensive School	RC	VA
St. George's Church of England School	CE	SA
Snodland CE Primary School	CE	VC
Holy Trinity CE Primary School	CE	VA
Kingston-Upon-Thames		
Holy Cross Convent School	RC	VA
Richard Challoner School	RC	SA
Lambeth		
Bishop Thomas Grant School	RC	VA
Archbishop Tenison's School	CE	VA
La Retraite R.C. Girls (G.M.) School	RC	VA
St. Bernadette RC Junior Mixed School	RC	VA
Lancashire		
Newton Bluecoat C of E GM Primary School	CE	VA
Archbishop Temple School (Ex William Temple)	CE	VA
Lincolnshire		
Rauceby School CE G.M.	CE	VC
William Farr CE Comprehensive School	CE	VC
William Alvey CE Junior School	CE	VC
The Magdalon School	CE/ME	VC
Liverpool		
St. Franis Xavier's College	RC	VA
Norfolk		
Dereham Church CE Grant-Maintained	CE	VA
Oxfordshire		
Shenington CE Primary School	CE	VA
Rochdale		
St. James CE Primary School	CE	VC

	Denomination	Former Status
Sheffield		
Clifford CE Grant-Maintained	CE	VC
Somerset		
Sexey's School	CE	VC
Southwark		
St. Francesca Cabrini Grant Maintained School	RC	VA
Staffordshire		
St. Thomas More RC High School	RC	VA
Surrey		
St. Paul's Catholic School	RC	VA
St. John the Baptist School	RC	VA
Send C of E First School (Grant-Maintained)	CE	VC
Sutton		
Wilsons School	CE	VA
The John Fisher School	RC	VA
St. Philomena's Catholic High School for Girls	RC	VA
Tower Hamlets		
Raines Foundation School	CE	VA
Walsall		
St. Thomas More RC Comprehensive G.M. School	RC	VA
Wandsworth		
John Paul II RC School	RC	VA
Salesian College	RV	VA
Wiltshire		
St. Augustine RC (G.M.) Comprehensive School	RC	VA

Key to abbreviations:
CE — Church of England
RC — Roman Catholic
ME — Methodist
VA — Voluntary Aided
SA — Special Agreement
VC — Voluntary Controlled

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list in rank order local education authorities giving the percentage of pupils in *(a)* the primary and *(b)* the secondary sector in grant-maintained schools (i) this summer term and (ii) from next September.

Mr. Robin Squire: The tables give the percentages of state-educated secondary and primary pupils attending schools which are currently self-governing (GM) state schools, or will be from September, together with rankings. Percentages for September are based on schools which have been approved, or which my right hon. Friend is minded to approve (as at 21 July) for starting dates in September. Further applications with proposed starting dates in September are still under consideration.

Percentage of primary and secondary pupils in grant maintained schools
(September figures include all schools approved as at 21 July 1993)
(All data based on January 1992 Form 7)

	LEA Name	Percentage of secondary pupils in GM schools as at July 1993	Rank	Percentage of secondary pupils in GM					
201	Corporation of London	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
202	Camden	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
203	Greenwich	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
204	Hackney	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
205	Hammersmith	20·0	21	20·0	29	0·0	—	0·0	—
206	Islington	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
207	Kensington	19·8	22	19·8	32	0·0	—	0·0	—
208	Lambeth	46·5	5	53·4	6	1·3	19	1·3	27
209	Lewisham	0·0	—	0·0	—	1·0	22	1·0	28
210	Southwark	4·3	52	23·2	22	2·0	15	2·0	16
211	Tower Hamlets	8·0	44	8·0	50	0·0	—	0·0	—
212	Wandsworth	70·4	2	70·4	2	3·2	8	3·2	12
213	Westminster	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
301	Barking	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
302	Barnet	17·4	25	22·7	25	0·0	—	0·0	—
303	Bexley	10·1	40	19·9	31	2·5	13	2·5	15
304	Brent	43·0	7	43·0	10	0·0	—	0·0	—
305	Bromley	63·6	3	63·6	3	4·4	3	4·4	5
306	Croydon	14·1	34	25·7	16	0·0	—	0·0	—
307	Ealing	43·1	6	43·1	9	1·8	16	1·8	18
308	Enfield	0·0	—	19·9	30	0·0	—	0·0	—
309	Haringey	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
310	Harrow	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
311	Havering	20·5	19	25·5	18	0·0	—	0·0	—
312	Hillingdon	75·1	1	75·1	1	6·4	1	7·3	2
313	Hounslow	15·6	31	15·6	40	0·0	—	0·0	—
314	Kingston upon Thames	28·9	12	38·0	12	0·0	—	0·0	—
315	Merton	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
316	Newham	4·2	53	4·2	59	0·0	—	0·0	—
317	Redbridge	0·0	—	7·6	51	0·0	—	0·0	—
318	Richmond on Thames	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
319	Sutton	59·2	4	59·2	4	0·0	—	1·7	20
320	Waltham Forest	9·9	41	17·1	37	0·0	—	0·0	—

	LEA Name	Percentage of secondary pupils in GM schools as at July 1993	Rank	Percentage of secondary pupils in GM					Rank
330	Birmingham	14·7	33	17·7	36	0·0	—	0·5	35
331	Coventry	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
332	Dudley	12·1	38	16·4	38	0·0	—	1·5	26
333	Sandwell	3·7	56	3·7	61	0·0	—	0·0	—
334	Solihull	0·0	—	0·0	—	2·6	12	2·6	14
335	Walsall	15·9	30	29·4	14	0·0	—	0·0	—
336	Wolverhampton	11·4	39	11·4	44	0·0	—	0·0	—
340	Knowsley	0·0	—	8·1	48	0·0	—	0·0	—
341	Liverpool	3·6	57	3·6	62	0·0	—	0·0	—
342	St. Helens	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
343	Sefton	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
344	Wirral	5·2	49	9·4	46	0·0	—	0·0	—
350	Bolton	12·3	35	12·3	43	1·6	17	1·6	25
351	Bury	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
352	Manchester	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
353	Oldham	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
354	Rochdale	8·1	43	8·1	49	4·3	4	4·3	6
355	Salford	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
356	Stockport	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
357	Tameside	12·3	36	18·3	35	0·0	—	0·0	—
358	Trafford	20·4	20	25·6	17	0·0	—	0·0	—
359	Wigan	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
370	Barnsley	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
371	Doncaster	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
372	Rotherham	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
373	Sheffield	0·0	—	7·6	52	0·2	33	0·6	34
380	Bradford	9·8	42	9·8	45	0·0	—	0·7	32
381	Calderdale	24·2	14	24·2	21	0·4	30	0·4	36
382	Kirklees	4·8	50	4·8	58	0·0	—	0·0	—
383	Leeds	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
384	Wakefield	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
390	Gateshead	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
391	Newcastle	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
392	North Tyne	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
393	South Tyne	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
394	Sunderland	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
420	Isles of Scilly	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
901	Avon	2·8	60	2·8	64	0·0	—	0·0	—
902	Bedfordshire	16·4	27	19·0	33	1·2	21	1·6	23
903	Berkshire	15·1	32	16·1	39	2·6	11	3·2	10
904	Bucks	23·2	15	24·5	20	2·4	14	3·6	8
905	Cambridge	27·6	13	32·1	13	3·3	7	3·3	9
906	Cheshire	3·8	55	3·8	60	0·0	35	0·1	40
907	Cleveland	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
908	Cornwall	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
909	Cumbria	22·3	17	26·0	15	0·7	28	2·0	17
910	Derbyshire	16·3	28	24·7	19	1·0	23	1·7	21
911	Devon	5·3	48	6·6	54	0·0	—	0·0	—
912	Dorset	17·7	24	21·4	26	0·9	25	0·9	30
913	Durham	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
914	East Sussex	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
915	Essex	31·6	9	54·0	5	3·0	10	6·3	3
916	Gloucestershire	42·0	8	49·4	7	3·0	9	3·2	11
917	Hampshire	12·2	37	15·4	41	1·5	18	1·7	22
918	Hereford and Worcester	2·9	59	7·5	53	0·0	—	0·0	—
919	Hertfordshire	16·3	29	22·7	24	0·9	24	0·9	29
920	Humberside	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·1	34	0·1	39
921	Isle of Wight	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
922	Kent	33·0	11	43·5	8	1·3	20	2·6	13
923	Lancashire	5·4	46	5·4	56	0·2	31	0·2	37
924	Leicester	5·4	47	5·4	57	0·0	—	0·0	—
925	Lincolnshire	35.6	10	38·6	11	5·3	2	7·9	1
926	Norfolk	21·2	18	21·2	27	3·6	5	3·7	7
927	North Yorks	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
928	Northants	19·1	23	20·5	28	3·3	6	4·9	4
929	Northumberland	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
930	Notts	3·0	58	3·0	63	0·0	—	0·0	—
931	Oxfordshire	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·2	32	0·2	38
932	Shropshire	6·9	45	14·0	42	0·0	—	0·8	31
933	Somerset	1·4	61	1·4	65	0·6	29	0·6	33
934	Staffordshire	3·8	54	6·3	55	0·0	—	0·0	41
935	Suffolk	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
936	Surrey	22·8	16	22·8	23	0·8	27	1·6	24
937	Warwickshire	17·0	26	18·8	34	0·0	—	0·0	—

	LEA Name	Percentage of secondary pupils in GM schools as at July 1993	Rank	Percentage of secondary pupils in GM					Rank
938	West Sussex	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—	0·0	—
939	Wiltshire	4·4	51	8·8	47	0·8	26	1·7	19
Number of GM relevant LEAs			61		65		35		41

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education in how many ballots on grant-maintained status where a simple majority of parents voted in favour of seeking grant-maintained status the margin between the percentage voting yes and the percentage voting no has been 60:40 or closer; and, of these, how many (i) have been approved, (ii) have been rejected and (iii) have not yet received a decision from him.

Mr. Robin Squire: In 127 (13 per cent.) of the 963 ballots which had resulted in a majority in favour of applying for self-governing (GM) status as at 21 July, 60 per cent. of voters or less voted "yes"; 94 of these applications have been approved, four have been rejected, and my right hon. Friend has not yet reached a decision on the remaining 29.

Training and Enterprise Councils

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what was the purpose of the recent Department for Education regional conferences for the directors and board members of the TECs; and if he will list in each *(a)* the number of invitations sent, and to which categories of invitee, *(b)* the numbers from each category attending and *(c)* the cost of the conference.

Mr. Boswell: The series of regional seminars run by the Department for Education between July 1992 and May 1993 was designed principally for TEC chairmen and TEC business directors with an interest in education. The purpose was to bring TECs up to date on key education issues and policies; to develop a better understanding between the Department and TECs of their respective roles; and to bring together representatives of the education service with TECs at local level.

The information requested for each is in the table.

DFE seminars for TECs: table showing numbers of invitees and attendees[1] and costs[2] by region

	North-west	North and North-east	East Anglia and East Midlands	South-east	West Midlands	London	South-west
TECs							
Invitees	42	42	42	24	30	27	19
Attendees	39	37	38	17	23	25	19
LEAs							
Invitees	19	19	12	10	11	33	8
Attendees	19	19	10	5	9	25	8
Colleges and schools							
Invitees	5	11	8	8	8	8	10
Attendees	5	11	5	7	4	8	9
Government Departments, Further Education Funding Council, OFSTED							
Invitees	15	14	17	15	14	14	17
Attendees	13	14	15	15	13	14	14
Cost (£)	3,344	5,188	5,112	4,312	5,175	8,597	5,559

[1] Precise figures for attendance are not available; the figures are based on final acceptances.
[2] The cost figures include the cost of facilitators and consultancy support utilised after the first seminar in the North-west.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Potatoes

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will make a statement outlining the implications for producers within the United Kingdom of European Commission proposals on member state aid to potato producers.

Mr. Jack: The European Commission's proposals for a common organisation of the market in potatoes would end national support arrangements. If adopted in their present form, this would mean the end of the planting controls and intervention buying arrangements which form part of the Potato Marketing Scheme. The Council of Ministers has yet to make a decision on the proposal. My right hon. Friend stated on 24 June at columns 391-96 the current policy on the United Kingdom potato marketing scheme and our negotiating position on a Community regime for potatoes.

Fur Farms

Mr. Morley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list, by county and showing their location, all the fur farms currently operating, the type of fur-bearing animals they are farming and the number of each type of fur-bearing animals in each of the fur farms.

Mr. Soames: Information is not collected on the farming for fur of animals other than mink. Information on individual mink farms, including the exact location and numbers of mink kept, are not divulged. There are at present 13 mink farms operating in England in which approximately 33,000 mink are being kept for fur. These establishments are situated in the following counties:

	Number
Northumberland	1
Lancashire	4
West Yorkshire	2
Staffordshire	1
Suffolk	2
Hampshire	1
Isle of Wight	1
Cornwall	1

Fishing Vessels

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the number of times each British registered fishing vessel formerly Spanish registered or owned by Spanish individuals or companies landed fish in British ports in 1991, 1992 and 1993.

Mr. Jack: Information relating to the fishing operations of individual vessels is confidential. The table contains details of the total number of landings into British ports by the vessels concerned.

	1991	*1992*	*1993*[1]
Total number of landings	284	371	95
Vessels making five or more landings	9	18	3
Vessels making less than five landings	37	35	29

[1] To date.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the current holders of 10 m and under fishing licences for area VII F and G.

Mr. Jack: The 10 metre and under licences are general authorities to fish in all appropriate EC waters. All holders of such licences are therefore authorised to fish in area VII F and G. At 1 July 1993 Fisheries Departments had issued 5,193 10 metre and under licences; these could only be listed at disproportionate cost.

Salmonella

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food whether existing arrangements for the payment of compensation to producers whose poultry breeding flocks are slaughtered because of salmonella will continue when directive 92/117/EEC is implemented in Great Britain.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: Producers will continue to receive compensation for poultry breeding flocks slaughtered because of salmonella when Directive 92/117/EEC is implemented in Great Britain. However, the Government has reviewed the existing legislative provisions for the slaughter of poultry, in particular schedule 3(5) of the Animal Health Act 1981, and concluded that they form an unsatisfactory basis for dealing with salmonella in poultry in that the absence of clinical signs in the live bird makes it difficult to distinguish between birds which are infected and those that are not. The Government believe that the principle of distinguishing between infected birds and non-infected birds for the purpose of assessing compensation is correct but that the existing legislation provides an insufficiently clear basis on which to do so.

The Government therefore intend to bring forward proposals as soon as parliamentary time permits and after full consultation with the industry, to amend the Animal Health Act 1981 so as to provide a clear statutory basis for the payment of compensation for birds compulsorily slaughtered because of salmonella. In the meantime, the Government proposed to pay full compensation for all birds compulsorily slaughtered because of salmonella, including those slaughtered since the policy was introduced in March 1989. Payment made since March 1989 will be adjusted accordingly.

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what arrangements she is making to implement directive 92/117/EEC with regard to the control of salmonella in poultry.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: The Poultry Breeding Flocks and Hatcheries Order 1993, which brings existing arrangements for the testing and registration of poultry breeding flocks into line with those required under Directive 92/117/EEC, was made today and will come into force on 30 August.

The size of breeding flocks subject to controls is to be raised from 25 to 250 birds. While the bacteriological testing arrangements for grandparent and elite flocks remain unchanged, those for parent breeding flocks are to be eased so that samples are taken and tested at the owner's expense every two weeks instead of every week as at present, and under the supervision of the Ministry every eight weeks instead of every four weeks as at present. Existing statutory testing requirements for breeding flocks of turkeys, ducks and geese will be replaced by voluntary arrangements. There will no longer be a requirement to test poultry breeding flocks for Salmonella pullorum.

Breeding flocks of domestic fowl, turkeys, ducks and geese comprising 250 or more birds of a single species and hatcheries with an incubator capacity of more than 1,000 eggs will be required to register with Agriculture Departments on a simple "once and for all" basis and will no longer be subject to an annual inspection of the premises.

The Government remain committed to firm action against salmonella and continued protection for the consumer while avoiding disproportionate burdens on producers. These changes, which have been the subject of full consultation with interested organisations, are being introduced in advance of the directive coming into force on 1 January 1994 and taken together with the ending of controls on commercial egg-laying flocks earlier this year will significantly reduce burdens on poultry producers and remove some of the disadvantages they currently bear due to more stringent controls compared with their counterparts in other member states.

DEFENCE

Royal Navy

Mr. Trotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Royal Navy personnel are currently serving in sea-going posts; how many will be so serving after the planned reduction in the number of ships in the fleet; and, in each case, what percentage of the personnel strength of the Royal Navy will be in sea-going appointments.

Mr. Hanley: There are currently 18,240 trained RN and WRNS personnel serving in sea-going appointments. This

represents some 38 per cent. of the total trained manpower. The manpower requirement beyond 1995 will be kept under review in the light of changing circumstances, but it is expected that the proportion of sea-going appointments will remain broadly the same.

Collision, Irish Sea

Mr. John D. Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the collision between the fishing trawler Amber Rose from Portavogie harbour and the submarine HMS Oppossum in the Irish sea on 14 July; if the submarine was submerged; and if the submarine's radar system was operational on that date.

Mr. Hanley: I can confirm that a minor collision occurred between the Royal Navy submarine HMS Oppossum and the fishing vessel Amber Rose in the Irish sea on 14 July. There were no casualties. HMS Oppossum was on the surface at the time of the collision. An investigation is under way to establish the full facts of the incident.

RAF Order of Battle

Dr. Hampson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement of the current RAF order of battle.

Mr. Hanley: I refer my hon. Friend to annex D of the 1993 Statement on the Defence Estimates, "Defending Our Future" (Cm. 2270).

Radiation Sample Analysis

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, column 710, what were the criteria adopted in choosing British Nuclear Fuels for the radiation sample analysis contract in 1992; and whether the renewal of BNFL's contract followed a process of competitive tendering.

Mr. Aitken: BNFL won the sample analysis contract in 1992, following competitive tendering during which it was judged to have offered the best bid in terms of value for money and technical competence. Competitive tendering was not considered appropriate for the 1993 renewal. The need to build up a consistent and reliable database makes it advisable to continue with the same contractor for at least three years, provided the technical performance is satisfactory.

Non-departmental Bodies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 6 July, *Official Report*, column *113-14*, whether a register of interests of appointees to the executive non-departmental bodies sponsored by his Ministry is maintained by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the various bodies; and whether such registers of interests are available for public scrutiny.

Mr. Hanley: A register of interests of appointees is not maintained centrally by my Department or by any of the executive non-departmental bodies. The Services Sound and Vision Corporation (SSVC) is, however, both a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Its directors are required under company law to disclose any other directorships they hold. These disclosures are registered at Companies house and therefore available for public scrutiny.

Depots (Rail Connections)

Mr. Grocott: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of his Department's depots had rail connections in *(a)* 1990, *(b)* 1991 and *(c)* 1992.

Mr. Hanley: The number of Ministry of Defence depots with rail connections was 37 in 1990, 21 in 1991 and 20 in 1992.

D Notice System

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for South Shields (Dr. Clark) of 26 October 1992, *Official Report*, column *510*, whether the review of the D notice system has been completed.

Mr. Hanley: Responsibility for the management of the D notice system lies with the Defence, Press and Broadcasting Committee (DPBC), a joint forum of Government and media representatives chaired by the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence. The DPBC decided last year to expand its annual review of the D notices to consider the purpose, scope and operation of the system in the light of international changes and the increased emphasis of openness in Government.

I understand that the DPBC has approved a number of significant changes to the D notice system as a result of the review. The number of notices has been reduced from eight to six and their content and style has been revised to make them more relevant and user-friendly. The notices will now be known as defence advisory notices, and the DPBC has become the Defence, Press and Broadcasting Advisory Committee, better to reflect the voluntary and advisory nature of the system.

The new notices are published today for the first time, with their introduction and an explanation of how the system works, in an open government document. They will come into effect on 1 August. Their publication is intended to promote a better understanding of the system and to be a contribution to greater openness. I am placing a copy of the open government document in the Library of the House.

Military Service Defence Agency

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what performance targets have been set for the Military Survey Defence Agency for 1993-94.

Mr. Hanley: The Military Survey Defence Agency key targets for 1993-94 are:

1. To deliver 3,600 man-days of uniformed personnel in support of operations.
2. To deliver 26,000 man-days of uniformed personnel in support of exercises and military training.
3. To implement the military survey modernisation project by starting the installation check and test phase by 1 October 1993.
4. To meet the following targets for pre-planned production and services:
   (a) originate or revise 425 maps/charts;
   (b) produce 820 digital geographic products;
   (c) reproduce 7,000,000 copies of maps/charts;
   (d) issue from stock 7,000,000 copies of maps/charts.
5. To carry out 5,300 man days training for students from outside military survey.
6. To make further efficiency improvements to the value of 2·5 per cent. of the budget.
7. To keep within the cash allocation of £48,870,000 for 1993-94.

Naval Aircraft Repair Organisation

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what performance targets have been set for the Naval Aircraft Repair Organisation Defence Support Agency for 1993-94.

Mr. Hanley: The Director General Aircraft (Navy), acting as the owner of the agency on behalf of my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence under the terms of the agency's framework document has set the following key targets for this financial year:

Quantity:

To complete 100 per cent. of the funded task as detailed in DGA(N)'s tri-service schedule of identified repair work.

Quality:

To reduce by 2 per cent. the weighted number of allied quality assurance publication non-conformances in 1993-94.

Timelines:

To complete more than 85 per cent. of contracts on time in 1993-94 and to increase this figure to over 95 per cent. by the end of 1994-95.

Cost:

To maintain the cost of direct output units at its current level throughout 1993-94 and to achieve a 7·5 per cent. reduction over the 1991-92 launch values by the end of 1994-95.

Efficiency:

To improve the efficiency index (measured work content divided by the measured time taken) from 61·4 per cent. in 1992-93 to 63·3 per cent. by the end of 1993-94.

Productivity:

To improve productivity from the achieved 1992-93 figure of 560 to an average of 575 direct output units per employee by the end of 1993-94.

These targets are similar to those set for last year, but the way the productivity and timeliness targets have been set has changed. The target for productivity for 1992-93 was calculated on the basis of overtime that could not be met from within the available funding. The target for timeliness for 1992-93 was specifically developed as a new method of measuring contract performance for the agency, but there were no historical data to provide a realistic baseline. Nevertheless, improvements of 2 per cent. and 18·3 per cent. were achieved in productivity and timeliness last year.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Disabled People (Access)

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Chairman of the Accommodation and Works Committee (1) what has been the cost, at current prices, of making the Palace of Westminster more accessible to people with disabilities, both users of the Palace and visitors, since 1 September 1970; and if he will set out the details and cost of each adaptation since that date;

(2) what estimates have been made of the costs of adapting the Palace of Westminster to make it fully accessible to people with disabilities, both as users of the Palace and as visitors; and if he will make a statement;

(3) if, in considering proposals for adapting the Palace of Westminster to make it fully accessible to people with disabilities, both users of the Palace and visitors, he will examine the possibility of phasing the costs over a period of three, five and seven years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Ray Powell: The Palace of Westminster's Victorian design presents fundamental obstacles to easy access and movement of persons with disabilities. Improvements have nevertheless been made in certain areas, such as the construction and adaptation of lavatories, the installation of a stairlift to the Grand Committee Room in Westminster Hall, and the provision of sound induction loops in the public galleries of the Chamber and a number of Committee Rooms. It is not possible, however, separately to identify all such improvements or their cost.

The Accommodation and Works Committee has recently received and given preliminary consideration to a comprehensive consultants' report containing a number of recommendations for improvement. It is to be given further consideration in the autumn with the benefit of advice from the all-party group on disablement and from English Heritage. It is hoped that a phased programme of improvements can be agreed which will be incorporated into the programme of works. Estimates for each of the report's recommendations are being prepared.

Consumers Association

Mr. French: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if he has considered an application for an exhibition relating the Consumers Association to be displayed in the Upper Waiting Hall.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: I understand that under procedures agreed by the Administration Committee arrangements have been made for the exhibition to be held in the Upper Waiting Hall from 1 to 5 November.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Islamic Dress Code

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer on 19 July, *Official Report*, column *20*, if he will seek the views of the female United Kingdom citizens currently employed in the British embassy in Tehran on the imposition of the Islamic dress code.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We are well aware of their views.

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *20*, (1) if he will discuss with other non-Islamic countries having embassies in Tehran the imposition of the Islamic dress code on female diplomatic staff, with a view to establishing a common position.

(2) if he will now make representations to the Government of Iran regarding the obligation of female diplomats to conform to the Islamic dress code.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Her Majesty's embassy in Tehran is in touch with other missions in Tehran about a range of issues. It is accepted practice among the diplomatic community, male and female, in Iran to abide by the Islamic dress code.

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *20*, regarding the imposition of the Islamic dress code on female diplomatic staff in Tehran, on what occaions male diplomatic staff have been obliged by foreign Governments to comply with dress codes; and if he will give details.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: All diplomatic personnel, whether male or female, comply with the appropriate foreign dress code whenever it is necessary to enable them to carry out their duties effectively.

Religious Freedom, Russia

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to President Yeltsin on the recent amendment of the 1990 law on religious freedom by the Russian Parliament to restrict foreign Christian missionary work; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have raised our concerns at a senior level in the President's Administration and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We have called the amendment, which has not yet received President Yeltson's approval, a retrograde step and have drawn attention to Russia's international commitments under the CSCE in relation to religious freedom and the free passage of information.

Vietnamese Boat People

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the sum of money owed to the Hong Kong Government, and by whom, for the cost of keeping the Vietnamese boat people.

Mr. Goodlad: The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) currently owes the Hong Kong Government approximately 90 million United States dollars for the care and maintenance of refugees in the territory.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when it is expected that all remaining Vietnamese boat people at present being held in detention in Hong Kong will have been repatriated to Vietnam.

Mr. Goodlad: If the 1993 rates of voluntary repatriation and refugee resettlement can be maintained, and there are no more new arrivals, the Hong Kong camps could be empty within three years.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many Vietnamese boat people in total had been repatriated to Vietnam from Hong Kong up to 10 July.

Mr. Goodlad: As at 1 July (the latest figures available), 29,893 migrants had returned home voluntarily. A further 627 had been returned under the orderly repatriation programme.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many Vietnamese boat people were still being held in detention in Hong Kong as of 10 July.

Mr. Goodlad: As at 1 July (the latest figures available), the Hong Kong camp population was as follows:

	Number
Refugees	2,231
Screened out (after appeal)	24,143
Awaiting screening or results	14,353
Total	40,727

Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Japanese Government about supporting an indefinite extension of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs has not recently discussed this issue with the Japanese Government. However, Japan agreed to the G7 summit political declaration which supported as an objective the indefinite extension of the non-proliferation treaty.

Cyprus

Sir Keith Speed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings have been held by Her Majesty's Government with leading political members of *(a)* the Greek Cypriot community and *(b)* the Turkish Cypriot community, over the past five years.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The information requested is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ministers have held many meetings with leading Cypriots, including Cypriot Ministers, in this period. They meet more Greek Cypriots, reflecting in particular the size of the Greek Cypriot ethnic community in the United Kingdom and our policy on recognition. The purported declaration of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" in 1983, placed substantial constraints on ministerial level meetings. Contacts with leaders of the Turkish Cypriot community are maintained chiefly through Her Majesty's high commissioner in Nicosia.

Gibraltar

Mr. Nigel Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent judgment by the European Court of Justice confirming Gibraltar's suspension from an EC air services directive (89/463).

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The judgment has no implications for our title over Gibraltar or for the status of the 1987 airport agreement. We continue to believe that implementation of the agreement, updated as necessary to reflect subsequent directives, would be in the best interests of Gibraltar. It would in particular remove Gibraltar's suspension from EC air liberalisation measures.

Mr. Thomason: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent judgment by the European Court of Justice confirming Gibraltar's suspension from the EC air services directive (89/463).

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The judgment has no implications for our title over Gibraltar or for the status of the

1987 airport agreement. We continue to believe that implementation of the agreement, updated as necessary to reflect subsequent directives, would be in the best interests of Gibraltar. It would in particular remove Gibraltar's suspension from EC air liberalisation measures.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Housing Benefit

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the total amount in cash terms and in real terms of housing benefit paid to people *(a)* aged 16 and 17 years, *(b)* aged 18 to 24 years and *(c)* aged 25 years and over for each year from 1980-81 to 1992-93.

Mr. Burt: Housing benefit expenditure by age has been available only since 1990. Expenditure figures for 16 and 17-year-olds are not reliable. The available information is in the table.

£ million

	Age under 25	*Age 25 and over*
Annualised 1990-91 based on 31 May 1990 data[1]		
cash terms	492	3,928
real terms	544	4,337
Annualised 1991-92 based on 31 May 1991 data[1]		
cash terms	628	4,675
real terms	650	4,838

[1] 1992-93 prices

Note:

Source: Figures derived from the housing benefit management information system annual 1 per cent. sample of housing benefit cases taken at a point in time (31 May) each year. They are not annual expenditure figures as published in the departmental report of "The Growth of Social Security".

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the level of housing benefit paid to people *(a)* aged 16 and 17 years, *(b)* aged 18 to 24 years and *(c)* aged 25 years and over as a percentage of gross domestic product for each year from 1980-81 to 1992-93.

Mr. Burt: The available information is in the table.

Housing Benefit expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product

	Percentage
1980-81	0·7
1981-82	1·0
1982-83	1·1
1983-84	1·2
1984-85	1·3
1985-86	1·3
1986-87	1·3
1987-88	1·2
1988-89	1·1
1989-90	1·1
1990-91	0·9
1991-92	1·0
1992-93	1·2

The GDP information cannot be provided for particular age bands.

Note: The source housing benefit expenditure figures are taken from table 9a of "The Growth of Social Security". For years prior to 1988 these include expenditure related to housing costs paid as part of supplementary benefit. The figure for 1989-90 includes community charge rebate.

Households Below Average Income

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer of 16 July 1992, *Official Report*, column *948*, what was the average equivalised income at April 1993 prices for the poorest 20 per cent. from the latest households below average income analysis, before and after housing costs in 1979, 1981, 1987, 1988-89 and 1990-91 for (i) a pensioner couple, (ii) a single pensioner, (iii) a couple with children, (iv) a couple without children, (v) a single adult with children and (vi) a single adult without children.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the tables. All estimates are subject to sampling error which may affect the validity of comparisons between groups at a point in time and over time. Results for singles and couples will be affected by a discontinuity related to cohabiting. Further information is provided in appendix 10 of Households Below Average Income—1979-1990-91, a copy of which is in the Library.

Median equivalised income in April 1993 prices for the bottom 20 per cent. by household family type

	1979	*1981*	*1987*	*1988-89*	*1990-91*
Before housing costs					
Pensioner couple	88	93	100	100	98
Single pensioner	88	94	97	93	95
Couple with children	103	92	99	102	97
Couple without children	128	129	120	131	137
Single with children	86	90	95	95	95
Single without children	111	108	109	109	103
After housing costs					
Pensioner couple	75	79	86	86	86
Single pensioner	81	84	86	84	88
Couple with children	86	75	78	80	74
Couple without children	110	109	97	108	113
Single with children	71	75	77	72	74
Single without children	96	89	84	81	78

Pensioners

Mr. Bowden: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what percentage of pensioner households have been dependent on state benefits for at least 75 per cent. of their income in each of the last 10 years for which information is available.

Mr. Hague: Such information as is readily available is in the table. Comparable data for 1980 and 1982 to 1986 are not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The proportion of pensioner units dependent upon state benefits 1979 to 1990-91

Year	Benefit income make up: at least 75 per cent. of total gross income Per cent.
1979	62
1981	61
1987	55
1988	54
1989	53
1990	50
1990-91	50

Notes:

1. Pensioner units are defined as single people above state pension age and couples in which the husband is above state pension age.
2. "1990-91" denotes estimates from a combined sample of the 1990 and 1991 Family Expenditure Surveys (FESs). One quarter of the 1991 FES sample has been omitted because of inadequate data on Community Charge Benefit receipt following the delayed issue of Community Charge bills in April 1991. As a result the sample size in that year is too small to provide reliable estimates of pensioners' incomes. For this reason the remaining data for 1991 has been combined with that for 1990.
3. Estimates of the proportion of pensioner units who are dependent on state benefits for at least 75 per cent. of their gross income include those with no income other than state benefits.

Mr. Bowden: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many and what proportion of all pensioners, single pensioners and pensioner couples have total incomes of *(a)* £1, *(b)* £2, *(c)* £3, *(d)* £4 and *(e)* £5 above income support levels.

Mr. Hague: The information is in the table. As this question seeks to establish pensioners' incomes in relation to income support levels the criteria for assessing pensioner entitlement to income support have been used i.e. "pensioners" are taken to be those aged 60 or over, and the average income bands exclude income derived from sources which would not be taken into account for income support (e.g. housing benefit or attendance allowance).

Number of pensioners whose income for income support purposes is within a banded range of their income support levels

(000s)

Range	Singles	Couples	Total
£0-£1	65	20	90
£1-£2	45	20	70
£2-£3	65	25	90
£3-£4	60	30	90
£4-£5	65	25	90

Proportion of pensioners whose income for income support purposes is within a banded range of their income support levels

Range	Singles per cent.	Couples per cent.	Total per cent.
£0-£1	1	1	1
£1-£2	1	1	1
£2-£3	1	1	1
£3-£4	1	1	1
£4-£5	1	1	1

Source

Both tables are based on data drawn from the 1989 to 1990 and 1991 Family Expenditure Surveys modelled at 1993-94 prices and benefit levels.

Notes:

1. Caseloads have been rounded to the nearest 5,000. Figures in the first two columns may not sum to the total in the final column because of rounding.
2. Each percentage gives the proportion of the *total* pensioner caseload for the column.
3. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest percentage point.
4. Pensioner benefit unit defined as either:
   (a) Single person aged 60 or over
   (b) Couple where either person is aged 60+
5. Totals include pensioners with capital exceeding the upper earnings limit for income support.

Mr. Bowden: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what number and proportion of all pensioners had no income from any source other than from state benefits for each of the last 10 years for which information is available.

Mr. Hague: Such information as is readily available is in the table. Comparable data for 1980 and 1982 to 1986 is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Pensioner unit dependent upon state benefits 1979 to 1990-91
Pensioner units with no income other than state benefits

Year	Number (000s)	Proportion (per cent.)
1979	1,470	23
1981	1,420	21
1987	1,110	16
1988	1,170	17
1989	1,010	14
1990	1,090	16
1990-91	1,040	15

Notes:

(1) Pensioner units are defined as single people above state pension age and couples in which the husband is above state pension age.
(2) "1990-91" denotes estimates from a combined sample of the 1990 and 1991 Family Expenditure Surveys (FESs). One quarter of the 1991 FES sample has been omitted because of inadequate data on community charge benefit receipt following the delayed issue of community charge bills in April 1991. As a result the sample size in that year is too small to provide reliable estimates of pensioners' incomes. For this reason the remaining data for 1991 has been combined with that for 1990.
(3) Estimates of the proportion of pensioner units who are dependent on state benefits for at least 75 per cent. of their gross income include those with no income other than state benefits.

Mr. Bowden: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the actual weekly amount received by all pensioners as *(a)* total social security benefits, *(b)* occupational pensions and *(c)* savings income for each of the last 10 years; what were the gross and net weekly total figures; and what was the real terms increase over the last 10 years for which information is available.

Mr. Hague: Such information as is readily available is in the tables. Comparable data for 1980 and 1982 to 1986 is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Information on all sources of pensioners' income has been included (i.e. earnings and "other" income) to enable gross totals to be arrived at.

The average incomes of pensioner units by source, 1979 to 1990-91

Income source	*1979*	*1981*	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1990-91*	*Real income growth 1979 to 1990-91 (Percentage)*
(a) Pensioner couples								
Earnings	24·20	19·00	16·50	25·90	21·10	17·90	20·00	−17
Benefit income	81·20	85·20	93·80	91·00	90·10	92·70	94·40	14
Investment income	16·20	23·10	41·00	40·80	37·70	41·90	45·10	179
Occupational pension	30·20	30·50	48·00	58·10	51·10	48·90	54·40	80
Other income	0·80	0·60	0·80	0·30	0·50	0·70	0·90	19
Total gross income	152·50	158·30	200·10	216·00	200·40	202·10	214·80	41
Deductions	22·00	23·10	34·40	38·40	32·70	33·00	33·60	53
Total net income	130·50	135·20	165·70	177·60	167·70	169·20	181·20	39
Total net income (after housing costs)	111·60	117·10	146·50	158·70	152·30	159·60	170·90	53
(b) Single pensioners								
Earnings	5·50	4·30	3·30	3·80	4·60	3·80	5·40	−1
Benefit income	53·70	57·90	64·00	62·90	61·50	61·50	62·30	16
Investment income	8·60	9·90	14·90	16·00	19·00	21·20	21·60	151
Occupational pension	9·40	10·90	19·30	19·10	19·40	19·50	20·20	115
Other income	0·50	0·40	1·10	0·50	0·40	1·00	0·80	50
Total gross income	77·70	83·50	102·60	102·30	104·90	107·10	110·20	42
Deductions	9·50	10·30	16·10	16·30	16·80	15·60	15·40	61
Total net income	68·10	73·20	86·50	86·00	88·10	91·50	94·80	39
Total net income (after housing costs)	55·40	59·60	70·40	70·10	73·80	79·60	82·50	49
(c) All pensioner units								
Earnings	11·90	9·50	8·00	11·70	10·50	9·10	10·90	−9
Benefit income	63·20	67·60	74·70	73·00	71·90	73·10	74·20	17
Investment income	11·20	14·60	24·30	25·00	25·80	28·90	30·30	171
Occupational pension	16·60	17·90	29·60	33·20	30·90	30·40	32·90	98
Other income	0·60	0·50	1·00	0·40	0·50	0·90	0·90	37
Total gross income	103·50	110·10	137·70	143·30	139·50	142·40	149·10	44
Deductions	13·80	14·90	22·70	24·30	22·60	22·00	22·20	60
Total net income	89·70	95·20	115·10	119·00	116·90	120·30	127·00	42
Total net income (after housing costs)	74·80	80·00	97·80	102·00	102·20	109·30	115·40	54

Notes:

(1) Components may not sum to totals owing to rounding.

(2) All averages are means, and all estimates of real growth are based upon mean amounts.

(3) All figures are before housing costs unless otherwise stated.

(4) Pensioner units are defined as single people over state pension age and couples in which the husband is over state pension age.

(5) '1990-91' denotes estimates from a combined sample of the 1990 and 1991 Family Expenditure Surveys (FESs). One quarter of the 1991 FES sample has been omitted because of inadequate data on Community Charge Benefit receipt following the delayed issue of Community Charge bills in April 1991. As a result the sample size in that year is too small to provide reliable estimates of pensioners' incomes. For this reason the remaining data for 1991 has been combined with that for 1990.

(6) All amounts are at January 1991 prices.

Invalidity Benefit

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what information the Benefits Agency collects concerning the nature of the disabilities of persons in receipt of invalidity benefit by Benefits Agency district in connection with his review of Government expenditure on benefits.

Mr. Scott: Benefits Agency district offices obtain information on the disease or disorder giving rise to a claim for invalidity benefit from the medical statement issued by the medical practitioner. This information is not collected centrally. District offices have not been asked to provide additional information on the nature of the disabilities of people receiving invalidity benefit in connection with the long-term review of expenditure.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many women have had their invalidity benefit restored on the basis of hardship in *(a)* Strathclyde and *(b)* Scotland as a whole in the most recent period of time for which records are available.

Mr. Scott: The administration of invalidity benefit is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member shortly with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mr. M. Bichard to Dr. Norman Godman, dated 22 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many women have had their Invalidity Benefit restored on the basis of hardship in *(a)* Strathclyde and *(b)* Scotland as a whole in the most recent period of time for which records are available.

The information has been obtained in the format requested. The statistics relating to the number of women who have had their Invalidity Benefit paid on the basis of hardship following the decision of a Social Security Commissioner on 1 April 1992 in *(a)* Strathclyde and *(b)* Scotland are shown below:

	Number
(a) Strathclyde	[1]215
(b) Scotland	[1]228

[1] Of these totals, 203 cases are contained within one District (Clyde Valley District) which also received a much higher number of applications. The high incidence of hardship cases within this District is being investigated.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) if he will give the numbers of persons in receipt of invalidity benefit in the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Benefits Agency district for each year since 1987;

(2) if he will give the current number of persons in receipt of invalidity benefit in the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Benefit Agency district.

Mr. Scott: The administration of invalidity Benefit is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mr. M. Bichard to Mr. Gordon Prentice, dated 22 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking if he will give the numbers of persons in receipt of invalidity benefit in the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Benefit Agency district for each year since 1987 and the current number of persons in receipt of invalidity benefit in that district.

The information is not available in the format requested because the Benefits Agency was only set up in April 1991 and it is not possible to provide the information requested prior to this date. Separate statistics were not kept for invalidity benefit claimants until May 1991 and a yearly count of the number of recipients is not maintained. The latest available figures show that there were 12,614 people claiming invalidity benefit in the Agency's Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale district at the last working day of June 1993. The figures on the last working day of June 1992 and June 1991 are 11,790 and 10,421 respectively.

The statistics provided include a few customers who have claimed but are not receiving invalidity benefit, eg. because there is underlying entitlement which has been extinguished by the payment of a higher overlapping benefit or where termination action has not been completed. These figures were obtained from a 100 per cent. clerical count of cases in the District/Benefit office.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Means Testing

Mr. Stern: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if it is intended to amend the level of assumed income from capital that is taken into account in calculating means-tested benefits.

Mr. Burt: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Bow and Poplar (Mrs. Gordon) on 22 July.

Unemployment Benefit

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what restrictions are placed upon the payment of unemployment benefit in other EC states.

Mr. Burt: Common requirements for payment of unemployment benefit in other EC countries are that a person is involuntarily unemployed, capable of work, registered and available for work.

Age, period of past employment and contribution record are other factors governing entitlement or duration of payment of benefit.

More information can be found in "Social Protection in the Member States of the Community," a copy of which is in the Library.

State Pension

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what are the regulations covering the start date for payment of the state pension following the attainment of retirement age; and what are the regulations covering the termination date of payment of the state pension.

Mr. Hague: Regulation 16 of the Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations 1987—SI 1987/1968—governs both the start and termination dates for payment of retirement pension.

Accommodation Payments

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what efforts are currently undertaken by his Department to secure that payments for rent in advance and deposits for accommodation are available quickly and reliably from the Benefits Agency.

Mr. Scott: The administration of the social fund is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mr. M. Bichard to Mr. Dafydd Wigley, dated 22 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency, it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State asking what efforts are currently undertaken by his Department to secure that payments for rent in advance and deposits for accommodation are available quickly and reliably from the Benefits Agency.

I should explain that help with returnable deposits for accommodation has been excluded from the Social Fund (SF) by direction of the Secretary of State.

However, for rent in advance, help from the SF may be given in the form of a Budgeting Loan (BL), where the applicant has been in receipt of Income Support for 26 weeks,

or a Crisis Loan (CL) in other cases; these loans are interest-free. CLs are subject to an overriding condition that the payment is necessary to avoid serious risk to health or safety. An exception to this rule is where applicants who receive a Community Care Grant on returning to the community, after a period of institutional or residential care, also need rent in advance.

Decisions on SF applications are made independently by specially trained Social Fund Officers (SFOs). While SFOs are subject to the law and Secretary of State's directions, they still have considerable discretion about whether to make payment, having regard to the circumstances of an individual applicant. These will include consideration of the nature, extent and urgency of the need.

The Secretary of State has set a number of targets for the Benefits Agency one of which is clearance times for budgeting loan applications. The Agency has continued to meet this target, indeed performance improved over the year 1992-93 by two working days, emphasising the Agency's commitment to customer care. Most CL applications continue to be cleared on the day they are made, reflecting the urgent nature of such an application.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy of this letter will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Flooding, Llandudno

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) what percentage of applicants to the crisis fund following the Llandudno flooding were made from people in receipt of invalidity benefit; and if he will make a statement;

(2) how many applications to the crisis fund he received in the aftermath of the Llandudno flooding; what percentage of these have been granted; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Scott: The administration of the social fund is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from M. Bichard to Mr. Alex Carlile, dated 22 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency, it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many applications to the crisis fund he received in the aftermath of the Llandudno flooding; what percentage of these have been granted and what percentage of these were from people in receipt of invalidity benefit.

The Benefits Agency District of North Wales Coast, which serves the area affected by the flooding, received 187 applications for a Crisis Loan from victims of the flood. All of these applications resulted in an award. Eight of the applications (4·3 per cent.) were from people in receipt of Invalidity Benefit.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy of this letter will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Nigel Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what minimum standards of service he has approved for customers of the disability living allowance unit; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Scott: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has approved the charter standard statement which was published today by the Benefits Agency. We welcome this statement, which sets out the business of the unit, advice on contacting staff and the minimum standards of service customers of the unit can now expect.

The publication of the statement underlines and further extends the Benefits Agency's strategy of maintaining and improving standards of service to its customers by establishing targets for the handling and clearance of claims and answering the telephone and correspondence.

By the end of June 874,000 claims for disability living allowance had been made. More than 848,000 claims have been cleared, resulting in 502,000 awards. Early difficulties following the introduction of disability living allowance have now been redressed and I congratulate the unit's staff on their efforts to overcome these problems.

A copy of the statement has been placed in the Library.

Next Steps Agencies

Mr. Nigel Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security when the annual reports and accounts for each of his next steps agencies will be published; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lilley: I have agreed that the 1992-93 reports and accounts for the four social security agencies operating last year should be published as follows: yesterday those for the Information Technology Services Agency, today those for the Benefits Agency, on 30 July those for the Contributions Agency, and at the end of September those for the Resettlement Agency. Copies of all four reports will be placed in the Library.

The Child Support Agency began operations in April this year. Its first annual report will be for 1993-94.

Occupational Pensions

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the average sum now paid out annually in occupational pensions for *(a)* males and *(b)* females.

Mr. Hague: The average amounts of occupational pension paid in 1990-91 are estimated as £4,200 per annum for males and £2,015 for females at January 1991 prices. *Note:* Source: 1990 and 1991 Family Expenditure Surveys.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is his estimate of the number of people who have opted out of the state earnings-related pension scheme into personal pensions and have now allowed those pensions to lapse.

Mr. Hague: Personal pensions used for opting out of SERPS do not lapse. Membership continues until cancelled either by the individual concerned or by the trustees or managers of the scheme.

Income Distribution

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will publish a table showing the income distribution of the recipients of *(a)* contributory benefits, *(b)* non-contributory benefits, *(c)* means-tested benefits, *(d)* child benefit and *(e)* retirement pension broken down into (i) equivalised income bands before and after housing costs and (ii) quintiles on an equivalised basis.

Mr. Burt *[holding answer 15 July 1993]:* The information has been placed in the Library.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Environmental Economic Indicators

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research has been undertaken by his Department into the adoption of environmentally related macroeconomic indicators.

Mr. Nelson: Initial research has been carried out by the Central Statistical Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 24 February 1993 at column *592*.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Mr. Cox: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what severance pay Mr. Jacques Attali is to receive following his resignation as president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; what view the Government have expressed on this matter; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Nelson: Following his resignation as President of the EBRD, Mr. Attali has decided to waive the compensation to which his contract would have entitled him.

Crown Estates Commissioners

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the current salary of each full-time and part-time Crown Estates Commissioner.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: The first commissioner works part time and has a current salary of £33,595. The second commissioner works full time and his salary, including bonus, is £91,046. The remaining six commissioners all serve part time: two are paid £12,455 a year and four are paid £10,455 a year.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the numbers of staff by grade who are employed in Customs and Excise in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Sir John Cope: The number of staff by grade who are employed in automatic data processing functional specialism is as follows:

	Number
Grade 4	1
Grade 5	3
Grade 6	5
Grade 7	26
Senior executive officers	155
Higher executive officers	300
Executive officers	166
Administrative officers	97
Administrative assistants	350

WALES

KONVER Programme

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make representations to the European Community to secure that the Fishguard and Haverfordwest travel-to-work areas become eligible for money allocated through the Konver programme.

Mr. Redwood: Both Fishguard and Haverfordwest travel-to-work areas are eligible for consideration under the KONVER initiative and will feature as such in the operational programme being prepared by the United Kingdom Government for submission to the EC by 31 August 1993.

Disability

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to collect annual data on the estimated number of children with disabilities in Wales by region and by nature of disability.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The Children Act 1989 requires each local authority to keep a register of disabled children in their areas. There are no plans to collect data centrally on the number of children with disabilities.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement outlining what action will be undertaken by his Department resulting from meetings with the Wales Council for the Disabled to discuss the information award scheme.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: As a result of meetings with the Wales Council for the Disabled and the Welsh Consumer Council during 1992, the published information for users, carers and the general public initiative was set up to run one year. The initiative is nearing its completion and awards will be made on 26 July.

Diretoria Conference

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales which members of his Department attended the Directoria conference in Brussels between 2 to 4 June; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Redwood: None. I understand, however, that certain officials from Welsh local authorities attended. Directoria is a meeting for local authority representatives.

Youth Organisations

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will announce a target date for reaching his Department's efficiency target in respect of the timetable for informing all national voluntary youth organisations of their grant level.

Mr. Redwood: The target date for notifying national voluntary youth organisations in Wales of their grant levels for 1994-95 is 31 January 1994.

Sheep Dip

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information he has on the number of recorded cases of organophosphate contamination of humans directly attributable to the handling of sheep dips in Wales in each year since 1985.

Mr. Redwood: The Government operate the suspected adverse reaction scheme, under which persons who believe that they may have suffered a reaction to sheep dip are encouraged to report full details to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate. The number of suspected adverse reaction reports made under the scheme in relation to Wales each year between 1985 and 16 July 1993, which is the latest date for which figures are available, are given as follows. The figures relate to the number of reports, not to the number of people involved.

	Number
1985	0
1986	0
1987	0
1988	2
1989	0
1990	0
1991	10
1992	25
1993	12

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what efforts are currently undertaken by his Department to encourage farmers to report any symptoms of illness or depression suffered during or after the use of sheep dips.

Mr. Redwood: A number of initiatives have been put in hand by the Government to help ensure that those who use sheep dip report any suspected adverse reaction to it. Among other measures the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) has for a number of years operated a widely publicised suspected adverse reaction scheme, under which persons who believe they may have suffered from an adverse reaction to sheep dip are encouraged to report full details.

A letter was sent in April 1991 by the chief medical officer to all medical practitioners in Great Britain making them aware of the issues involved and alerting them to the need to report details of any suspected adverse reaction to sheep dip. A further letter will be sent to all UK medical practitioners shortly giving further advice on the potential hazards which can arise from misuse of these toxic products.

This letter will draw attention to new leaflets prepared by the National Office of Animal Health and VMD giving detailed guidance on the protection of operators and the environment, including medical advice to doctors and users, and the need to report suspected adverse reactions to the VMD. The leaflet has been circulated to all sheep farmers in the UK and made widely available from HSE, Agricultural Departments and other outlets within the agricultural industry.

Mineral Extraction

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to secure that all new planning permissions for mineral extraction are limited to no more than 20 years, and the revision of existing permissions with the imposition of a 20-year time limit.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: A consultation paper issued last year sought views on ways in which old minerals permissions could be updated and on possible mechanisms for ensuring future periodic updating of minerals permissions generally. The paper set out possible options, one of which was that the current 60-year time limit on pre-1982 minerals permissions be reduced. We hope to consult further on detailed proposals later this year. There are no proposals to change the duration of those minerals permissions granted since 22 February 1982 on which guidance is given in minerals planning guidance note 2.

Children in Care

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information he has on the number and percentages of children under the age of 18 years who were looked after by local authorities in March 1991 and March 1992 in Wales under the care of *(a)* foster placements, *(b)* community homes, *(c)* registered voluntary and private homes, *(d)* under placement with parent registration and *(e)* in other accommodation.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Information on the number of children in Wales looked after by local authorities at 31 March 1992 is not yet available. The available information for children in care at 31 March 1991 is given in the following table:

Accommodation	*Number of children*	*Percentage of total*
Foster placements	1,950	61·4
Community homes	528	16·6
Registered voluntary and private homes	18	0·6
Under charge of parent	434	13·7
Other accommodation	247	7·8
Total of all children	3,177	100.0

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what estimate he has on the numbers of children looked after in March 1992 and in care in March 1991 in Wales; and if he will indicate *(a)* total numbers, *(b)* those granted care orders, *(c)* those given section 20 voluntary arrangements, *(d)* single placements, *(e)* those given Section 20 under private care arrangements, *(f)* those on remand or in detention and *(g)* any other categorisation.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Information on the number of children in Wales looked after by local authorities at 31 March 1992 is not yet available. The available information for children in care at 31 March 1991 is given in the following table:

Legal Status	*Number of children in care*
On remand, committed or detained	26
Subject to interim care order	106
Section 2 Child Care Act 1980 (voluntary care)	1,246
Under care orders	1,799
Total all children	3,177

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information he has on the number of cases of young people under the age of 17 years running away from residential care homes in Wales, by local authority area.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The available information on children and young people running away from residential care relates to children who have absconded for more than

one week on the date that the statistics are collected. The latest available information relates to 31 March 1991 and is shown in the following table.

Local Authority	Aged 16 to 17 years[1] Boys	Girls	Total
Clwyd	—	—	—
Dyfed	—	—	—
Gwent	1	—	1
Gwynedd	—	—	—
Mid Glamorgan	—	1	1
Powys	—	—	—
South Glamorgan	4	2	6
West Glamorgan	—	—	—
Wales	5	3	8

[1] There were no children aged under 16 years who had absconded for more than one week.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish figures showing the rate per 1,000 population under the age of 18 years who were removed to a place of safety in each local authority area in Wales in 1987, 1989 and 1991.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information requested is shown in the following table:

	Number of Children removed to a place of safety			Rate per 1,000 population aged under 18 years		
	1987	1989	1991	1987	1989	1991
Clwyd	54	43	43	0·6	0·5	0·5
Dyfed	40	20	95	0·5	0·3	1·2
Gwent	18	27	31	0·2	0·3	0·3
Gwynedd	19	31	10	0·3	0·6	0·2
Mid Glamorgan	61	35	36	0·5	0·3	0·3
Powys	26	5	9	1·0	0·2	0·4
South Glamorgan	79	64	49	0·8	0·7	0·5
West Glamorgan	48	13	27	0·6	0·2	0·3
Wales	345	238	300	0·5	0·4	0·5

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish figures showing the number of children moved to a place of safety who were *(a)* aged under five years, *(b)* aged five to nine years, *(c)* aged 10 to 15 years and *(d)* aged 16 years and over at the time the orders were made in Wales in each year since 1989.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The latest available information on the number of children in Wales removed to a place of safety is shown in the following table:

Age	1989	1990	1991
Under five years	115	144	160
Five to 15 years	111	160	132
16 plus years	12	9	8
Total all Children	238	313	300

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many children in Wales were *(a)* in care in March 1991 and *(b)* looked after in March 1992 indicating the numbers aged (i) under five, (ii) five and under 10, (iii) 10 and under 16, (iv) 16 and 17 and (v) over 17 years.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Information on the number of children in Wales looked after by local authorities at 31 March 1991 is not yet available. The available information for children in care at 31 March 1991 is given in the following table:

Aged	Number
Under 5 years	549
5-9 years	691
10-15 years	1,303
16-17 years	625
Over 17 years	9
Total	3,177

Agricultural Wages Board

Mr. Barry Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) what is his policy concerning the Agricultural Wages Board;

(2) if he will make a statement concerning the future of the Agricultural Wages Board.

Mr. Redwood: We will consider our policy on the future of the Agricultural Wages Board in the light of responses to the consultation paper that we issued on 1 July.

UNCED

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to require all his Department's executive agencies to work within the framework of Agenda 21 of the United Nations conference on environment and development.

Mr. Redwood: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment has published a consultation paper on the United Kingdom's national strategy for sustainable development, which is due to be completed by the end of the year. The role that different organisations can play in implementing Agenda 21 will be addressed in this strategy.

Child Protection Registers

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what were *(a)* the number of registrations and *(b)* the numbers on child protection registers in Wales in (i) 1991 and (ii) 1992 indicating the numbers in each instance caused through (1) neglect, (2) physical injury, (3) sexual abuse, (4) emotional abuse and (5) grave concern.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information requested is shown in the table.

Category of registration	Additions to the register[1] 1 April 1990 to 31 March 1991	1 April 1991 to 31 March 1992	Numbers on the register 31 March 1991	31 March 1992
Neglect	80	165	230	270
Physical abuse	270	353	468	481
Sexual abuse	93	203	148	237

Category of registration	Additions to the register[1] 1 April 1990 to 31 March 1991	1 April 1991 to 31 March 1992	Numbers on the register 31 March 1991	31 March 1992
Emotional abuse	30	68	93	102
Grave concern	898	593	1,467	962
Other[2]	21	43	54	60
Total	1,392	1,428	2,460	2,112

[1] Additions to the register may include reclassifications of existing cases as well as new registrations.
[2] Other categories are combinations of the single categories (excluding grave concern).

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what were the number and percentage of *(a)* registrations, including combination categories, and *(b)* off the register numbers, including combination categories, in (i) 1991 and (ii) 1992 of children placed on child protection registers in Wales according to the age categories of (1) unborn, (2) under one year old, (3) one to four, (4) five to nine, (5) 10 to 15 and (6) 16 years and over.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The available information for additions to and removals from child protection registers in Wales is given in the following table. Information is not collected centrally on the ages of children added to or removed from the registers.

	Number
1 April 1990 to 31 March 1991	
Additions[1]	1,392
Removals	1,253
1 April 1991 to 31 March 1992	
Additions[1]	1,428
Removals	1,755

[1] Additions to the register may include reclassifications of existing cases as well as new registrations.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what were the numbers and percentages of the population aged under 18 years in Wales on child protection registers who were *(a)* under place of safety orders, *(b)* in care, *(c)* not in care but under supervision orders and *(d)* none of the above categorisations in 1991; and what were the numbers and percentages (i) under emergency protection orders, (ii) looked after by local authorities, (iii) under supervision orders but not granted emergency protection orders nor looked after by local authorities and (iv) in none of these categorisations who were on child protection registers in Wales in 1992.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information requested is not available centrally.

Council Housing

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what were the annual maintenance, general management and special management costs per council dwelling in each of the Welsh housing authorities in the latest year for which figures are available; and what the amounts were for Wales as a whole.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: I will write to the hon. Gentleman and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information he has as to the average rent increases made by each Welsh housing authority since 1987.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: I will write to the hon. Gentleman and place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House.

Bullying

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures are being taken in Clwyd to reduce bullying in schools; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Under the Education (No. 2) Act 1986, headteachers are responsible for maintaining high standards of discipline and behaviour in schools and for regulating the conduct of their pupils.

Asthma

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what assessment he has made of the extent of links in Wales between opencast mining and the incidence of asthma; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: In 1988 the Welsh Office commissioned an independent expert assessment of a report, produced by Drs. Temple, Watkins, Thomas and Rees of Glynneath, which alleged an association between opencast operations and illnesses in the local community. The assessment, by Dr. Peter Elwood, concluded that the data on asthma presented in the Glynneath's doctors' report were flawed and that it was impossible to draw firm conclusions from the report.

The Government's committee on the medical effects of air pollutants has considered the suggestion that opencast coal mining might have a deleterious effect upon the health of those living nearby. No convincing evidence to support this suggestion has been discovered. A recent study by Dr. Temple was considered by the committee. Although it agreed that the results were compatible with an association between opencast coal mining and asthma consultations, the committee considered that further work would be needed to sustain a causal hypothesis.

The Government remain interested in the results of good quality research in this field.

Steroid Abuse

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many deaths in Wales in each year since 1988 are known to have been caused by anabolic steroid abuse; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: There were no deaths of Welsh residents in the years 1988 to 1992 where the underlying cause was non-dependent abuse of drugs (other, mixed or unspecified) (ICD 305.9) or poisoning by hormones and synthetic substitutes (androgens and anabolic congeners) (ICD 962.1) and where anabolic steroids were mentioned on the death certificate.

Welsh Economic Council

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to change the name of the proposed Welsh Economic Council to reflect the priorities set out in Agenda 21 of the United Nations conference on environment and development.

Mr. Redwood: No.

Housing Revenue Accounts

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list all the Welsh housing authorities transferring money from their housing revenue accounts to the general rate fund in 1993-94, giving the amount in each case.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: No Welsh housing authorities are budgeting to transfer money from their housing revenue accounts to their general funds in 1993-94.

Assisted Places Scheme

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much has been spent on the assisted places scheme in each local authority area in Wales since 1985-86.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Payments to independent schools for fee remissions under the assisted places scheme are listed in the following table by local authority area:

Assisted places scheme
Expenditure in each local authority area in Wales 1985-86 to 1991-92

Local authority	*1985-86*	*1986-87*	*1987-88*	*1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*
Clwyd	281,828	371,706	476,178	493,451	522,212	568,450	669,600
Dyfed	38,279	454,400	55,732	75,308	92,650	140,381	203,641
Gwent	250,402	323,909	416,588	391,774	451,204	444,569	541,027
Powys	62,116	95,473	131,470	155,404	189,033	244,081	321,779
South Glamorgan	209,858	274,274	314,274	319,099	334,290	358,798	328,763
Total	842,483	1,519,762	1,394,242	1,435,036	1,589,389	1,756,279	2,064,810

Sustainability Research Centre

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to establish a Welsh centre for research into sustainability.

Mr. Redwood: Research is one of the issues currently being considered in the Government's preparation of the United Kingdom strategy for sustainable development. In the meantime, I have no plans to establish a Welsh centre for research into sustainability.

Care and Repair Schemes

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what efforts are being undertaken by his Department to secure that care and repair schemes are available within all local authority areas in Wales.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The Welsh Office is currently considering what funding it should provide for such schemes in the future.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Redwood: My Department does not currently assign automatic data processing staff to a functional specialism. Automatic data processing allowances are paid to staff as follows:

	Number
Senior executive officers	3
Higher executive officers	15
Executive officers	24
Administrative officers	11
Administrative assistant	1
Total	54

A wide range of other staff are involved in automatic data processing to various degrees.

Interim Development Orders

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to cancel interim development orders with minimal compensation, where such orders conflict with acknowledged interests of environmental importance.

Mr. Redwood: The Planning and Compensation Act 1991 enables interim development order permissions to be updated by the imposition of modern environmental conditions which do not attract compensation provided they are consistent with the guidance in minerals planning guidance note 9. We have no plans for further measures to amend compensation provisions.

Environment Policy

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to make a statement outlining the impact of his departmental expenditure on the environment of Wales to coincide with the annual allocation of his Department's block grant.

Mr. Redwood: Information on the environmental aspects of my Department's main expenditure programme is already included in the annual report for the Welsh Office, the latest version of which was published in February 1993.

Mortality Rates

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish perinatal and infant mortality rates by health authority region in Wales in 1989 and 1991.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply given on 21 June at column *46*.

Rent Arrears

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list by local authority the rent arrears owed by local authority tenants for the last year for which figures are available and the total rent owing.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information as at 31 March 1993 is as follows:

Local Authority Current and Former Tenants' Arrears

	£
Aberconwy BC	75,301
Alyn and Deeside DC	251,363
Arfon BC	108,691
Blaenau Gwent BC	103,099
Brecknock BC	65,207
Cardiff CC	951,585
Carmarthen DC	168,368
Ceredigion DC	133,000
Colwyn BC	68,233
Cynon Valley BC	100,000
Delyn BC	117,825
Dinefwr BC	144,000
Dwyfor DC	35,419
Glyndwr DC	223,415
Islwyn BC	117,000
Llanelli BC	218,822
Lliw Valley BC	144,292
Meirionnydd DC	42,000
Merthyr Tydfil BC	100,985
Monmouth BC	205,675
Montgomeryshire DC	104,876
Neath BC	224,300
Newport BC	686,000
Ogwr BC	542,358
Port Talbot BC	190,673
Preseli Pembs DC	177,000
Radnorshire DC	41,500
Rhondda BC	260,000
Rhuddlan BC	121,100
Rhymney Valley DC	495,000
South Pembs DC	170,470
Swansea CC	1,179,944
Taff Ely BC	431,906
Torfaen BC	468,157
Vale of Glam BC	198,000
Wrexham Maelor BC	351,548
Ynys Mon BC	160,000
Total	9,177,112

Source: Local authority returns.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as braille, tape or large print;

(2) what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as braille, large print or tape.

Mr. Redwood: My Department's usual policy is to deal individually with requests for information in forms other than standard print. Where however the information is specifically relevant to numbers of blind or partially sighted people, arrangements are made for it to be available through tape library services.

Housing Subsidy

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is the amount of housing subsidy under the Housing Act 1980 that each Welsh housing authority is entitled to in 1993-94; and what is the total for Wales.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The Development Board for Rural Wales and district housing authorities are no longer entitled to claim housing subsidy under part VI of the Housing Act 1980. However, district housing authorities may adjust claims made prior to 31 March 1990. No such adjusted claims have been made in this financial year to date.

Nurses

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many nurse pay regrading appeal buy-outs have occurred in each district health autohority area in Wales in 1991, 1992 and to date in 1993; and what was the total cost of buy-out and the average buy-out amount in each authority area.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: None.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many nurse pay regarding appeals were outstanding within each district health authority in Wales at the latest available date.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information requested on outstanding appeals is as shown in the following table:

Health Authority	*Appeals at employing authority level*	*Appeals at all-Wales level*	*Appeals at national level*
Clwyd	0	40	71
East Dyfed	4	79	7
Gwent	4	222	17
Gwynedd	0	113	32
Mid Glamorgan	96	310	39
Pembrokeshire	0	50	0
Powys	0	103	43
South Glamorgan	0	231	29
West Glamorgan	0	83	8
WALES	104	1,231	246

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and Agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Redwood: The Department has not contracted out any services or functions since November 1991 which were previously carried out in-house. The application of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 has therefore not been relevant during that period.

Economically Inactive Persons

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information is held as to the numbers of economically inactive persons in Wales recorded by the 1991 census as *(a)* housewives, *(b)* students and *(c)* long-term sick.

Mr. Redwood: The 1991 census recorded the number of economically inactive residents aged 16 and over in Wales. Of these, 91,226 were students, 160,652 were permanently sick and 303,378 were females in the category "other inactive" which includes persons looking after the family/home.

Correspondence

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what is his policy in respect of replying to correspondence to him from hon. Members representing Welsh constituencies.

Mr. Redwood: All right hon. members and leaders of parties in Wales usually receive a reply from me whatever the subject of their inquiries.

All other members are answered by myself, the Minister of State or the Parliamentary Secretary usually in accordance with ministerial responsibilities for different subjects.

We also take into account the addressee of the letter and any special interests of the Ministers.

South Glamorgan Peripheral Distributor Road

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received with regard to the proposed trunking of the south Glamorgan peripheral distributor road; what response he proposes to make to such representations; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: A report submitted by South Glamorgan county council is being considered.

Housing Association Properties

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received in relation to capital grant levels and rent levels in housing association properties and their effect on the incentive to work; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: I have received several representations in recent months, notably about housing association grant.

ENVIRONMENT

Pollution Inspectorate

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many meetings of local liaison committees were attended by representatives of Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution during 1990, 1991 and 1992; and what is his chief inspector's current policy on HMIP representation at local liaison committees.

Mr. Yeo: The number of meetings of local liaison committees attended by representatives of HMIP was as follows:

	Meetings
1990	113
1991	134
1992	119

Within overall resource constraints and at the discretion of regional managers, HMIP will normally attend: local authority committee meetings where the inspector has identified a positive purpose for attending and will deliver a specific message to the meeting; general meetings where guidance is requested and specific issues are to be discussed, except where there is an application or enforcement procedure pending.

Farm Diversification

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many farm diversification schemes have been implemented following the issue of his planning policy guidance note No. 7—PPG7; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: It is for farmers themselves to decide if they wish to engage in a diversification project. We have no information on the number of such enterprises, either requiring planning permission or otherwise, but new enterprises that are well planned can benefit both farmers and the communities in which they live. We expect local planning authorities to have regard to PPG7 in the exercise of their planning functions.

Shared Housing Ownership

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the grant allocation for individual projects under the Housing Corporation's shared ownership for the elderly programme for the current financial year and for each year since 1989 by region and local authority area.

Mr. Baldry: The Housing Corporation does not have a separate shared ownership programme for the elderly. However, a proportion of its general shared ownership is designated for the elderly. It also runs a leasehold for the elderly scheme, where elderly people may buy a lease from a housing association, which then acts as managing agent. At the allocation stage the corporation's records do not make it possible to distiguish between these two scheme types. It is not yet possible, therefore, to provide a separate figure for allocations to shared ownership schemes for the elderly for 1993-94.

I will arrange for two tables to be placed in the Library, one showing the combined total value of allocations for leasehold for the elderly and shared ownership schemes intended for the elderly for 1993-94 broken down by region and local authority area, and the other showing a breakdown between the two schemes for the earlier years requested. It would not be possible to provide the list of allocations to individual projects requested, except at disproportionate cost.

Environmental Audits

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the progress made to date by his Department in establishing an environmental audit scheme for the United Kingdom.

Mr. Yeo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer that the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Technology gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Woodspring (Dr. Fox) on 20 July 1993, *Official Report*, column *129*.

Methyl Bromide

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to *(a)* establish a target date for cutting methyl bromide use by 50 per cent. in the United Kingdom and *(b)* bring forward scheduled date for the phasing out of hydrochlorofluorocarbons in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Yeo: The Government have no plans to cut methyl bromide use in the United Kingdom by 50 per cent. We support the Commission's proposal that consumption of HCFCs within the European Community should end by 2015.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what discussions have been undertaken at Council of Ministers level concerning *(a)* the phasing out of hydrochlorofluorocarbons and *(b)* reducing levels of methyl bromide; and what were the positions taken by representatives from Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands in the discussions.

Mr. Yeo: Numerous discussions on HCFCs and methyl bromide controls have taken place at the Council of Ministers level over the past year, notably at informal Councils during the renegotiation of the Montreal protocol in Copenhagen. The positions of the three countries mentioned have varied during this time.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what information he has concerning emissions of methyl bromide from chemical plant processes in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Yeo: This information is not currently available.

Housing Association

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what changes he proposes to make in the arrangements under which local authorities can support housing associations with housing association grant.

Sir George Young: I have no plans at present to make any such changes.

Architects

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will bring forward proposals to ensure that only qualified architects are permitted to use the title.

Mr. Baldry: No. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Leeds, Central (Mr. Fatchett) on 30 June 1993, *Official Report*, column *526*, and to the answer my right hon. Friend the Minister for Housing, Inner Cities and Construction gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Waterson) on 2 February 1993, *Official Report*, columns *89-90*.

Opencast Coal

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the number of opencast coal planning applications, size and location of sites in Northumberland and Durham submitted in each year since 1990 and those which have received approval.

Mr. Baldry: This information is not held centrally. According to statistics published by the County Planning Officers Society's committee No. 3, however, the information is as follows:

Planning Applications

	Number of applications	*Area (hectares)*	*Tonnage (thousands)*
Durham			
1990-91	21	642	3,213
1991-92	8	174	595
Northumberland			
1990-91	14	253	1,976
1991-92	8	291	936

Applications Approved

	Number	*Area*	*Tonnage*
Durham			
1990-91	12	334	960
1991-92	5	92	327
Northumberland			
1990-91	10	119	1,602
1991-92	7	197	706

Environmental Tribunal

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what consideration has been undertaken by his Department for the establishment of an environmental tribunal in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Yeo: The recent White Paper on open government announced that we are considering the need for a tribunal to handle appeals under the Environmental Information Regulations. We are not thinking of setting up an environmental tribunal with any wider remit.

Environmental Assessments

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make it his policy to support the use of strategic environmental assessments within policies, plans and programmes adopted within the United Kingdom.

Mr. Yeo: In "This Common Inheritance: The Second Year Report"—Cm 2068—the Government restated their commitment to integrating environmental concerns into decision making at all levels.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what proportion of the capacity of the proposed Nirex deep repository for radioactive waste would be required to dispose of *(a)* thermal oxide reprocessing plant operational wastes if British Nuclear Fuels plc is not allowed to satisfy foreign waste return clauses using substitution for equivalent waste, *(b)* THORP operational wastes if substitution is allowed, *(c)* THORP decommissioning wastes and *(d)* wastes arising from stage 3 decommissioning of existing nuclear facilities.

Mr. Yeo: The capacity of the proposed Nirex deep disposal facility for low and intermediate-level radioactive waste has yet to be established.

Ozone Depletion

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what action has been taken to ensure that ozone-destroying substances consumed by his Department are identified as controlled wastes when they are no longer in use.

Mr. Yeo: My Department has taken action to deal with the proper disposal of the most significant ozone-depleting substances used on our premises. New guidance for procurement and accommodation officers instructs them to ensure that service contractors comply with best practice including professional guidance and relevant British standards.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment by what date his Department's use of ozone-depleting chemicals will conform to EC regulations on limits on these chemicals.

Mr. Yeo: The current EC regulations control the production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances not their use.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the quantity of ozone-depleting substances recycled within the Department and returned to the manufacturer.

Mr. Yeo: Figures for the quantity of ozone-depleting substances recycled within the Department and returned to the manufacturer are not available. It is the Department's policy to recycle or dispose of such substances in an environmentally responsible manner.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Enviornment which current uses of ozone-depleting chemicals by his Department are considered essential.

Mr. Yeo: None of my Department's uses of ozone-depleting chemicals will require continued production under the Montreal protocol or European Community essential use procedures.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how much funding has been allocated or spent to deal specifically with measures to reduce the Department's consumption of ozone-depleting substances.

Mr. Yeo: Figures for how much the Department is spending to reduce its consumption of ozone-depleting substances are not available. My Department is taking a number of initiatives to eliminate the use of these substances on its premises including: the purchase of fridges free of ozone depleting substances, the replacement of halon fire extinguishers, a ban on the purchase of correction fluids containing 1.1.1-Trichloroethane; and a programme to identify and then replace CFCs and HCFCs in air conditioning plant.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what measures have been taken to ensure that ozone-destroying substances in use by his Department, identified as controlled waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, do not reach the atmosphere.

Mr. Yeo: New guidance for procurement and accommodation officers instructs them to ensure that service contractors comply with best practice including professional guidance and relevant British standards.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many chlorofluorocarbon domestic fridges are contained within Department buildings.

Mr. Yeo: Figures for the number of CFC domestic fridges contained within our many premises are not available. The numbers will decline as we continue our policy of replacing them with ozone-friendly fridges as they come to the end of their useful life.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what targets have been set for the recycling of ozone-depleting chemicals within departmental buildings.

Mr. Yeo: No specific targets have been set. New guidance for procurement and accommodation officers instructs them to ensure that service contractors comply with best practice, including professional guidance and relevant British standards.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many catastrophic leaks of ozone-depleting substances have occurred within Department buildings in the last five years.

Mr. Yeo: None.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what proportion of his Department's consumption of ozone-depleting substances become controlled waste in terms of section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Mr. Yeo: Figures are not kept for the amount of ozone-depleting substances removed from departmental premises. My Department has just appointed consultants to review our environmental management systems and, as part of their brief, they will consider the need for such records.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many CFC and chlorofluorcarbon and hydrochlorofluorocarbon installations are contained within Department buildings.

Mr. Yeo: No central records are kept of CFC and HCFC installations contained within departmental buildings, but the Department has just appointed consultants to review our environmental management systems and the development of procedures for keeping such records is part of their brief.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what guidance has been sought and received on alternatives or substitutes for the ozone-destroying chemicals in use by his Department.

Mr. Yeo: My Department has sought and received advice on substitutes for ozone-depleting chemicals from a variety of sources.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make it his policy to purchase for his Department only ozone-friendly fridges that do not contain chlorofluorocarbons or hydrochlorofluorocarbons.

Mr. Yeo: My Department's policy is to buy fridges which do not contain ozone-depleting substances in either the refrigerant or the insulation.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many portable halon fire extinguishers are contained within departmental buildings; and what measures are being taken to ensure their recycling and replacement.

Mr. Yeo: No such extinguishers are contained within the buildings for which my Department has lead responsibility.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what the latest available figures are for the Department's total purchase of chlorofluorocarbons and hydrochlorofluorocarbons.

Mr. Yeo: Figures on the total amount of CFCs and HCFCs purchased by the Department are not available. It is the Department's policy to eliminate the use of ozone-depleting substances on its premises.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what quantity of HCFC 22 is purchased by the Department per annum.

Mr. Yeo: Figures on the amount of HCFC 22 purchased annually are not available. It is my Department's policy to eliminate the use of ozone-depleting chemicals on its premises.

Temporary Accommodation

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many households were in temporary accommodation for each year since 1978 *(a)* in total and *(b)* in the north-west region.

Sir George Young: Information is reported quarterly to the Department—half-yearly before 1984—on homeless households for whom local authorities have accepted responsibility to secure permanent accommodation, under the homelessness provisions of the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 and part III of the Housing Act 1985.

The available estimates of the number of such households in temporary accommodation in England and in the north west at 31 December, including some on whom inquiries had not yet been completed, are as follows:

	England	*North west*
1978	[1]3,700	[2]—
1979	[1]5,590	[2]—
1980	[1]4,710	[2]—
1981	[1]4,840	[2]—
1982	9,340	[2]—
1983	9,840	[2]—
1984	12,300	540
1985	15,920	790
1986	20,790	900
1987	24,760	1,750
1988	30,100	1,840
1989	37,900	1,650
1990	45,270	1,920
1991	59,930	2,210
1992	62,740	2,200

[1] Includes only those households in bed and breakfast accommodation and in hostels and women's refuges. Prior to 1982 information on homeless households in other forms of temporary accommodation was not collected by the Department.
[2] Not available.

Housing Finance Survey

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the 1993 Association of District Councils/Association of Metropolitan Authorities housing finance survey; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: The joint Association of District Councils and Association of Metropolitan Authorities housing finance survey provides a useful contribution to the information which the Department gathers during the course of the financial year, and I was pleased to have a discussion with the associations about the 1993-94 survey at the meeting of the Housing Consultative Council on 7 July. My Department will, as usual, form a view of the emerging picture on local authority housing finance, and all of this information will be taken carefully into account in the decisions we take, including in the context of the public expenditure survey, which will conclude towards the end of the year.

Local Government

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what was the total gross expenditure on local government in 1991-92 prices for each year since 1970-71.

Mr. Baldry: The available information is:

	Total gross expenditure (England) at 1991-92 prices (£ million)
1980-81	56,570
1981-82	55,081
1982-83	56,262
1983-84	58,062
1984-85	58,215
1985-86	57,718
1986-87	58,359
1987-88	59,904
1988-89	60,722
1989-90	64,528
[1]1990-91	63,422
[1], [2]1991-92	63645
1992-93	n.a
1993-94	n.a

[1]Figures for 1990-91 and 1991-92 are not directly comparable with those in respect of earlier years due to system changes.
[2]Provisional.

Housing Welfare Services

Dr. Liam Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what decision he has reached on the outcome of the consultation exercise on housing welfare services, which was conducted earlier in the current year by his Department and the Welsh Office.

Sir George Young: When the provision of welfare services to elderly people in local authority sheltered housing was put in doubt following the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the Ealing case, the Government acted immediately to provide protection. New powers were taken in the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993, and my Department and the Welsh Office issued a consultation paper about the

long-term arrangements for local authority housing welfare services. We have now decided how to proceed, taking careful account of the information and views expressed by local authorities and others.

First, we have decided to leave in place indefinitely the powers for local authorities to provide housing welfare services to their tenants. This will give housing authorities the long-term certainty that they need, and will be widely welcomed.

Second, we have decided that some of the welfare services which may be provided by wardens in sheltered accommodation, and which are concerned with the provision of essential care, should no longer be charged to the housing revenue account. These services are those of the kind which involve helping tenants into and out of bed; toileting, dressing, feeding and bathing; administering medication; and nursing care. Instead, these services should be funded from the general funds of local authorities, and the appropriate public resource transfer will be considered. The exclusion of these services from the housing revenue account, will be subject to the making of an order, on which consultation will be conducted in the normal way. It will not affect authorities powers to provide these services.

Remaining housing welfare services provided by wardens should be able to be charged to the housing revenue account, but local authorities will need to consider this carefully in each individual case.

We are satisfied that these decisions and proposals will produce no disruption to the services provided to elderly people in sheltered housing schemes, consistent with the commitment that the Government's have given. There should be no implications for tenants' existing entitlements to housing benefit.

During the consultation on wardens' welfare services in sheltered housing schemes, a broader range of issues has been drawn out, which concern the role of all social housing managers. These issues again fall into two groups. First, those which concern the powers given to housing management; and second, the source of the funds to pay for management activities.

Housing managers do need the ability to use broad powers. The primary role of professional council housing management is to ensure that housing is properly utilised, is kept in good repair and that rents are collected. But in cases of special needs, and in the most difficult and challenging housing estates, the responsibility of managers covers a wide range of functions, alongside the efficient and effective delivery of the normal estate management duties. The Government have worked with local authorities, through a range of policies and programmes, to encourage and support a better life for tenants on estates. Additional services are required by these programmes. In some instances, managers may need to provide these services themselves. Often, they can better act as co-ordinators and facilitators of services provided by other agencies.

It does not follow that all the costs of these additional services should be paid for from rents or from the subsidy provided by central government to housing revenue accounts. Rents are paid by tenants essentially towards housing costs, and the housing revenue account is primarily an account for the costs of meeting landlord functions. Local authorities therefore need to consider carefully, within the requirements of schedule 4 to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which costs should be charged to their housing revenue accounts, and which should be funded from elsewhere.

There has been much debate on these issues during consultation on the proposals for welfare services. It may be that some further discussion of the wider role of social housing managers would be helpful to provide a greater degree of understanding and clarity. The Government want to ensure that their policies of working with local housing authorities to assist tenants and for better housing estates remain strong. My Department and the Welsh Office will shortly consult local authority associations about how best to approach this, including whether it would be helpful to issue a departmental circular.

Direct Labour

Mr. Thomason: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what action he proposes to take against those local authorities whose direct labour or services organisations made significant financial losses in 1991-92.

Mr. Baldry: So far this year, 60 statutory notices under the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 and the Local Government Act 1988 haved been served on 38 different local authorities in respect of financial failure in 1991-92. My right hon. Friend has now considered the responses of nine of the authorities on whom notices were served on 25 January and 7 April. He has today given directions under section 19B of the 1980 Act to the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham—building maintenance and highways and sewerage—and under section 14 of the 1988 Act to the London borough of Waltham Forest—ground maintenance.

The effect of these directions is to require the authorities to seek the Secretary of State's consent if they wish to award the work, or elements of the work to their in-house labour force following retendering which is currently under-way.

He has decided to take no further action in respect of financial failure in 1991-92 by:

(a) Canterbury (building maintenance, highways and sewerage, sport and leisure management), Daventry (highways and sewerage), Hampshire (highways and sewerage), Liverpool (highways and sewerage), Southwark (ground maintenance, highways and sewerage, refuse collection, vehicle maintenance) and Stoke-on-Trent (building maintenance, highways and sewerage other cleaning, refuse collection), because they met financial objectives in 1992-93,

(b) Canterbury (school and welfare catering) Sandwell (building maintenance) and StokeOon-Trent (works of new construction over £50,000) because, despite recording losses in 1992-93, they have provided strong evidence that financial objectives will be net in 1993-94.

(c) Canterbury (other catering) because the work has been contracted out.

Canterbury, Southwark, Stoke-on-Trent and Sandwell haved been asked to provide quarterly financial returns to the Department.

He is still considering responses from the London borough of Camden—building maintenance—and from Hereford and Worcester county council—building maintenance—to notices served on them on 25 March and 7 April respectively and responses from the remaining 27 authorities on which notices were served during May and June.

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he has now considered the responses made

by the London borough of Lambeth to the five notices served on it, on 24 March, under section 19A of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 and section 13 of the Local Government Act 1988; and what action he proposes to take.

Mr. Baldry: My right hon. Friend has considered carefully the responses he has received from the London borough of Lambeth to the statutory notices served on the council on 24 March, and has given today four directions to the authority, under section 19B of the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980 and section 14 of the Local Government Act 1988.

These measures effectively prevent the direct labour organisation from carrying out further work on highway maintenance, including street lighting, after 1 April 1994, except for emergency work, snow clearance, and gritting roads; prevent the DLO from carrying out work on the repair and maintenance of non-educational public buildings; restrict the amount of housing maintenance work which can be carried out by the DLO to two out of the three existing contracts and provide that the Secretary of State's consent is required before the DLO can carry out further work after 1 April 1994. In addition, the directions require the authority to submit all outstanding accounts to the Department by 31 December 1993 or be prevented from carrying out the relevant work after 31 July 1994.

Water Act 1989

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what information he has on the operation, by water companies, of the code of practice on conservation, access and recreation, approved under the provisions of the Water Act 1989; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: The standing committee set up by the Government on the code of practice—comprising representatives from conservation, heritage and recreation bodies, the water industry, the National Rivers Authority and Government Departments—has recently reported on the operation of the code. The report, which has been placed in the Library of the House, confirms that the water industry is carrying forward the environmental policies of its predecessors and in doing so is reflecting the guidance provided in the code on meeting statutory environmental duties.

At the time of privatisation, it was widely feared that there would be a deterioration in the conservation activities of the water industry and in its provision for public access and recreation. The report shows that this has not occurred. On the contrary, the indications are that access is being extended and facilities improved.

The report also highlights the overall high standard of annual reports published by the water companies, since privatisation, on their work in relation to conservation, access and recreation.

Conservation

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the implementation in the land use planning system of the new EC directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora; and when the Government will publish the planning policy guidance note on nature conservation.

Mr. Curry: The Government expect to lay draft regulations to implement the planning aspects of the EC habitats directive in Great Britain in the autumn. They will provide for the formal designation of special areas of conservation—SACs—pursuant to the habitats directive and of special protective areas—SPAs—pursuant to the birds directive. There are currently 72 designated SPAs.

We are continuing to work on the details of the implementation of the directive, but our current proposals are to require decisions taken under the planning and related legislation to accord with the relevant requirements of the directive. The draft regulations will, it is proposed, include a requirement to take appropriate steps under that legislation to help meet the obligation under the directive to avoid significant deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species in designated SPAs and SACs. Where a proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on an SAC or SPA, and is not directly connected with or necessary to site management, the local planning authority or other decision taker will be required to assess the proposal for its implications on the conservation objectives for which the area was designated.

The regulations will provide that development may proceed if the assessment shows that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site. If the assessment indicates that a negative effect on the nature conservation interest will result, the development may only be allowed if there are no alternative solution and if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature. There are stricter considerations for sites which host priority natural habitats or species, which are considered to be in danger of extinction.

The Department of the Environment and the Welsh Office will publish the planning policy guidance note on nature conservation after Parliament has considered the draft Regulations and before they come into force. The PPG will provide guidance on how the Government's policies on the conservation of our natural heritage should be reflected in land use planning. It will also set out the main obligations under both domestic and international law, which local planning authorities need to know in drawing up development plans and in taking planning decisions.

The Scottish Office will publish an explanatory circular at about the same time, and intends to issue in draft in the autumn more comprehensive guidance for local authorities and others on the natural heritage in Scotland.

Standard Spending Assessments

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what percentage of the total local authority grant distribution is influenced by the number of single-parent families living within an authority's area.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* The distribution of revenue support grant to local authorities depends on the difference between each authority's standard spending assessment and its income from business rates and the council tax. It is not possible to say how much of the grant distribution is attributable to any one of these influences.

The proportion of children living in single-parent families forms one component of the additional needs, children at risk and children's social index indicators used to calculate the SSA elements for education and personal social services. The proportion of persons living in single

adult households with children under age 16 is also one component of the all-ages social index used to calculate the SSA elements for all other services and for personal social serevices for people aged 18 to 64 years.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what percentage of the total grant distribution for local authorities is determined by the percentage of households *(a)* without access to an inside lavatory and *(b)* sharing accommodation.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* The distribution of revenue support grant to local authorities depends on the difference between each authority's standard spending assessment and its income from business rates and the council tax. it is not possible to say how much of the grant distribution is influenced by any one of these elements.

The proportions of persons in households without exclusive use of a bath or inside lavatory and in shared accommodation are two of the five components of the all ages social index used to calculate the SSA elements for all other services—for shire districts only—and for personal social services for people aged between 18 and 64 years. The proportion of persons in shared accommodation also is one component of the children's social index used to calculate the SSA element for children's social services.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the validity of the 1991 census data on *(a)* the percentage of households sharing accommodation and *(b)* the number of households with an outside lavatory as measures of housing need as part of the standard spending assessment system.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* The proportions of persons in households in shared accommodation and without exclusive use of a bath or inside lavatory are two of the five components of the all ages social index used to calculate the SSA elements for all other social services—for Shire district services—and for personal social services for people aged between 18 and 24 years. The appropriateness of the index and its components are being considered in consultation with the local authority associations, as part of the SSA review which is underway at present.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made as to the extent to which declining school populations put additional cost per pupil burden on local authorities; and if he will consider recognising such costs as part of the review of SSAs currently being undertaken.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* None. No evidence has yet been presented as part of the current review of standard spending assessments on the extent to which declining school populations create unavoidable additional costs per pupil in providing a common level of service.

Local Authority Capital Receipts

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he will update the forecast of local authorities' extra capital expenditure arising from the temporary relaxation in the capital receipt rules; and when he expects to consult the local authority associations about the effect to date of the relaxation.

Mr. Baldry: Local authorities' estimates of the capital receipts they expect to receive during the period of the temporary relaxation in the rules will be published in due course once authorities' returns have been received and processed. It is for local authorities to decide the spending of their usable capital receipts. We will consider any representations on this subject made by the local authority associations at the meeting of the Consultative Council on Local Government Finance on 22 July.

EC Habitats Directive

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list those coastal and offshore sites which his Department is considering for inclusion on a list of special areas of conservation under the EC habitats directive; and if he will place in the Library a map identifying them.

Mr. Yeo: The Joint Nature Conservation Committee is co-ordinating work of the statutory nature conservation agencies in identifying candidates for the United Kingdom national list of sites under the habitats directive. It is not yet in a position to make recommendations.

Parking Penalties

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what guidelines are issued to London local authorities regarding consistency in penalties for parking on single yellow lines and residents' parking meters by *(a)* private and *(b)* public traffic wardens; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: I have been asked to reply.

My Department issued guidance to London local authorities in August 1992—"Traffic Management and Parking Guidance", local authority circular 5/92, paragraph 12.5. This says that penalties under the new local authority parking enforcement system should broadly correspond with the levels of fixed penalties for the non-endorsable parking offences enforced by the police and the traffic warden service.

SCOTLAND

Road Accidents

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what he intends to do to reduce road accident casualties among *(a)* children under five years of age, *(b)* children of five to 16 years of age, *(c)* pensioners and *(d)* pedestrians in (i) rural areas and (ii) urban areas; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The Government have set a target of reducing road accident casualties by one third by the year 2000. I am very glad to say that substantial progress has been made in reducing fatal and serious casualties. In 1992, these had been reduced by 37 per cent. from the baseline (the average casualty numbers between 1981 and 1985). Progress has been slower with total casualties. These are down 11 per cent. from the baseline. Much therefore remains to be done to meet the challenging one-third target.

The casualty reduction target can only be tackled by multi-disciplinary and multi-agency effort. Central

Government work closely with local government, with the police and with the specialised road safety organisations in the fields of engineering enforcement and education.

Analyses have already identified the vulnerable road users in Scotland, and actions are in hand to improve safety amongst them. The Scottish Office Education Department and the Scottish Road Safety Campaign have taken initiatives to improve the road safety training and education of school age children, particularly as pedestrians but also as pedal cyclists. Hard hitting television advertising is being broadcast to target the most vulnerable school age pedestrians, namely boys between 8 and 14-years-old. For the pre-school age group, the Scottish Road Safety Campaign has produced a videofilm of simple safety rules for showing in playgroups and nurseries. The video is complemented by a leaflet for parents. The Scottish Office is taking independent advice from consultants on the options for creating a Children's Traffic Club for three to five-year-olds in Scotland. For the elderly, road safety messages are being placed on public transport and on posters for issue through local road safety officers and social work departments. Later in the year, elderly people will be provided with reflective shopping bags to carry as a conspicuity aid.

Most pedestrian casualties happen on local roads and local authorities are being encouraged to draw up safety plans and to undertake local safety schemes to tackle these problems. The Scottish Office supports these efforts by helping to underpin local accident, investigation and prevention units, and by the adoption of policies—particularly relating to vehicle speed—designed to promote traffic calming. The Scottish Office has issued revised criteria for setting speed limits on local roads, and is taking part in an examination of ways to reduce vehicle speeds through villages. Guidance has been issued on the creation of 20 mph speed limit zones, on variable speed limits, and on the introduction of automatic cameras to detect speed and red light offenders. Traffic calming regulations are being prepared to clarify the types of speed reducing engineering measures which are acceptable. It is expected that traffic calming will have much to contribute towards casualty reduction in urban and rural situations.

Bed-and-Breakfast Accommodation

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will conduct an investigation into bed-and-breakfast establishments to assess their suitability as emergency and as long-term accommodation for the homeless in respect of cleanliness and available facilities.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: It is for local housing authorities to ensure that bed-and-breakfast establishments which provide short-term accommodation for homeless people are suitable for that purpose; £7·5 million extra capital allocations were made available to authorities in December 1992 targeted on projects reducing the use of bed-and-breakfast accommodation and assisting single-parent families.

Police Reports

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list for each procurator fiscal area for each of the last five years *(a)* the total number of reports submitted by the police, *(b)* the total number marked "no further proceedings", *(c)* the total number proceeded with and *(d)* the total number resulting in conviction; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The information is as follows:

	1988			1989			1990			1991			1992	
	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court
Aberdeen	14,203	1,536	8,033	14,411	820	8,468	15,334	1,079	8,723	17,460	996	10,121	16,689	1,135	9,978
Airdrie	9,544	640	5,823	9,295	768	5,345	9,771	715	5,531	9,909	762	6,118	9,383	816	5,451
Alloa	2,924	343	1,784	3,226	306	1,826	3,526	400	2,004	3,702	443	1,835	3,856	332	2,002
Arbroath	2,537	229	1,613	2,644	152	1,732	3,232	170	1,868	3,249	196	1,708	3,828	263	1,722
Ayr	10,274	1,344	5,285	11,953	1,175	4,646	11,734	950	5,171	11,936	1,002	5,153	11,270	819	5,439
Banff	1,198	93	757	1,140	59	681	1,385	59	743	1,786	119	931	1,600	90	872
Campbeltown	776	67	610	803	78	653	730	94	559	954	93	696	831	64	591
Cupar	2,994	265	1,818	3,288	274	1,529	3,021	221	1,540	2,793	228	1,328	3,219	265	1,543
Dingwall	1,885	270	1,140	1,969	179	1,519	2,048	201	1,557	1,992	126	1,547	1,951	147	1,476
Dornoch	598	48	446	660	44	437	598	57	462	603	57	457	601	56	432
Dumbarton	8,691	809	5,347	9,137	602	5,563	9,813	654	5,385	10,363	842	5,784	9,379	1,152	4,998
Dumfries	8,270	273	6,770	7,073	288	5,653	8,330	259	6,089	9,016	334	6,615	9,873	376	5,778
Dundee	13,600	1,032	9,257	13,812	2,261	8,654	15,688	2,664	8,226	14,885	1,941	9,442	14,059	1,361	8,233
Dunfermline	8,939	1,325	4,076	8,395	615	4,493	8,115	771	4,018	8,527	1,008	4,458	8,843	780	5,074
Dunoon	1,337	196	978	1,463	185	996	1,548	173	972	1,528	122	894	1,494	120	982
Duns	1,720	188	630	1,388	93	430	1,897	130	772	2,001	140	626	2,181	133	607
Edinburgh	37,651	4,933	21,748	41,411	4,029	23,426	39,355	4,321	23,375	36,113	3,233	21,229	36,747	2,914	21,782
Elgin	4,485	688	2,092	4,956	530	2,494	5,179	617	2,094	5,431	478	2,563	4,704	445	2,242
Falkirk	9,801	1,976	4,761	11,329	1,606	4,852	10,578	1,576	4,235	11,412	1,683	4,889	11,470	1,600	5,025
Forfar	3,459	37	1,950	3,403	125	1,803	3,734	99	2,027	4,112	47	1,796	3,882	54	1,758
Fort William	1,732	122	1,184	1,804	118	1,170	1,635	95	1,117	1,691	112	1,281	1,809	87	1,184
Glasgow	74,001	18,514	37,741	82,948	19,066	42,599	84,162	14,377	42,181	85,936	10,298	44,265	86,156	10,411	44,385
Greenock	6,268	762	3,838	7,573	406	3,729	7,461	535	3,388	7,403	441	3,514	7,516	493	3,305
Haddington	4,380	606	2,211	4,785	466	2,534	4,131	571	1,830	3,769	434	2,190	4,491	396	2,500
Hamilton	26,097	4,271	13,261	28,404	2,486	16,095	28,539	2,264	17,009	27,301	2,310	16,297	26,136	2,427	15,947
Inverness	7,234	655	4,486	6,593	625	4,126	7,558	582	4,912	8,429	587	5,512	8,606	672	5,156
Jedburgh	1,772	238	945	1,872	138	1,050	1,981	209	837	2,358	219	1,002	2,436	230	849
Kilmarnock	12,750	1,530	6,911	14,099	1,164	8,303	13,708	1,025	7,522	13,453	956	7,942	12,921	1,290	6,930
Kirkcaldy	10,053	1,217	5,517	9,443	517	5,814	8,760	456	5,890	9,117	545	5,958	9,536	780	5,278
Kirkcudbright	1,377	33	985	1,411	35	1,152	1,663	65	1,145	1,876	61	1,338	2,018	54	1,158
Kirkwall	681	78	584	664	56	591	662	60	512	676	86	450	757	96	492
Lanark	4,980	574	1,975	5,254	1,194	2,667	4,973	495	2,944	6,784	402	4,279	6,717	523	3,999
Lerwick	913	129	564	1,007	137	516	1,178	115	577	996	160	436	883	107	418
Linlithgow	8,631	575	5,594	9,928	457	6,243	10,053	337	6,212	9,255	347	6,225	9,017	395	5,971
Lochmaddy	312	8	262	244	13	191	236	19	162	241	10	188	270	18	215
Oban	1,299	123	932	1,174	74	896	1,208	84	846	1,189	75	879	1,177	109	852

	1988			1989			1990			1991			1992		
	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court	Total reports submitted	No prosecutions	Cases proceeding to court
Paisley	11,922	2,654	7,059	12,935	921	6,854	11,337	960	6,461	12,502	1,115	6,481	15,136	1,105	7,087
Peebles	834	47	465	1,126	61	672	1,080	50	652	1,137	51	602	1,488	42	748
Perth	9,355	1,641	4,590	8,908	1,211	4,863	11,611	1,494	5,921	10,887	1,376	5,015	10,210	1,476	4,113
Peterhead	2,476	647	1,118	2,731	273	1,583	3,054	300	1,505	3,196	362	1,547	3,282	338	1,480
Portree	690	56	471	586	35	397	617	38	377	848	44	467	539	38	353
Rothesay	362	39	282	373	58	242	316	34	188	363	39	268	331	27	205
Selkirk	2,273	268	1,044	2,280	228	929	2,482	197	1,014	2,404	207	968	2,119	130	1,008
Stirling	6,750	466	4,047	7,623	422	4,145	7,252	506	4,170	7,684	461	4,426	7,245	624	4,114
Stonehaven	2,683	199	1,427	3,119	202	1,514	3,710	239	1,672	4,864	250	2,052	3,426	183	1,630
Stornoway	927	36	702	1,027	20	695	1,118	13	751	1,165	21	846	843	97	527
Stranraer	2,136	194	1,534	2,336	243	1,437	2,241	159	1,618	3,510	250	2,360	3,322	204	2,193
Tain	1,487	250	923	1,464	163	1,036	1,598	148	1,110	1,610	170	1,115	1,616	132	1,197
Wick	1,312	223	945	1,218	114	872	1,532	176	981	1,315	127	932	1,430	181	885
Total	350,573	52,497	196,515	374,685	45,092	208,115	381,492	40,813	208,855	389,731	35,326	217,025	387,293	35,587	210,164

Outcome of court proceedings by region[1]

	1988		1989		1990		1991	
	Persons called to court	Persons charge proved	Persons called to court	Persons charge proved	Persons called to court	Persons charge proved	Persons called to court	Persons charge proved
Grampian region	14,348	13,250	14,407	13,387	15,254	14,010	16,174	14,912
Tayside region	18,717	16,724	17,600	15,855	17,773	15,826	17,026	14,848
Fife region	13,272	12,304	12,446	11,369	12,289	11,214	11,861	10,561
Central region	11,153	9,854	11,032	9,771	10,500	9,432	11,097	9,910
Strathclyde region	88,955	80,696	85,820	75,963	89,281	78,222	83,729	73,911
Dumfries and Galloway region	9,800	9,008	9,134	8,374	8,458	7,830	8,919	8,377
Lothian region	26,415	23,003	28,798	25,791	28,728	25,319	25,902	23,638
Borders region	3,023	2,879	2,889	2,762	3,020	2,881	2,988	2,878
Highland region	8,074	7,587	8,301	7,693	9,352	8,708	9,925	9,191
Orkney	588	560	589	554	562	503	349	324
Shetland	468	459	505	493	562	532	461	440
Western Isles	756	731	663	611	750	709	816	758
Region unknown	3	3	4	4	2	2	—	—
High Court	1,024	801	965	746	999	757	996	743
Total	196,596	177,859	193,153	173,373	197,530	175,945	190,243	170,491

[1] Excludes court type unknown.

Nursing Homes

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what information he has on the rate of staff turnover in *(a)* NHS geriatric units, *(b)* local authority nursing homes, *(c)* voluntary body nursing homes and *(d)* private sector nursing homes.

Mr. Stewart: The information requested is not centrally available.

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what information he has on the qualifications of, and ratio of qualified staff to residents *(a)* in NHS geriatric units and *(b)* in nursing homes run by (i) local authorities, (ii) voluntary bodies and (iii) private owners.

Mr. Stewart: The information requested is not held centrally. Data are available, however, for medical and nursing staff in the NHS and nursing staff in nursing homes registered under the Nursing Homes Registration (Scotland) Act 1938. This information is given in the tables:

Table 1
NHS staff in the specialty of Care of the Elderly as at 30 September 1992

	Whole-time equivalent
Doctors	280
Nursing staff	9,276
Qualified	4,729
Unqualified	4,548

Note: Data refer to doctors working in the specialty of geriatric medicine and nursing staff in the specialty of care of the elderly. No information is available on staff working in other specialties who treat elderly patients.

Table 2
Nursing staff in nursing homes registered under the Nursing Homes Registration (Scotland) Act 1938 at 31 March 1992

	Whole time equivalent
Nursing staff	10,020
Qualified	3,911
Unqualified	6,109

Note: Excludes independent sector establishments (mainly private hospitals) registered under the Act—8 in 1992; other "non nursing home" establishments may be included.

Table 3
Whole time equivalent qualified medical and nursing staff employed, average occupied bed days and the ratio staff:beds in the NHS at 30 September 1992:

Medical staff	Nursing staff[1]	Average occupied Bed days[2]	Medical staff: Beds	Nursing staff: Beds
280	4,729	9,737	0·03	0·49

Note:
[1] Qualified nursing staff working in the specialty of care of the elderly.
[2] The average daily number of geriatric assessment and geriatric long stay beds occupied in all NHS hospitals in Scotland; quarter ending 31 March 1992. Borrowed and temporary beds are included.

Table 4
Whole-time equivalent qualified nursing staff employed, places (beds) available and the ratio qualified staff: beds of establishments registered under the Nursing Homes Registration (Scotland) Act 1938 at 31 March 1992

	Number
Nursing Staff	3,911·0
Beds[2]	14,161
Staff:Beds	0·28

[1]Excludes independent acute sector establishments (mainly private hospitals) registered under the Act (8 in 1992); other "non nursing home" establishments may be included.
[2]Information on occupancy is not currently centrally available; the number of beds is the nearest indicator as occupancy levels will generally exceed 90 per cent.

Psychotic Patients

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what information he has on psychotic patients who have been discharged from hospital and found no bed available when they tried to return;

(2) how many psychotic patients seeking re-admission in each health board area have been sent to a bed-and-breakfast hotel because no hospital bed was available.

Mr. Stewart: The information requested is not centrally available. No individual would be refused admission to a hospital bed where it is considered clinically necessary.

Mental Health Officer

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary fo State for Scotland if he will give the reasons for the withdrawal of the designation mental health officer.

Mr. Stewart: There are no plans to withdraw the designation mental health officer.

Coastal Zone Management Scheme

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what studies his Department is carrying out into a coastal zone management scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Hector Monro: The Scottish Office earlier this year commissioned a review of issues affecting the Scottish coast as a first step in considering how best to take forward in Scotland the Government's response to the House of Commons Select Committee on the Environment's report on coastal zone protection and planning. It is expected that the review will be completed this autumn.

Care Assistants

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will issue a circular outlining the division of responsibilities between care assistants and nursing staff.

Mr. Stewart: There is no need to issue a circular on the division of responsibility between nurses and care assistants. The duties and responsibilities of the two groups and the training they receive are quite distinct. Skill mix arrangements are best determined locally.

Smoking

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many prosecutions have been carried out in Scotland in each of the last five years in respect of the sale of cigarettes to minors; how many of these resulted in convictions; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The information requested is not separately identifiable within the Scottish Office Home and Health Department's classification of crimes and offences.

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what action has been taken towards achieving the targets for reducing smoking prevalence among *(a)* adults and *(b)* children as outlined in the 1992 White Paper, "Scotland's Health—A Challenge To Us All"; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart: Action to reduce smoking prevalence at United Kingdom level has included increases in tobacco duty; the tightening of the voluntary agreement with the tobacco industry on tobacco advertising; the requirement for stronger and more prominent labelling of tobacco products; and the implementation of the Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991, strengthening the law against the sale of cigarettes to children.

Additionally, within Scotland, action has been initiated on the range of measures identified in "Scotland's Health —A Challenge To Us All". In particular, the Health Education Board for Scotland launched a major new mass media initiative in the autumn of 1992. The campaign features a national freephone service providing smoking cessation advice and literature; and between October 1992 and 15 July 1993, over 170,000 calls had been received. The board is also developing a smoking strategy in consultation with relevant organisations. Within the NHS in Scotland, the target of achieving virtual smoke-free status by the end of May 1993 has been achieved.

Smoking has been a major focus in the discussions the Chief Medical Officer has had with COSLA, the STUC, Scottish Homes and the Scottish Sports Council about the contribution those bodies can make to health promotion. I have also met employers' representatives in Scotland to discuss their role in promoting health in the workplace, including the importance of having in place clear policies on smoking.

Recognising the importance of influencing children, the new national curriculum guidelines for the 5 to 14 age group which were issued in March 1993, include guidance on health education with smoking as a key feature.

More recently we have published a popular version of "Scotland's Health—A Challenge To Us All" which highlights the need to reduce smoking and gives advice on

how to achieve this. The document was issued widely to local authorities, schools, health boards, general practitioners, employers organisations, medical professions and voluntary organisations.

Community Care

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the average length of time taken to prepare a patient who has been in hospital for most of his or her life for discharge under the care in the community legislation; and if he will conduct an investigation into the success of the policy.

Mr. Stewart: Patients who have spent many years in hospital receive careful preparation for discharge to community care. The length of time taken to prepare discharge varies widely from case to case and will depend on the patient's mental and physical condition, the nature of their illness, the length of time they have been in hospital, the availability of rehabilitation services, and the availability of suitable accommodation and support services in the community to help the patient after discharge. The primary objective for all concerned is that no patient should be discharged until they are well prepared and appropriate services are in place in the community to support them.

The Scottish Office will shortly issue a circular describing the latest monitoring arrangements for evaluating the effectiveness of the community care reforms.

NHS Trusts

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the types of benefits in addition to salary which are available only to NHS senior managers in boards of trusts, and their annual value in each case.

Mr. Stewart: The information requested is not available centrally as individual NHS trusts have the power to employ staff on such terms as they consider appropriate to their individual circumstances.

Fluoridation

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make it his policy that fluoridation of drinking water should require the consent of the elected representatives of the population concerned.

Mr. Stewart: Under the Water (Fluoridation) Act 1985, water authorities may increase the fluoride content of public water supplies on the application of health boards. As regards the future composition of water authorities, my right hon. Friend has at present nothing to add to paragraphs 3.21 to 3.24 of the White Paper "The Structure of Local Government" published earlier this month.

Forestry Commission

Mr. Chisholm: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how the interdepartmental review group on the Forestry Commission will operate in relation to the hearing of evidence and the publication of findings.

Sir Hector Monro: The forestry review group established by my right hon. Friend has received many representations from individuals, organisations and agencies with an interest in forestry matters. There are no plans for it to take evidence other than by such written submissions and its report, which will take the form of policy advice to Ministers, will be confidential to them.

Net Sizes

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will bring forward proposals that the carriage of monofilament nets, above the mesh size relevant to the catching of salmon, should be legal; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Hector Monro: My right hon. Friend has no plans to amend the Inshore Fishing (Prohibition of Carriage of Monofilament Gill Nets) (Scotland) Order 1986.

Parole Board

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to replace part-time members of the Parole Board with full-time, salaried officials; what consultations he is undertaking in relation to such a change; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend has no plans to replace part-time members of the Parole Board with full-time salaried officials.

Low Pay

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what was the change in income of the lowest-paid 10 per cent. of the population between 1979 and 1991 expressed in real terms;

(2) what were the average earnings of the lowest-paid decile of the population in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991 in (i) 1979 prices and (ii) 1991 prices;

(3) what was the average income of one-parent families in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991 expressed in (i) 1979 prices and (ii) cash prices;

(4) what was he threshold wage level for the lowest paid 10 per cent. of the population in 1991, expressed in 1979 prices.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* Information relating to the threshold level of the lowest 10 per cent. of the earnings of full-time employees, in 1979 and 1991, is shown in the table. Information relating to average earnings within these decile ranges is not available. Information on income for the lowest paid 10 per cent. and for one-parent families, is not available at the level of detail requested.

Lowest Decile of Gross Weekly Earnings of Full-time Employees

	April 1979		April 1991	
	Males £	Females £	Males £	Females £
Earnings at current prices	60·6	40·1	152·0	115·9
Earnings expressed in 1979 prices	60·6	40·1	62·0	47·3

Sources: The New Earnings Survey and the general index of retail prices.
Notes: 1. Relates to employees on adult rates of pay (men aged 21 and women aged 18, or over, in 1979) whose pay was not affected by absence.
2. Based on a 1 per cent. sample of employees on PAYE schemes.
3. Combined information for males' and females' pay deciles is not available for 1979.

One-parent Families

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many single-parent households were headed by *(a)* teenage women and *(b)* teenage men in (i) 1979 and (ii) 1991 or the latest available date.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* The 1991 census recorded 2,172 households in Scotland consisting of one female aged 16 to 19 and one or more children aged under 16. The corresponding number of households headed by a male aged 16 to 19 was 42. The eldest person may or may not be the parent of the others.

Families headed by someone aged 16 to 19 but living with other adults are not included. Further information on such families will be contained in the 1991 census report on household and family composition (10 per cent.), which is due to be published in spring 1994.

Comparable figures are not available for 1979 nor from the 1981 census.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many single-parent families there were in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1991 or at the latest available date.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* It is estimated from the 1991 census that there were 132,000 lone parent families with dependent children in Scotland. Comparable figures are not available for 1979 and data from the 1981 census for lone parent families are not directly comparable owing to a different treatment of co-habitation.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will give the percentage of people who are single parents in such age groups as he has available.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* Estimates for Scotland of the number of lone parents are available only from the census of population. Relevant information from the 1991 census is not currently available, but will be contained in the 1991 census report on household and family composition (10 per cent.), which is due to be published in spring 1994.

Lands Tribunal

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to introduce measures to overturn the decision of the Lands Tribunal for Scotland in the case of Robb *v.* Kyle and Carrick District Council (1989) in relation to succession to tenancy.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* None.

Geriatric Patients

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on his policy for the provision of hospital beds for the continuing care of geriatric patients, giving figures for existing and planned future NHS bed numbers in each of the units of Lothian health board; and what additional funding he is planning for nursing and medical provision for social work departments to meet the needs for alternative community care for people by such changes.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* Assessment of the need for national health service accommodation for the continuing care of geriatric patients is a matter for health boards. The provision of such accommodation is a matter for boards as purchasers and the relevant unit or trust as the provider.

Information on NHS bed numbers for quarters ending 31 December 1992 and 31 March 1993, the latest available, are shown in the table below. Lothian health board are currently reviewing their strategy for the care of the elderly. Until that review is complete figures for future NHS beds for the elderly are not available.

	31 December 1992			31 March 1993		
	Total[1]	Geriatric long-stay	Psycho-geriatric	Total	Geriatric long-stay	Psycho-geriatric
Lothian Health Board area of treatment	1,933	974	959	1,852	917	914
Edinburgh Priority Services Unit	696	305	391	642	275	367
Western General Hospital Unit	141	24	117	132	15	117
East and Midlothian Unit	559	311	248	532	284	248
Edinburgh Child Health Unit	—	—	—	—	—	—
Royal Infirmary and Associated Hospitals Unit	195	175	20	195	175	20
West Lothian Unit	342	159	183	350	168	182

[1] Average available staffed beds.

Substantial additional resources of £81 million have already been provided to local authorities to implement the community care proposals. This will increase to £106 million in 1994-95 and £158 million in 1995-96. In addition, my right hon. Friend recently announced an increase of £28 million in the funds available for bridging finance to facilitate the transfer of patients from hospitals into the community.

HEALTH

Langlands Review

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which organisations have submitted evidence to the Langlands review.

Mr. Sackville: The following organisations have so far submitted evidence to the review.

National health service bodies

Wessex Regional Health Authority (RHA); East Anglia RHA; South Western RHA; North Western RHA; North East Thames RHA; Trent RHA; South West Thames RHA; South East Thames RHA; Yorkshire RHA; Northern RHA; West Midlands RHA; Oxford RHA; Southampton and South West Hampshire Health Commission; Warwickshire Family Health Services Authority; Poole Hospitals National Health Service Trust; Norfolk Ambulance NHS Trust; Aintree Hospital Trust; Pinderfields Hospital NHS Trust.

Professional and staff bodies

Joint Consultants' Committee; British Medical Association; BMA Committee for Public Health Medicine and Community Health, Council of Deans of UK Medical Schools and Faculties; Royal College of Nursing; Chartered Society of Physiotherapy; Royal Pharmaceutical Society; Regional Dental Contacts Group; Regional Estates Management Group; UNISON.

National organisations and other bodies

Institute of Health Services Managers; National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts; NHS Trust Federation; The King's Fund; Health Services Management Centre, Birmingham; The Genetic Interest Group; Independent Health Care Association; Health Education Authority.

Community Health

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* community psychiatric nurses, *(b)* health visitors, *(c)* community midwives, *(d)* practice nurses, *(e)* other community nurses and *(f)* general practitioners were employed by the NHS in inner London for each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr. Sackville: The available information is shown in the tables. Figures for tables 1 and 2 are not directly comparable as district health authorities (DHAs) and family health services authorities (FHSAs) boundaries differ.

Table 1:
Community psychiatric nurses, health visitors, community midwives, other community nurses, (whole-time equivalents) in inner London at 30 September, 1987-91

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Community Psychiatric Nurses	160	170	200	230	190
Health Visitors	440	640	660	720	720
Community Midwives	150	160	210	200	130
Other Community Nurses	720	640	860	880	810

Notes: (i) Date applicable to DHAs in "inner London" as defined in the Tomlinson report; collected from DHAs, and, for 1991, from DHAs and NHS Trusts. (ii) Figures for community psychiatric nurses, community midwives and "Other community nurses" in 1991 are affected by coding errors. The underlying figures should be broadly unchanged from 1990.

Table 2:
Unrestricted general practitioners, and practice nurses (whole-time equivalents), at 1 October, 1988-1992

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Unrestricted GPs	3,221·0	3,260·0	3,223·0	3,177·0	3,186·0
Practice nurses	316·5	446·9	897·7	928·3	996·2

Notes: (i) Data are for the 12 complete FHSAs which fall wholly or partly within the London initiative zone (LIZ) (ii) Figures for unrestricted GPs may have been affected by the introduction of statutory retirement at the age of 70, as from 1 April 1991.

Management Executive (Rail Travel)

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the cost for each of the last three years of rail travel *(a)* in total and *(b)* to and from London for Leeds-based personnel of the NHS Management Executive.

Mr. Sackville: Information is not available in this form.

In 1991-92, before relocation, the National Health Service Management Executive spent a total of £577,000 on all travel and subsistence.

In 1992-93, when the executive was operating from Leeds and London, the spend was £1,374,000. The executive is now operating from Leeds and provisional figures show that £353,000 was spent on all travel and subsistence in the first three months of the current year.

The distribution of functions between the executive and the rest of the Department has varied from year to year and therefore expenditure between years is not directly comparable.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS Management Executive personnel based in Leeds have been provided with first-class rail season tickets to London; and what is the cost of those tickets in the current year.

Mr. Sackville: Three first-class season tickets have been provided at an estimated cost of £29,400.

Health Service Manpower

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans to publish her decision on manpower in relation to the NHS Management Executive and regional health authorities.

Mr. Sackville: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State asked a team to review the functions and manpower needed by the national health service above the level of local health care purchasers and providers. We hope to receive the team's advice shortly. It is too early to say what the implications of the review are, or over what time scale decisions might be taken.

Orthopaedic Surgeons

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information she has as to the ratios of specialist orthopaedic surgeon to head of population in *(a)* the United Kingdom and *(b)* all other EC countries.

Mr. Sackville: The available information is shown in the table. Information relating to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are matters for my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Wales and Scotland and my right

hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Equivalent information for other European Community countries is not available.

Hospital Orthopaedic surgeons England—30 September 1991

	Specialty: orthopaedic surgery	*Population in '000s per doctor*
Consultants	776	61·83
All doctors in Orthopaedic surgery (including consultants)	2,529	18·97

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proposals she has for increasing the number of specialist orthopaedic surgeons.

Mr. Sackville: We encourage an overall expansion of consultant numbers in order to improve patient care and this has included local central funding for the new deal and part-time consultant initiatives. The number of consultants appointed depends on the number of suitably qualified senior registrars available to fill the posts. In February this year the joint planning advisory committee accepted the trauma and orthopaedic specialty's advice on likely consultant opportunities and increased the quota for senior registrars from 181 to 210 posts. Consultant staffing in individual hospitals is a matter for local employing bodies, and they should have regard to competing priorities and available resources when assessing local staffing needs. Copies of the "Junior Doctors the New Deal" are available in the Library.

Pesticide Poisoning

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidelines have been issued by her Department to general practitioners concerning the identification of the symptoms, possible causes and treatment of cases of organophosphate poisoning;

(2) if she will place a copy of the updated version of "Pesticide Poisoning, Notes for the Guidance of Medical Practitioners", in the Library.

Mr. Sackville: Guidance on diagnosis and treatment of acute poisoning by organophosphate (OP) pesticides was included in the Department of Health book "Pesticide Poisoning: notes for the guidance of medical practitioners" which, at the time of publication, was provided to all doctors in general practice and to all hospital accident and emergency departments.

More recently, the Government's chief medical officers wrote in 1991 to all doctors in the United Kingdom about reporting of pesticide incidents and advised them that advice on poisoning was available from the Employment Medical Advisory Service and from the national poisons information service centres. Further advice on the subject by the Department of Health and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate is soon to be sent out to all general practitioners. A copy of the Department of Health handbook and the letter (PL/CMO(91)5) are available in the Library.

Health Technology

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what are the terms of reference of the NHS central research and development committee standing group on health technology.

Mr. Sackville: The terms of reference of the standing group on health technology assessment are as follows:

CENTRAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CRDC) STANDING GROUP ON HEALTH TECHNOLOGY. TERMS OF REFERENCE.

1. To advise on priorities for health technology assessment (HTA[1]), including
   - (i) studies involving the collection and analysis of new data;
   - (ii) reviews of such studies;
   - (iii) reports on the current state of the development, diffusion and likely impact of new technologies;

   and having regard to:
   - (a) the work of other Central Research and Development Committee (CRDC) advisory groups;
   - (b) the Government's health strategy and other policy priorities for the National Health Service;
   - (c) the likely benefits, risks, costs and broader impact of technologies;
   - (d) the stage of the technology's evolution and diffusion, and the likely impact of an assessment on practice;
   - (e) existing HTA findings both from work in the United Kingdom and from relevant work abroad;
   - (f) any specific issue(s) on which the CRDC may seek advice.
2. To advise on new technologies where, because of their potential risk, cost, ethical implications or other relevant factors, there is a particular need to control diffusion until more information is available.
3. To advise on priorities for research into methodologies of relevance to HTA, and in particular:
   - (i) methods of synthesising and reviewing existing data and findings;
   - (ii) experimental and non-experimental methods of assessing effectiveness;
   - (iii) economic evaluations;
   - (iv) strategies and methods for assessing emerging and developing technologies;
   - (v) methods which produce findings that are of relevance to as wide a range of settings as possible;
   - (vi) ways of evaluating the outputs, impact and cost-effectiveness of HTA.
4. To advise on training needs in respect of the conduct of high quality HTA.
5. (i) To produce an initial report on priorities for assessments of establishing technologies, focusing in particular on technologies of relevance to more than one disease or patient group;
   (ii) Thereafter, to advise on priorities in relation to new and emerging technologies.

[1]HTA is used here to refer to the assessment of the effectiveness, costs and broader impact of all procedures used by the health professionals to promote health, to prevent and treat disease, and to improve rehabilitation and long term care.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the budget of the NHS central research and development committee standing group on health technology.

Mr. Sackville: The work of the standing group is challenging, and widespread consultation with the national health service, the professions, the research community and industry are essential. It is not possible to include expertise in all areas in one group and the standing group will be underpinned by six advisory panels covering the acute sector; pharmaceuticals; population screening; primary and community care; diagnostics, imaging and monitoring; and methodologies. Funding of this scientific support will be around £150,000 in 1993-94.

The priorities for research identified by the standing group will be brought to the attention of all relevant research funding bodies. Allocations of central and NHS resources to health technology assessment (HTA) will reflect the central research and development committee's views of the importance of this task in relation to other priorities, but it is anticipated that around half of NHS direct support for research will, in time, be allocated to HTA.

Novel Surgical Procedures

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the research her Department and the Medical Research Council are funding into the cost effectiveness of novel surgical procedures.

Mr. Sackville: The Department of Health has commissioned the following work into novel surgical procedures:

Economic evaluation of laser technology in medical care
(Brunel University—£106,648 between 1990 and 1992)
Neonatal extracorporeal membrane oxygenation: a multicentre randomised controlled trial
(National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit—£484,719 between 1992 and 1997)
Neonatal extracorporeal membrane oxygenation: a multicentre randomised controlled trial
(University of Leicester—£623,207 between 1992 and 1996)
A prospective cohort study to evaluate the long and medium term outcomes of transcervical ablation of the endometrium
(Brunel University—£425,000 between 1993 and 1999)

The Department of Health has identified minimal access therapy (MAT) as a high priority for research in its 1993-94 programme.

The Medical Research Council receives its grant-in-aid from my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

GP Fund Holders

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the total amount that general practitioner fund holders in each region have saved in their staff and hospital referrals and drug budgets in 1991-92 in real terms and as a percentage of the total staff hospital referral and drug budget in that region.

Mr. Sackville: General practitioner fundholders do not have separate budgets for staff, hospital referrals and prescribing. Total savings in 1991-92 were 4 per cent. of budgets set.

Non-EC Doctors and Dentists

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what changes have been made to the 1985 circular HC FP(85)14 on the employment of doctors and dentists from non-EC countries in relation to permit-free training status for the purpose of postgraduate training in hospitals; and if she will make a statement;

(2) what instruction has been given to health authorities on whether work permits for doctors from non-EC countries should be issued for training grade posts after the expiry of the permit-free four-year period.

Mr. Sackville: No changes have been made to circular HC(FP)(85)14; nor have any instructions been given to health authorities in relation to the issue of work permits for training grade posts. Some parts of the guidance in HC(FP)(85)14 are under review, and will shortly be the subject of consultation with interested parties.

Cancer Vaccine

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what cancer vaccine treatment is currently available in the United Kingdom; and if she will list the locations.

Mr. Sackville: No cancer vaccine treatment is currently available.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she is undertaking or promoting in respect of cancer vaccines.

Mr. Sackville: No research is currently being undertaken by the Department in respect of cancer vaccines. The main agency through which the Government support biomedical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council, which receives its grant-in-aid from the office of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and it is collaborating with leading cancer charities in this area.

Children's Rights Commissioner

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research has been undertaken by her Department into the feasibility of establishing the post of an independent Children's Rights Commissioner in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Bowis: None.

York Health District

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people aged *(a)* 65 to 74, *(b)* 75 to 84 and *(c)* over 84 years were discharged from a hospital in the former York health district in each of the last 10 years; and, of these people, what percentage were re-admitted to a hospital in the district for treatment (i) in the same specialty or (ii) in a different specialty within (1) one month, (2) three months and (3) six months of their previous discharge.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally. The hon. Member may wish to contact Sir Bryan Askew, chairman of Yorkshire regional health authority, for details.

Medical Practitioners

Mr. Gunnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many newly qualified medical practitioners entered general practice in the United Kingdom in 1992.

Mr. Sackville: A total of 1,250 newly qualified medical practitioners entered general practice in England between 1 July 1991 and 30 June 1992. Information relating to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are matters for my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Wales and Scotland and my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

West Midlands Regional Health Authority

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations her Department has received concerning the decision of West Midlands regional health

authority in 1990 to allow its software division employees to remain in the NHS pension scheme after their transfer to employment by the Health Management Trust-FIP Ltd.

Mr. Sackville: We are not aware that the Department has received any such representations.

Anabolic Steroids

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information her Department has published on the *(a)* known and *(b)* suspected side-effects of anabolic steroids;: and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The Centre for Research into Drugs and Health Behaviour recently published the results of a Government-funded study of anabolic steroid use in Great Britain. A copy of the report, entitled "Anabolic Steroid Use in Great Britain—an exploratory investigation", will be placed in the Library. The aim of the study was to explore the extent of anabolic steroid use in gyms, but the report also includes data on effects reported by steroid users themselves.

Parkfield Sterile Supplies Unit

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to ensure that consultation takes place on the proposal to put the Parkfields sterile supplies unit in the west midlands out to tender.

Mr. Sackville: This is a matter for West Midlands regional health authority. The hon. Member may wish to contact Mr. Bryan Baker, the chairman of the health authority, for details.

Dental Practitioners

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will extend the use of the title "doctor" to include general dental practitioners and those employed in the community dental service.

Mr. Sackville: We have no present plans to do so.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* her policies and *(b)* her Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if she will publish the performance indicators by which her Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Sackville: The Government continue to help small businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

It continues to be the policy of the Department and the national health service to provide equal opportunities to all potential suppliers of whatever size, to trade on a value for money basis. This policy underpins all NHS and departmental contracts with suppliers. To help all businesses, a guide on how purchasing is now organised and who to contact, "Purchasing at NHS Supplies", has been published and widely distributed. A copy of the guide will be placed in the Library.

It is not practicable to monitor centrally the precise extent to which the NHS or the Department make use of small businesses. Similarly, it would not affect the way in which we purchase goods and services. Therefore no performance indicators on this subject are currently maintained.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list all the computer consultancies employed by her Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to her Department.

Mr. Sackville: The full information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The total expenditure on information technology consultancy services by the Department in the years 1991-92 to 1992-93 was as follows:

	£ million
1991-92	12·495
1992-93	14·647

The services covered by this expenditure included advice on procurement and information strategies, the design, development and implementation of the office information system and user support services. Planned expenditure in 1993-94 is £13·661 million.

Nursing and Residential Homes

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the number of *(a)* private nursing home beds and *(b)* residential home beds registered in England in total and by local authority each year since 1985; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Bowis: Information about newly registered private nursing homes and residential care homes, including bed numbers, is not available centrally.

Speech Therapy

Mr. Rowe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received about the future funding of speech therapy training; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Bowis: We have received a number of such representations.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what is her Department's policy on which information produced by her Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print;

(2) what arrangements her Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by her Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape.

Mr. Bowis: The Department aims to provide the general public with a wide range of information relating to legislation, policy, patients' rights and other health advice. A number of publications have already been produced for people who are visually impaired. Examples are shown as follows:

TITLE/TYPE OF PUBLICATION
Braille
Patients Charter (also available in audio cassette version).
NHS Reforms and You (also available in Moon and audio cassette versions).
Audio Cassette
Health of the Nation.
While You Are Pregnant—Safe Eating.
Elderly Health.
Community Care Changes in April 1993 (tapes are also available in ethnic minority languages).
Large Print
Keep Warm Keep Well (also available in audio cassette version).
Community Care changes in April 1993.

Moreover the citizens charter, which calls on public services to make sure information about services is easily accessible to all their users, is putting fresh emphasis on the need for effective communication with those who have special needs, including people who are visually impaired.

Mental Health

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what correspondence she has received from the National Schizophrenia Fellowship about the funding of respite services for people with a severe mental illness and their carers; and when she expects to reply.

Mr. Bowis: The Department has received and replied to several letters from the National Schizophrenia Fellowship about a whole range of issues concerning services for people with severe mental illness and their carers.

Fluoridation

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what is the current recommended concentration of fluoride compound in drinking water; and what plans she has to revise this.

Mr. Sackville: The Government believe that fluoridation of water to a level of one milligram per litre is the optimal concentration for reducing teeth decay. There are no plans to revise this.

Degree Funding

Mr. Rowe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to alter the current arrangements for funding first degrees being undertaken by intending national health service employees; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: Officials of the Department have held discussions with officials of the Department for Education about the arrangements for funding undergraduate courses in speech and language therapy, dietetics and chiropody. No decisions have yet been reached. Any proposals for change which may emerge from these discussions will be considered in consultations with the national health service, professional bodies and higher education institutions. There are no current plans to alter the present arrangements for the purchasing of education and training by regions for other professions employed in the NHS.

"The Health of the Nation"

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the cost of the "The Health of the Nation" anniversary events programme.

Mr. Sackville: Most of the publications and material produced during the first anniversary of Health of the Nation were fulfilling commitments set out in the White Paper or were an integral part of taking work on implementation forward. The exception was "CMO's Challenge", which was developed and launched as a specific initiative to take forward action on the findings of the first English health survey. The cost of "CMO's Challenge" was £15,000.

Tobacco

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will publish the sixth annual report of the committee for monitoring agreements on tobacco advertising and sponsorship.

Mrs. Virginia Bottomley: The committee for monitoring agreements on tobacco advertising and sponsorship has submitted its sixth report to the United Kingdom Health Ministers and to the Secretary of State for National Heritage. Copies have been placed in the Library. I am very grateful to the committee, and particularly the chairman, Sir John Blelloch, for their valuable work in continuing to monitor the agreements. The report shows that the industry has continued to honour its commitments.

Health Advisory Service

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the annual report of the NHS Health Advisory Service.

Mr. Bowis: The 1992-93 annual report of the National Health Service Health Advisory Service has been published today. Copies will be placed in the Library.

Junior Doctors

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to eliminate posts where junior doctors are contracted to work more than 83 hours per week.

Mr. Sackville: Regions have been advised that eliminating the few remaining posts where junior doctors and dentists are contracted for more than 83 hours per week is a priority. We shall be monitoring progress very closely.

Aycliffe Children's Home

Dr. Liam Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will publish the report of the social services inspectorate's investigation of Durham county council's inquiries into allegations of injuries to children accommodated in Aycliffe children's home.

Mr. Bowis: We have today published this report. Copies will be placed in the Library. The report makes a number of recommendations about the management of Aycliffe and the care of the children which Durham county council will be addressing as a matter of urgency. The chief inspector of the social services inspectorate will monitor developments closely and give advice and guidance where appropriate.

Dental Instruments

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what new proposals she has to strengthen, or make mandatory, guidelines issued to dentists on sterilising dental instruments.

Mr. Sackville: The chief dental officer will shortly be issuing a further reminder to all dentists of the importance of adhering strictly to the recommended standards of cross-infection control.

Birth Defects

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the number and percentage of birth defects among live births in each of the past 10 years.

Mr. Sackville: The information for 1982-91 (the latest year for which information is available) is shown in the table.

Number and percentage of birth defects among livebirths 1982-91 England and Wales

Year	Numbers[1]	Livebirths	Percentage
1982	12,732	625,931	2·03
1983	13,444	629,134	2·14
1984	13,546	636,818	2·13
1985	12,949	656,417	1·97
1986	12,758	661,018	1·93
1987	13,129	681,511	1·93
1988	12,723	693,577	1·83
1989	12,191	687,725	1·77
1990	7,941	706,140	1·12
1991	6,889	699,217	0·99

[1] The congenital malformation notification system is voluntary and is usually linked to the statutory system of birth notification to local health authorities which has existed since 1926. The local health authorities extract from the birth notifications details of babies born with malformations. This information is commonly supplemented with details obtained from midwives, hospitals, doctors and health visitors. The purpose of this system is primarily to detect changes in the frequency of reporting any particular malformation or group of malformations rather than trying to estimate prevalence at birth. Only malformations detected at or within 10 days of birth are currently included in the system, to ensure rapid reporting and thus fast detection of any increase in reporting levels. The system does however provide the most extensive data on prevalance levels available in England and Wales.

Prior to 1990 all malformations, however minor, were reportable to the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS). In January 1990 an exclusion list was introduced describing the minor anomalies which should no longer be notified. Therefore data are not comparable for the period before 1990 and for 1990 onwards.

For more information on congenital malformations refer to OPCS publication, series MB3, copies of which are available in the Library.

Health Authority Expenditure

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the total gross expenditure of each regional health authority in each of the last five years; and what is the projected expenditure for the next two years.

Mr. Sackville: Gross expenditure figures by regional health authority (RHA) for the financial years 1987-88 to 1991-92 are shown in the table. The 1991-92 figures are not comparable with those for earlier years and should be interpreted with caution. Simple comparisons between authorities is misleading because RHAs devolved their non-core functions at varying times and bore different costs on their regional budgets.

The 1992-93 figures will be available by December 1993. Figures are not available for future years.

Regional health authorities gross expenditure
£ 000

RHA	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92
Northern	46,185	55,691	64,234	71,150	63,474
Yorkshire	70,463	70,801	76,187	94,300	65,094
Trent	73,401	81,274	77,848	111,458	174,284
East Anglian	27,606	29,435	29,440	42,595	45,648
North West Thames	50,360	59,999	65,161	102,830	57,619
North East Thames	55,687	76,422	69,967	80,198	189,715
South East Thames	63,769	66,668	76,734	77,299	250,032
South West Thames	103,166	110,282	131,677	123,865	149,077
Wessex	55,523	56,683	86,441	71,823	25,017
Oxford	33,377	43,945	50,165	56,482	49,363
South Western	41,357	45,207	54,589	63,013	86,185
West Midlands	106,307	82,442	112,625	137,810	111,014
Mersey	46,641	26,245	24,357	42,580	23,961
North Western	88,869	88,340	87,673	91,032	65,151

Source: Annual accounts of regional health authorities. (Figures are not adjusted for inflation).

Notes to the table:

1. The figures for the years prior to 1991-92 vary between RHAs as regions were managed in an integrated way and the balance of management between RHAs and their respective district health authorities (DHAs) differed between regions. The figures were also affected by other factors including differences in the geographical size of regions, in the number of DHAs they included and in the extent to which RHAs directly managed operational services.
2. Following the implementation of the NHS reforms the role of RHAs is changing and this has a major impact on the figures for 1991-92. There are significant variations in the extent to which RHAs have retained or devolved management, support and operational services functions and in the extent to which their costs are borne or recharged to users. Some RHAs are directly involved in the purchaser function while the figures for others include additional significant costs—notably the payment of funds for nursing and other staff training to health providers.

Live Births

Mrs. Wise: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the tables published on pages 26 and 32-33 of HC 624, for what percentage of live births in 1990-91 the data for the maternity tail of the hospital episodes statistics were submitted from the South Western and West Midlands regional health authorities.

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* Neither health authority submitted any of the additional data collected within the hospital episode statistics "maternity tail".

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Manufacturing Investment

Mr. Henderson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what new measures his Department proposes to stimulate increased levels of manufacturing investment in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Sainsbury: Investment will be encouraged by the profitable and competitive manufacturing base which our policies are designed to ensure.

Creative Accounting

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what proposals he has to make under which the sale of creative accounting schemes by auditors to their audit clients would become an offence.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: I have no plans to limit companies' freedom to seek accountancy advice.

A. F. Budge (Construction)

Mr. Hood: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what discussions he or his Department have had with A. F. Budge (Construction).

Mr. Neil Hamilton: A. F. Budge (Contractors) Limited went into administrative receivership on 4 January 1993 and compulsory liquidation on 24 February of the same year. There are provisions requiring the receiver to make a note on the public record at Companies House and to advertise his appointment from which my department would become aware of the receivership.

Mr. Hood: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he was informed of the receivership of A. F. Budge (Construction); and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: A. F. Budge (Contractors) Limited went into administrative receivership on 4 January 1993 and compulsory liquidation on 24 February of the same year. I am not aware of any discussions between my department and the receivers or the company except matters relating to the administration of the insolvency proceedings.

Fossil Fuel Decarbonisation

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement about the research projects undertaken by his Department into fossil fuel decarbonisation schemes since April 1992; and what plans he has to develop fossil fuel decarbonisation demonstration projects.

Mr. McLoughlin: My Department is taking part with British Coal, and with support from National Power and PowerGen, in a study programme under the auspices of the International Energy Agency—the IEA greenhouse gases research and development programme—to evaluate the feasibility and costs of capture and safe disposal of carbon dioxide from large fossil fuel combustion plant. This began in 1991 and is due for completion in autumn, 1994. A total of thirteen countries, and the European Commission, are cooperating in this programme.

In addition, my Department is contributing to a complementary review, by the British Geological Survey and British Coal under the European Community's JOULE II research programme, of the scope for permanent, underground storage of carbon dioxide in Europe. This two-year review began in January 1993.

It would be premature to develop demonstration projects ahead of the completion of these initial feasibility studies.

British Standards

Mr. Wigley: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make it his policy to secure that any future revision of British standards include specific reference to the needs of disabled people.

Mr. McLoughlin: Any future revision of a British Standard is a matter primarily for the responsible Committee of the British Standards institution. The Institution is independent of Government.

I am advised that where appropriate the needs of disabled people are taken into account when British standards are prepared.

Assisted Areas

Mr. Pickles: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what will be the timing for changes he will be making to the assisted areas map; and what arrangements will be made for grant applications from businesses in areas which are to lose status caught up by those changes.

Mr. Sainsbury: The European Commission cleared yesterday the Government's proposals for the new assisted areas map of Great Britain. I have today signed the order to bring the new map into effect. It will be laid before Parliament today.

My right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Scotland and for Wales and I have today written to all hon. Members to advise them of the changes. We have issued jointly a background document setting out the new map and explaining how the review of the map was conducted. Copies of this document are available in the Vote Office.

The new map will come into operation on 1 August. This allows nine days' notice so that businesses which have been engaged in pre-application discussions with departments under the various regional schemes will have an opportunity to complete formal application procedures before the changes take effect. Offers which have already been made will be honoured.

Oil and Gas Exploration

Mr. Ainger: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he expects to announce the next round of offshore licensing for oil and gas exploration.

Mr. Eggar: No decision has been taken yet as to whether or when there will be another round of offshore oil and gas licensing.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) what steps he is taking to ensure that discharges of all

oil contaminated cuttings from exploration and appraisal wells are prohibited in line with Her Majesty's Government's commitment at paragraph 28.1(iii) of the final declaration of the third international conference on the protection of the North sea; and by what date he expects the prohibition to take effect;

(2) by what date Her Majesty's Government expect to prohibit discharges of all oil contaminated cuttings in United Kingdom waters in line with their commitment at the third international conference on the protection of the North sea (paragraph 28.1(i) of the final declaration); and what steps he is taking to ensure this commitment is met.

Mr. Eggar: At the meeting of the Oslo and Paris Commissions on 22 September 1992, Ministers approved a PARCOM decision on the use of oil-based muds. This decision did not prohibit discharges of oil-contaminated cuttings, but set out definitions, rules and principles to avoid marine pollution from this source. The rules and principles state that the average oil content on cuttings discharged into the sea shall not exceed the target standard of an average 10 grammes of oil per kilogramme of dry cuttings. This standard is to be achieved as soon as possible and practicable and, in any event, have full effect for exploration and appraisal drilling no later than 31 December 1993 and for all wells no later than 31 December 1996.

Discharge of oil cuttings is an offence under section 3 of the Prevention of Oil Pollution Act 1971, unless an exemption from this provision has been granted under section 23. All exemptions are subject to conditions which require the operator to comply with the PARCOM decision, and to sample, analyse and report to the Department the oil content of the discharged cuttings.

Deregulation Unit

Mrs. Helen Jackson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade which of the regulations governing environmental and pollution control the deregulation unit is examining.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: All regulations affecting business are being reviewed by the deregulation task forces and by Government Departments.

Mrs. Helen Jackson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the members and advisers of the deregulation unit.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: There are 49 civil servants in the deregulation unit, including seven full-time secondees from the private sector. A list of the membership of the deregulation task forces is in the Library.

Radiocommunications Agency

Mr. Deva: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what targets he has set the Radiocommunications Agency for 1993-94.

Mr. Sainsbury: I have set the agency a range of key targets for 1993-94 which will appear in the agency's annual report for 1992-93. In addition to achieving an efficiency improvement of 4 per cent., it will also be required to meet the following quality of service targets covering its licensing work and enforcement activities:

Licensing

99 per cent. of new aeronautical and aircraft applicants and amendments to be processed within three working days;

90 per cent. of ships' radio licences to be issued within one month;

98 per cent. of maritime business radio cases to be processed within one month;

99 per cent. of new on-site paging applications and amendments to be processed and despatched within four working days;

90 per cent. of new private mobile radio applications and amendments that require no international co-ordination to be processed and despatched within 15 and 20 working days respectively.

Enforcement

100 per cent. of safety of life services complaints to be handled within 24 hours;

98 per cent. of business complaints to be handled within five working days; and

98 per cent. of domestic complaints to be handled within one month.

In addition, I have set the chief executive of the agency the personal target of replying within 10 working days to letters from Members of Parliament delegated to him for reply.

EC Directives

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the EC directives affecting British industry which have been implemented in the United Kingdom before the actual date on which they were required to take effect.

Mr. Needham: The detailed information requested can be obtained only at disproportionate cost. In general, EC directives are implemented on the actual date on which they are required to take effect.

EC Standards

Sir Cranley Onslow: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what estimate he has made of the effect on British manufacturing industry's investment planning of delays in agreeing EC standards.

Mr. Needham: No such estimate has been made by my Department. We are, however, concerned that the rate at which CEN and CENELEC produce the standards for use in relation to single market legislation is too slow and will be discussing with Community partners and national standards bodies what steps might be taken to improve the position. The Government are engaged in a review of future United Kingdom resourcing of the preparation of standards (*Official Report*, 10 June 1993, column *302*) and welcome views on the best approach to the United Kingdom's input to European standards' committees.

Co-operative Projects

Mr. Purchase: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what projects have been funded since January 1990 under the arrangements, consequent to the winding up of the Co-operative Development Agency, for providing £200,000 a year for three years for innovative co-operative projects; if he will list the dates on which the funding commenced and the amount provided; and how many applications were rejected.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* The Government have contributed or committed in excess of £475,000 since January 1991 to fund 16 development projects to help improve the business performance and competitiveness of co-operative businesses. Twenty-eight proposals have not been supported. The list of supported projects is shown in the table.

Contractors	*Project(s)*	*Start date*	*Budget*
United Kingdom Co-operative Council (UKCC)	Pump-priming United Kingdom Co-operative Council	1 April 1991	90,000
Industrial Common Ownership Movement (ICOM)	Kitemark-Workers Code of Practice	3 April 1992	30,000
Industrial Common Ownership Movement (ICOM)	Promotion of Co-ops to Corporate Purchasers	3 April 1992	40,000
David Hall Partnership	Co-op Research – Successful Co-operation	26 June 1992	26,157
United Kingdom Co-operative Council (UKCC)	Pump-priming United Kingdom Co-operative Council	1 April 1992	45,000
Industrial Common Ownership Finance (ICOF)	Financial Needs Analysis	17 June 1992	39,422
Scottish Wholefoods Collective Warehouse (SWCW)	Consultancy Network	7 July 1992	23,325
Scottish Co-op Development Company (SCDC)	Phoenix Co-operative Initiative	13 May 1992	40,500
Plunkett Foundation	Training provision for Directors of Co-ops	26 March 1992	18,802
Plunkett Foundation	Ownership options for Public Services	26 March 1992	20,388
Open University	Community Care	17 June 1992	32,943
Industrial Common Ownership Movement (ICOM)	Turnaround Courses	4 February 1993	4,700
Nottingham Co-operative Development Agency	Marketing Group Guides	15 March 1993	4,339
Industrial Common Ownership Movement	Dissemination of Promotion of Co-ops to Corporate Purchasers	September 1993	6,500
Plunkett Foundation	Dissemination of Ownership Options for Public Services	September 1993	7,745
Plunkett Foundation	Dissemination of Training provision for Directors of Co-ops	October 1993	7,500
Open University	Dissemination of Community Care Project	September 1993	4,700
Open University	Directory of Worker Co-ops in the United Kingdom	June 1993	9,988
Open University	Workshop on Co-op Development Activities	June 1993	3,067
Scottish Co-operative Development Company (SCDC)	Dissemination of Phoenix Co-operative Initiative	September 1993	8,000
Baker Brown Associates	Pathways to Co-operation	June 1993	22,266
United Kingdom Co-operative Council (UKCC)/Industrial Common Ownership Movement (ICOM)	Co-ops for One Stop Shops	September 1993	30,000
Scottish Wholefoods Collective Warehouse (SWCW)	Printing and Dissemination of Consultancy Network Report	August 1993	4,200

Mr. Purchase: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what proposals he has to continue funding innovative co-operative projects; and what sums are available in the current financial year.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* My Department is currently supporting a number of development projects relating to co-operative businesses and has already committed over £100,000 to these in the current financial year. We do not plan to make any further funding available specifically to support co-operative projects but will be assisting in their relationships with business links.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* The appointments of British Coal Corporation members are subject to the provisions of the Coal Industry Nationalisation (National Coal Board) Regulations 1946.

Regulation 3 in essence requires members

(a) to disclose to my right hon. Friend full particulars of any interest or securities held or acquired in any undertaking carrying on a business similar to that at any time carried on by the corporation; and

(b) to disclose at a meeting of the members of the corporation any direct or indirect interest in a contract made or proposed by the Corporation.

I have no present plans to revise those regulations.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 26 July 1993

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Judicial System (Probity)

Mr. Mates: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will make a statement on his responsibilities in respect of the maintenance of the integrity and probity of the judicial system; and what role his Department plays in relation to allegations of bribery involving judges.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The Lord Chancellor regards integrity and probity as essential qualities for all those working in the judicial system. The investigation of allegations of bribery involving judges is a matter for the police. Consideration will also be given by the Lord Chancellor to any further action that may be required in the light of the results flowing from any such investigation.

Industrial Deafness

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department (1) what steps he is taking to help victims of industrial deafness who are deterred from pursuing claims against their employers by the new regulations governing legal aid;

(2) what steps he is taking to help victims of industrial deafness to pursue their claims for compensation against their employers.

Mr. John M. Taylor: No separate assessment has been made of the effect of the legal aid eligibility changes on litigants with specific categories of case. However, the financial limits for personal injury actions remain higher than those for other categories of civil proceedings. The disposable income limit for personal injury cases is £7,500 (£6,800 for other proceedings) and the disposable capital limit is £8,560 (£6,750 for other proceedings).

No specific steps are proposed for the handling of industrial deafness cases, but they will benefit from a number of jurisdictional and procedural changes introduced for personal injury cases generally over the past two years. In the coming months the Lord Chancellor intends to issue a public consultation document setting out proposals for a less formal method than trial in open court for handling smaller personal injury claims. Depending on the financial limit set, a number of industrial deafness cases may benefit.

Vulnerable Witnesses

Dr. Godman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department in how many cases defence counsel have objected to the use of video-link television equipment for the purpose of interviewing child witnesses and other vulnerable witnesses in each of the past three years; of these objections, how many were accepted by the court; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The information sought by the hon. Member is not collected, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department in how many cases and in which courts video link television equipment has been used for the purpose of interviewing child witnesses and other vulnerable witnesses outwith the actual court room in each of the past four years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The number of cases in which child witnesses has given evidence via live television links at suitably equipped Crown court centres is set out in the table provided in answer to the hon. Member's previous question.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department in how many court cases a screen has been used in order to shield child witnesses from those being proceeded against in each of the past three years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The hon. Member asked a similar question on 16 November last year, to which I gave an answer that the information was not collected. I am pleased to be able to report that from 1 January 1993 my Department introduced a mechanism for collecting this information in the Crown court. Since that date there have been 18 reported cases in which a screen has been used to shield a child witness in court.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department how many courts have video-link television equipment installed for the purpose of interviewing child witnesses and other vulnerable persons; where such courts are located; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Live television link equipment, for the purpose of children giving evidence under the provisions of section 32 Criminal Justice Act 1988, has been installed at the 47 Crown court centres listed in the table, which also provides the answer to the hon. Member's further question.

TV links statistics

Court	*1989 Used*	*1990 Used*	*1991 Used*	*1992 Used*
Birmingham	10	26	16	18
Bradford	—	—	—	0
Bristol	—	—	4	4
Caernarfon	—	—	—	0
Cardiff	—	—	12	10
Carlisle	—	—	—	0
Central Criminal Court	4	4	3	2
Chelmsford	11	4	16	7
Chester	—	—	0	0
Croydon	—	—	—	1
Derby*	—	—	—	—
Exeter	2	7	4	1
Gloucester	—	—	—	2
Grimsby	—	—	—	1
Guildford	7	5	7	3
Harrow	—	—	—	0
Hull	—	—	—	0
Ipswich*	—	—	—	—
Kingston upon Thames*	—	—	—	—
Leeds	3	8	17	13
Leicester	—	—	6	0
Lewes	—	—	—	0
Lincoln	—	—	—	0

Court	1989 Used	1990 Used	1991 Used	1992 Used
Liverpool	16	11	13	6
Luton*	—	—	—	—
Maidstone	15	18	4	3
Manchester	2	6	1	0
Mold	9	3	1	1
Newcastle	—	—	11	5
Northampton	—	—	1	1
Norwich	—	—	2	1
Nottingham	16	15	14	3
Peterborough*	—	—	—	—
Plymouth	—	—	—	0
Portsmouth	—	—	—	1
Preston	—	—	1	0
Reading	—	—	1	0
St. Albans	—	—	—	0
Sheffield	—	—	5	3
Southwark	2	6	5	7
Stafford	—	—	0	0
Swansea	6	15	3	3
Teesside	—	—	—	0
Truro	—	—	—	0
Winchester	5	0	5	0
Wolverhampton	—	—	3	3
Woolwich*	—	—	—	—

Installation of equipment at the courts marked "*" took place in 1993.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Benefits Agency

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Benefits Agency business plan for the current year was laid before Parliament.

Mr. Ancram: It is expected that the Social Security Agency's 1993-94 business plan will be published in August 1993. The agency's service and financial targets for the year have, however, already been set and are as follows. They are in line with the Government's policy of improving the service provided to customers and fully support the standards established in the Northern Ireland citizens charter. I am satisfied that the targets present a demanding challenge for the agency.

1. BENEFIT CLEARANCE TIMES *(a)*

	Per cent.	In days
Social fund crisis loans—on the day the need arises		
Social fund community care grants	65	7
	95	20
Income support	71	5
	90	13
Sickness/invalidity benefit	65	10
	95	30
Child benefit	73	10
	95	30
Family credit	60	13
	95	42
Disability living allowance	65	30
	85	55
Retirement pension	65	20
	95	60
Unemployment benefit		7·5

2. BENEFIT ACCURACY
Income support: to pay the correct amount in at least 92 per cent. of cases. Sickness/invalidity benefit: to pay the correct amount in at least 97 per cent. of cases.
Family credit: to pay the correct amount in at least 92 per cent. of cases.
Disability living allowance: to pay the correct amount in at least 96 per cent. of cases.
Retirement pension: to pay the correct amount in at least 99 per cent. of cases.

3. CUSTOMERS SATISFACTION *(b)*
90 per cent. of customers to regard the agency's service as satisfactory or better.

4. FINANCIAL RECOVERY
Recovery of social fund loans—£16·1 million.
Recovery of income support overpayments—£1·2 million.
Recovery of centralised benefits overpayments—£0·18 million.
Benefit savings from detection and prevention of fraud—£10·8 million.
Increase number of contribution surveys to 6,000—including 1,400 employer educational visits.
Increase class 1 identified from survey—arrears and in-year savings—to £0·38 million.

5. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
To live within a gross allocation of £28·5 million for social fund loans and community care grants.
To live within the agency's gross administration budget of £119·5 million, of which £113·6 million relates to running costs. A cash efficiency saving of £2·8 million—2·7 per cent. —has been deducted from the running costs—excluding Benefits Agency work.

Notes:
(a). Clearance times normally cover the period from the date of receipt of the claim in the agency to the formal decision by the adjudication officer or equivalent. Notification of the result is normally issued the following day. All days refer to working days.
(b) The customer satisfaction target covers a two-year period and will be measured by an independent survey in 1994-95.

Hospital Opthalmic Departments

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidelines are given to health and social services boards for keeping and collating statistics in hospital ophthalmic departments; and what data from hospital ophthalmic departments boards are required to collate.

Mr. Ancram: The same data are collected for the specialty of ophthalmology as for all other hospital specialties. Details of the forms and how to complete them are given in the guidance manual for Korner central requirements for hospital services. This is supported by a data dictionary which lists the standard definitions to be used throughout Northern Ireland. In addition, anonymised records of patients' diagnoses and any operative procedures carried out are also collected for analysis centrally.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what is the average cost of a visit to a hospital ophthalmic out-patient department.

Mr. Ancram: This information is not available at present.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many referrals from general practitioners and optometrists to hospital ophthalmology out-patients clinics there have been since 1985.

Mr. Ancram: This information is not available in the form requested. The total number of referrals to hospital ophthalmology out-patient clinics in Northern Ireland since 1985 is as follows:

Year	Number
1985	19,268
1986	19,449
1987	18,786
1988-89	18,306
1989-90	19,106
1990-91	19,872
1991-92	20,668
1992-93	21,832

Director of Public Health

Dr. Hendron: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if the Eastern Health and social services board intends to re-advertise the post of director of public health;

(2) when the Eastern health and social services board expects a permanent director of public health to take up the post.

Mr. Ancram: The vacant post of director of public health, Eastern health and social services board, was advertised in March 1993. A number of candidates were shortlisted for the post, but following interviews the board did not make an appointment.

The board intends to readvertise the post and, in the meantime, an effective acting-up arrangement is in place.

Armagh Health Centre

Mr. John D. Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to sell the health centre in Armagh; what plans he has for the property to be advertised for sale to the public; and if he will make a statement on the procedures which apply to the sale of publicly owned properties.

Mr. Ancram: The general medical practitioners working in Armagh health centre have expressed an interest in buying the premises. The proposal is being considered by the Southern health and social services board and is subject to approval by the Department of Health and Social Services. If the proposal is approved the premises would be sold at a price advised by the district valuer.

A sale in these circumstances would result in a change of ownership but a continuation of the general medical services currently provided from the health centre. The sale would not therefore be advertised on the open market, nor would it be subject to the normal policy and procedural guidelines for dealing with the disposal of surplus Government land which are contained in DOE (NI) lands service circular No. LSC/1/91. A copy of the said circular has been placed in the Library.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Atkins: The Government continue to place a high priority on helping small businesses in Northern Ireland, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance. Economic development strategy focuses on assisting companies to develop their growth potential and competitiveness and is implemented through the Industrial Development Board (IDB) and the Local Enterprise Development Unit (LEDU)

Each year, IDB and LEDU set challenging targets and measure performance against both these and performance in the previous year.

LEDU had a successful year in 1992-93 with a significant rise in activity levels across its range of programmes, including 3,716 individuals receiving enterprise training against a target of 3,000, and 1,429 new business start-ups against a target of 1,215.

During 1992-93 there was a net increase of employment of 1,020 in LEDU client companies; this represents a significant reversal of the previous years results which showed a net decrease in employment of 650.

Overall, 1992-93 was also a year of substantial achievement for the IDB when viewed against a background of recession at home and overseas. It was a successful year for inward investment, with 10 projects offering almost 2,000 new jobs having been attracted to Northern Ireland. Companies already based in Northern Ireland, many of them employing fewer than 200 people, have been winning business in the highly competitive international marketplace. Achieving and maintaining international competitiveness is promoted by the IDB as the most important objective which companies should strive towards if they are to survive and grow.

Industrial Development Board

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps the IDB has taken following the report by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland into the selective financial assistance criteria employed by the IDB to improve the assessment of the employment potential of projects.

Mr. Atkins: The Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland reported to the House of Commons earlier this year on the application by the Industrial Development Board of its selective financial assistance criteria. This report was the basis of an examination by the Committee of Public Accounts which published its report, containing a number of recommendations, on 22 July 1993. A formal memorandum of reply to the Committee's report will be issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel in early autumn.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the implementation of the Industrial Development Board's forward strategy for 1991 to 1993; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: The Industrial Development Board has reported on the implementation of forward strategy in its annual reports for 1990-91 and 1991-92. A further update will be given in the report of 1992-93 to appear in the autumn. IDB officials report to me on their activities and I have regular meetings with the board's chairman. The board's activities are subject to regular policy evaluation and review.

Housing

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what comparative assessments have been made between housing associations and the Housing Executive with regard to the value for money in the administration, management and development costs of the different organisations.

Mr. Atkins: It is not possible to draw meaningful comparisons of relative value for money between the Housing Executive and housing associations because of the differences in the scale of their operations, in the housing needs which they seek to meet and in age and type of their housing stock. However, work is continuing to develop valid comparisons of management, maintenance and capital costs. A recent assessment of the value for money in new housing schemes confirms that in general both the Housing Executive and housing associations provide value for money.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what provision for move-on accommodation has been made by the Housing Executive for the years 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96.

Mr. Atkins: I have been advised by the chairman of the Housing Executive that it does not make specific provision for move-on accommodation.

The executive does however provide financial assistance to a number of voluntary agencies working in the homelessness field which provide counselling and resettlement programmes as part of their overall accommodation service. This assistance will amount to approximately £350,000 in 1993-94.

Selective Financial Assistance

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what amounts of selective financial assistance were allocated to industrial enterprises in the constituency of South Down from 1 April 1981 to 31 March 1992; and what were the total amounts of selective financial assistance allocated in each year in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Atkins: Information on selective financial assistance offers made by the Industrial Development Board to companies in the South Down constituency is available only from 1 September 1982, when the board was set up. Information on selective financial assistance offers made by the Local Enterprise Development Unit is available only by district council area.

The table sets out the information available.

Selective financial assistance offers

£000

Year	*Industrial Development Board*		*Local Enterprise Development Unit*	
	South Down	*Northern Ireland*	*Down, Banbridge and Newry and Mourne*	*Northern Ireland*
1981-82	n.a.	n.a.	1,024	5,545
1982-83	[1]62	[1]44,000	1,178	9,027
1983-84	2,985	80,000	1,375	13,549
1984-85	6,625	133,000	1,534	18,027
1985-86	4,307	72,000	2,197	21,759
1986-87	1,522	109,000	2,241	18,890
1987-88	811	97,000	2,563	18,200
1988-89	4,870	107,000	3,080	26,004
1989-90	610	93,000	887	21,668
1990-91	1,415	82,000	2,498	22,936
1991-92	300	64,000	1,520	20,014

[1]From 1 September 1982.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Atkins: Whether or not the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations apply in any particular case will depend on the nature of the work awarded and the contractors' own proposals for carrying it out. The services or functions which have been contracted out in Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office and their agencies, since November 1991, and in which the regulations were not applied, are as follows:

Building maintenance
Catering
Cleaning
Computer system
Courier system
Data processing
Facilities management
Grounds maintenance
Gully emptying
IT products and services
Messengers/porterage
Painting and decorating
Receptionists/telephonists
Roads reinstatement
Security
Sewer maintenance
Sludge tankering
Stores
Support typing
Verge maintenance

Renewable Energy

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if he will publish details of activity in Northern Ireland designed to promote renewable energy sources;

(2) if he will make an announcement on future non-fossil fuel obligation policy for Northern Ireland.

Mr. Atkins: A study, jointly commissioned by Northern Ireland Electricity plc (NIE) and the Department of Economic Development, into the potential for renewable energy has concluded that there are a number of promising renewable technologies for commercial development in Northern Ireland.

On the basis of the study's findings, and having regard to the Government's commitment to the promotion of commercially viable renewable technologies, I intend to make a non-fossil fuel obligation order next year under article 35 of the Electricity (Northern Ireland) Order 1992, requiring NIE to secure the availability of up to 15 MW of power from renewable sources. The size of the order and the technologies included within it, will be determined by the bids received by NIE, having regard to the need for diversity of technologies and the impact on costs to electricity consumers.

Accordingly, NIE will today be inviting bids from developers and will be announcing details of the arrangements for the processing of such bids.

I envisage further non-fossil fuel obligation orders being made in future years with the aim of achieving a target of about 45 MW of renewable plant in Northern Ireland by the year 2005.

Disability Allowances (Women)

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many women who qualify for severe disablement allowance and invalid care allowance will receive their full entitlement following the decision of the European Court of Justice on 30 March in case C328/91; when they will receive payments; if the payment of arrears will extend beyond 12 months from the date of claim; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Ancram: Responsibility for the subject in question has been delegated to the Social Security Agency under its chief executive, Mr. Alec Wylie. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from A. Wylie to Dr. Norman A. Godman, dated 22 July 1993:

As I am responsible for Social Security operational matters, your recent Parliamentary Question about the effect of the European Court of Justice decision in case C328/91 as regards the entitlement of women to Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) and Invalid Care Allowance (ICA) has been passed to me for reply.

Information about the number of women whose entitlement to these benefits falls within the scope of this decision is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. However, all such claims received after August 1988 have been adjudicated on and, where appropriate, payment made in accordance with normal rules and time limits. A decision regarding the payment of arrears beyond the normal time limit of 12 months is still awaited in separate cases currently before the European Court.

I hope this is helpful. A copy of this reply will appear in the official report and copies will be placed in the Library.

Paediatrics

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vacant posts of consultant paediatricians and senior registrars specialising in paediatrics have been notified in each of the past five years; on average how long it takes to fill such posts; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Ancram: The information is as follows, at September in each year:

Vacant posts

	Consultant paediatricians	*Senior registrars*
1988	3	1
1989	3	1
1990	3	0
1991	0	0
1992	1	2

On average, from notification of vacancies, it takes three months to advertise and select successful candidates.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many consultant paediatricians and senior registrars are currently in post.

Mr. Ancram: There are currently 26 consultant paediatricians and 11 senior registrars employed in the health and personal social services in Northern Ireland.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* consultant paediatricians and *(b)* senior registrars currently employed were trained in (i) Northern Ireland, (ii) elsewhere in the United Kingdom, (iii) other European Community countries and (iv) countries outwith the EC.

Mr. Ancram: The information sought is not available centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Concessionary Travel

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what information he has concerning the denial of concessionary travel privileges and related concessions to those persons aged 60 years or more who are in receipt of invalidity benefit; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Ancram: The concessionary fare scheme, which is administered by the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland, is not linked to the receipt of invalidity benefit.

Inward Investment

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many recorded visits were made by industrialists in connection with potential inward investment to each district council area in Northern Ireland from 1 April 1992 to 31 March 1993; and of these how many were repeat visits.

Mr. Atkins: Details of recorded first and repeat visits by industrialists to each district council area in Northern Ireland are set out in the table.

1992-93 Visits by District Council Area

District Council	*First visits*	*Repeat visits*
Antrim	17	21
Ards	2	3
Armagh	2	1

District Council	First visits	Repeat visits
Ballymena	1	2
Ballymoney	3	1
Banbridge	—	—
Belfast	55	86
Carrickfergus	4	3
Castlereagh	6	2
Coleraine	1	3
Cookstown	1	—
Craigavon	7	8
Derry	7	16
Down	5	1
Dungannon	1	2
Fermanagh	2	2
Larne	2	3
Limavady	—	2
Lisburn	5	6
Magherafelt	1	—
Moyle	1	—
Newry and Mourne	4	6
Newtownabbey	18	12
North Down	6	1
Omagh	—	1
Strabane	—	—
Total	151	182

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Asil Nadir

Mr. Mates: To ask the Attorney-General, (1) pursuant to his oral statement of 30 June, *Official Report*, column 967, when he concluded that there was no credible evidence implicating the judge in the case of Regina *v.* Nadir and Turner in a conspiracy;

(2) when he expects the police investigation under the direction of the Director of Public Prosecutions into the alleged conspiracy to bribe Mr. Justice Tucker to be completed; and if he will make a statement;

(3) when he first learned of the allegation that the judge in the case of Regina *v.* Nadir and Turner was involved in a conspiracy to pervert the course of justice;

(4) when he reviewed the evidence relating to allegations of involvement by the judges in the case of Regina *v.* Nadir and Turner in a conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

The Attorney-General: The director of the Serious Fraud Office was informed on 1 October 1992 that the Metropolitan police had commenced an investigation into an alleged plot to bribe the trial judge in the Polly Peck case. I was informed of the position during the week commencing 5 October. The investigation continues and its management is an operational matter for the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. I cannot say when it will be completed.

The evidence gathered during the investigation will be submitted to the Crown Prosecution Service at its conclusion. The information that no credible evidence had been revealed implicating the judge was confirmed in response to a specific inquiry initiated by me to the Director of Public Prosecutions in the light of speculation and concern caused by the statement made by the hon. Member himself on 29 June.

Jason Georgiou

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Attorney-General if he will list the previous convictions of Paul Smith, a prosecution witness in the case of Jason Georgiou; and in how many other cases he has been a prosecution witness.

The Attorney-General: No. Background information of this nature relating to prosecution witnesses is provided to the Crown Prosecution Service solely for use in the course of criminal proceedings.

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Attorney-General if he will outline the evidence which led the Crown Prosecution Service to charge Jason Georgiou with conspiracy to murder; and why the case was dropped.

The Attorney-General: No. It is my practice not to give detailed reasons in relation to decisions to prosecute. The Crown Prosecution Service was satisfied that the evidence available at the outset of proceedings was sufficient to provide a realistic prospect of conviction.

The case against Jason Georgiou and three of his co-defendants was dropped because the principal prosecution witness proved unwilling to give evidence at the trial.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

World Bank

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of the British contribution to the World Bank group is used *(a)* for projects that directly benefit the poorest people in developing countries and *(b)* to help to meet the goals established at the world summit for children.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: United Kingdom contributions are used to support the overall operations of the World bank. The proportion which can be attributed to projects of this kind cannot readily be estimated.

World bank lending for human resources development has increased almost fivefold since the early 1980s to 14 per cent. of total lending in fiscal years 1990-92, and in particular is focusing on basic social services, including primary health care and education. In fiscal year 1992, the bank estimates that 14 per cent. of new lending was for projects targeted at the poor. A second, equally important, component of the bank's poverty reduction strategy is the promotion of broadly-based economic growth which generates income-earning opportunities for the poor.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what opinions have been expressed by the Government to senior officials of the European bank for reconstruction and development on the bank's financial problems.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: In discussion with the EBRD senior officials and fellow members, we have consistently emphasised that the bank—like any other public sector organisation—has a duty to use the tax payer's resources as cost effectively as possible. We have welcomed the findings of the recently published report of the bank's

audit committee, which makes a number of proposals to strengthen financial procedures and controls. The bank's financial position remains strong—it made a small operating profit in 1992.

Structural Adjustment Programmes

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 1 March, *Official Report*, column *23*, what is the proportion of total United Kingdom aid which goes to each of the countries which are currently implementing a World bank or International Monetary Fund structural adjustment programme.

Mr. Lennox Boyd: The information requested for the countries listed in my earlier answer is contained in the table.

United Kingdom bilateral aid in 1991-92 to countries implementing IMF/World Bank—supported adjustment programmes.

Country	*Aid in £'000*	*Percentage of total gross bilateral aid*
Algeria	336	0·03
Bangladesh	57,731	5·35
Bolivia	3,951	0·37
Brazil	2,710	0·25
Colombia	3,789	0·35
Cote d' Ivoire	5,358	0·50
Egypt	13,406	1·24
Ethiopia	19,099	1·77
Gambia, The	5,812	0·54
Ghana	44,716	4·14
Guyana	5,811	0·54
Honduras	1,468	0·14
India	136,386	12·63
Jamaica	7,511	0·70
Jordan	3,122	0·29
Kenya	37,987	3·52
Lesotho	6,453	0·60
Malawi	23,153	2·14
Morocco	2,029	0·19
Mozambique	18,087	1·68
Nepal	16,664	1·54
Nicaragua	206	0·02
Pakistan	37,239	3·45
Philippines	7,357	0·68
Senegal	1,560	0·14
Sierra Leone	2,275	0·21
Sri Lanka	11,249	1·04
Tanzania	32,454	3·01
Uganda	26,960	2·50
Zambia	34,425	3·19
Zimbabwe	47,671	4·42
Total: Developing countries	616,975	57·14
Bulgaria	1,149	2·15
Czech and Slovak Federal Rep.	7,013	13·14
Hungary	6,315	11·83
Poland	10,734	20·11
Total: Central and Eastern Europe	25,211	47·23

Source: British Aid Statistics 1987-88 to 1991-92.

Russia

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of aid to Russia goes in the form of British manufactured goods and how much in direct cash payments; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We make no direct cash payments to Russia under the British bilateral aid programme; nor do we deliver aid in the form of British manufactured goods. The know-how fund transfers key British skills through technical co-operation projects.

Development Institutions

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will provide a table setting out, for each year since 1982, the total contribution made by Her Majesty's Government to each of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Development Association, the International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development bank, the African Development bank and the Asian Development bank; and, in each case, what Her Majesty's Government's contribution represents as a percentage of the annual income and expenditure of each institution.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The table sets out United Kingdom contributions to each of the institutions. United Kingdom shareholdings in most of the institutions are determined at the time of periodic capital increases or of replenishments of concessional funds. In the case of the International Monetary Fund, the United Kingdom's stakeholding is determined by its quota, which is effectively a loan remunerated at a market-related interest rate. Multilateral development bank operations are funded mainly by borrowings on the international capital markets. Expressing contributions as a percentage of annual income and expenditure is of marginal utility, therefore, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

United Kingdom contributions to multilateral institutions 1982-1991

(£'000)

	1982	*1983*	*1984*	*1985*	*1986*	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*
IBRD	—	1,600	28,146	3,764	26,888	20,168	6,561	12,646	10,255	11,782
IDA	153,481	203,860	169,218	124,438	118,557	133,000	207,000	169,500	173,000	188,866
IFC	—	—	—	—	8,177	4,129	3,558	3,728	250	430
MIGA	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,098	—	—	—
IMF	230	—	10	—	59	22	8,626	17,060	46	3,189
AfDB	—	2,204	2,204	2,204	2,313	2,310	329	1,706	1,839	1,936
AfDF	3,750	2,452	8,442	2,955	8,096	7,217	6,374	5,341	11,232	10,265
AsDB	—	1,394	1,424	1,334	1,524	775	1,172	703	703	706
AsDF	4,399	4,321	7,882	14,190	12,384	10,729	13,045	19,775	16,504	19,054

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
IADB	679	667	1,195	1,585	1,793	1,869	1,491	1,281	774	503
IADB:FSO	4,585	4,110	7,316	11,666	9,689	5,346	3,001	1,020	1,401	—

Notes:

1. The IMF figures shown are for United Kingdom contributions to various facilities, including, from 1988 on, the enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF) interest subsidy account.
   In common with other members, the United Kingdom's principal contribution to the IMF is in the form of a loan, the "quota", on which is paid a market-related rate of interest. As part of the 1983 general quota increase, the United Kingdom increased its loan by SDR 1,806·5 million. As part of the 1992 general quota increase, the United Kingdom increased its loan by a further SDR 1,220·6 million. At the current rate of exchange between the £ and SDR, these amounts are equivalent to approximately £1·7 billion and £1·1 billion respectively.
2. Acronyms
   IBRD: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development ("World Bank"); IDA: International Development Association; IFC: International Finance Corporation; MIGA: Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency; IMF: International Monetary Fund; AfDB: African Development Bank; AfDF: African Development Fund; AsDB: Asian Development Bank; AsDF: Asian Development Fund; IADB: Inter-American Development Bank; IADB FSO: IADB Fund for Special Operations.

HEALTH

NHS Trusts

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the names and occupations of the chairs and non-executive directors of each national health service trust in each regional health authority other than the Wessex and Northern regions.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Knowsley, North (Mr. Howarth) on 20 July at column *121*.

Generic Drugs

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will estimate the savings obtainable if all drugs were prescribed generically.

Mr. Sackville: An estimate, based on prescribing statistics for 1992 in England, suggests that savings of up to £80 million could have been achieved if all drugs which could have been dispensed in the generic form had been prescribed generically.

Psychiatric Care

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* woman, *(b)* men and *(c)* people from an ethnic minority were sectioned by section, under the mental Health Acts; and how many admissions there have been in each of the last five years.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally. Information on the number of admissions by gender and sections of the 1983 Mental Health Acts and other Acts is shown in the table.

Formal admissions to NHS facilities, Private Nursing Homes (authorised to detain patients under the Registered Homes Act 1984) and Special Hospitals of patients detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 and other legislation, by legal status England 1985-1989-90

England — *Numbers*

Legal status	Numbers (a)									
	1985		1986		1987-88		1988-89		1989-90	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total formal admissions (d)	8,153	9,134	7,904	8,792	8,004	8,773	8,247	8,993	8,614	8,698
Under Mental Health Act 1983:										
Non-offenders										
2 (assessment, with or without treatment)	3,121	4,780	3,416	4,971	3,716	5,151	4,047	5,468	4,301	5,233
3 (to hospital for treatment)	943	1,161	902	1,075	1,193	1,349	1,322	1,535	1,437	1,580
4 (for assessment in emergency)	1,525	1,939	1,205	1,581	945	1,251	885	1,145	826	1,042
5(2) (power to hold informal patient already in hospital)	130	137	129	148	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mentally disordered offenders										
35 (remanded to hospital for report)	114	32	158	43	188	46	240	59	230	54
36 (remanded to hospital for treatment)	28	5	26	7	31	7	28	1	33	5
37(4)(convicted person detained in a place of safety pending admission to hospital)	-	-	-	-	62	18	59	25	68	18
37 (convicted person sent to hospital for treatment with S.41 restrictions) (b)	157	22	150	20	230	45	175	41	194	41

Legal status	Numbers (a)									
	1985		1986		1987-88		1988-89		1989-90	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
37 (convicted person sent to hospital for treatment without S.41 restrictions)	646	127	640	131	403	106	404	72	516	101
38 (interim hospital order)	33	12	34	6	43	11	55	8	59	12
44 (patient committed to hospital pending Crown Court hearing for restriction order)	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	—	—	—
46 (detained during Her Majesty's pleasure)	2	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	3	—
47 and 48 (prisoner transferred to hospital with S.49 restrictions)	20	5	27	4	47	11	76	8	99	6
47 and 48 (prisoner transferred to hospital without S.49 restrictions)	46	13	71	11	44	8	56	10	41	7
Place of safety orders										
135 (warrant to remove to a place of safety)	80	56	58	57	22	36	33	50	35	47
136 (removal by police from a public place to a place of safety)	1,070	763	867	656	742	533	670	492	562	473
Previous legislation (Fifth Schedule)	34	19	30	22	5	3	—	1	1	—
Other Acts (c)	23	11	10	6	148	160	30	39	48	47

Notes:
(a) Figures for 1985-86 were collected by the mental health inquiry from all mental illness. mental handicap hospitals and units and were based on calendar years. Figures from 1987-88 refer to the financial year and were collected on form KH15 from NHS facilities. Data for special hospitals are also on a calendar year basis for 1985-89.
(b) These figures for 1985-1986 include section 37(4)
(c) "Other Acts" includes Criminal Procedure (Insanity) Act 1964, section 47 of the National Assistance Act 1948, sections 1, 2 or 12 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1969 and section 3 of the Powers of Criminal Courts Act 1973.
(d) Data for special hospitals by sex are only included in the total number of formal admissions.
—nil or negligible.
not collected.
. not available.

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she now expects to publish the Reed committee report on high security psychiatric care.

Mr. Bowis: Later in the year.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to complete the review of funding for those people needing psychiatric care; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Bowis: Conclusions following our review of legal powers on the care of mentally ill people in the community will be announced shortly.

Wandsworth (Operations)

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the number of operating theatre sessions held and cancelled in the Wandsworth health authority in each of the last three years.

Mr. Sackville: The information is shown in the table.

Scheduled sessions—all specialties

Year	Number
Held	
1990	7,842
1991	7,057
1992	7,776
Cancelled	
1990	492
1991	545
1992	733

Novel Surgical Procedures

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account will be taken in the budget of the NHS central research and development committee standing group on health technology of its new function in reviewing and regulating novel surgical procedures.

Mr. Sackville: Following the Advisory Council on Science and Technology report on medical research and health, the central research and development committee standing group on health technology has been asked to advise on a strategy to achieve appropriate control and monitoring of new surgical procedures, taking account of the roles and responsibilities of health professionals, their professional bodies, and local and central management in the reformed national health service. Until a mechanism is identified and agreed, it is not possible to estimate the

resources that may be required to support the work of the steering group and its advisory panels or to fund the research it recommends.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what powers the NHS central research and development committee standing group on health technology will have to control the introduction and dissemination of novel surgical procedures.

Mr. Sackville: The standing group on health technology will advise on new technologies where, because of their potential risk, cost, ethical implications or other relevant factors, there is a particular need to control diffusion until more information is available. The management executive of the national health service is currently considering how diffusion of such technologies can best be controlled. Following the Advisory Council on Science and Technology report on medical research and health, the central research and development committee standing group on health technology has been asked to advise on a strategy to achieve appropriate control and monitoring of new surgical procedures, taking account of the roles and responsibilities of health professionals, their professional bodies, and local and central management in the reformed NHS.

Midwives

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will give the number of midwifery staff whole-time equivalents in each of the last five years.

Mr. Sackville: The information is shown in the table.

Year	*Midwifery staff*
1987	23,300
1988	23,310
1989	22,940
1990	23,770
1991	23,040

Notes:

Figures for England, as of 30 September and are quoted in whole-time equivalents.

Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Figures include hospital and community midwives, senior nurses/midwives and directors of nursing services working within midwifery, and student midwives.

London Family Health Service Authorities

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what were the allocations for staff premises and computing for each family health services authority in the area covered by the London implementation group for 1992-93 and 1993-94.

Mr. Sackville: The information is not available centrally. Allocations for staff, premises and computing for individual family health services authorities within the London initiative zone are determined by the relevant regional health authority in accordance with its assessment of local needs and priorities.

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what were the total development moneys allocated for 1992 and 1993-94 to each FHSA covered by the London implementation group and provided for in "Making London Better".

Mr. Sackville: Allocations of development monies to family health services authorities are determined by the regional health authorities in accordance with their assessment of priorities for the improvement of primary health care services.

Qa Business Services

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if her Department was consulted by West Midlands regional health authority in 1989 on *(a)* the content of the Wraith and Casey market research report into the potential west midlands customer base for Qa Business Services and *(b)* the West Midlands regional health authority's own estimates of potential redundancies in the management services division consequent upon its privatisation.

Mr. Sackville: We are not aware that any such consultation took place.

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what further consideration her Department will give to making available financial assistance to the ex-employees of Qa Business Services on the lines of those given to civil servants transferred to TICC Ltd. on the privatisation of the Skills Training Agency;

(2) what representations her Department has received regarding the announcement by West Midlands regional health authority on 15 July that it had no legal or moral responsibility to provide financial compensation to the ex-employees of Qa Business Services; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: We regret that individuals have experienced financial loss following the collapse of Qa Business Services Ltd. in 1991. West Midlands regional health authority has examined the issue carefully; they have met with a group of former Qa employees on several occasions and invited them to submit any information they held which could substantiate a claim for compensation. After a full and exhaustive review of this evidence, West Midlands regional health authority concluded on the 15 July 1993 that, on present evidence, there was insufficient grounds for the regional health authority to accept responsibility for making compensatory payments. We have been kept fully informed on this issue and on the basis of the evidence available to us at this time we have accepted the region's conclusion. We have recieved no representations on this issue since 15 July.

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information her Department held on the future commercial viability of Qa Business Services when it announced that Qa Business Services had been given the waiting list initiative contract on 27 February 1991.

Mr. Sackville: This contract was awarded to Qa Business Services on the basis of its previous work for the Department on the management of waiting lists.

West Midlands RHA

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations her Department received from the legal department of West Midlands regional health authority in November 1991 concerning the sale of the regional health authority's management services division.

Mr. Sackville: We are not aware that the Department received any such representations in November 1991.

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information her Department has on whether the actions and decisions taken by West Midlands regional health authority officers in pursuit of the privatisation of the regional health authority's management services division were fully documented; and whether proper reporting procedures were fully adhered to.

Mr. Sackville: Information of this nature is provided through the statutory audit process. The management buy-out of the region's management information services division was covered in the district auditor's report of 15 April 1993. A copy of this report was sent to the Department.

Diabetic Eye Disease

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy that all diabetics are screened annually for diabetic eye disease.

Mr. Sackville: Since 1 July this year general practitioners will receive separate fixed payments for organising a programme of chronic disease management either for diabetes or asthma. Practices choosing to participate are required to ensure that on initial diagnosis and at least annually a full review of the patient's health is carried out including checks for potential complications. A joint Department of Health/British Diabetic Association task force on diabetes has been established to consider all aspects of the St. Vincent recommendations and will be considering what, if any, further advice should be offered on screening for diabetic retinopathy.

Staff Pensions

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what specific guidance her Department issues to regional and district health authorities on the protection of pension rights of staff transferred to employment in the private sector; and whether such guidance includes reference to the consideration of the consequences upon newly founded company pension schemes of the early collapse of companies.

Mr. Sackville: Advice has been issued to all national health service employers about overall terms and conditions of employment, including pensions, when an undertaking is transferred. NHS employers are also asked to issue to all staff leaving the NHS pension scheme, a leaflet which explains the pensions options open to them. This leaflet advises staff to think carefully before making any decision affecting their pension rights and, if unsure, to seek independent financial advice. A copy of "NHS Pension Scheme—Leaving the Scheme" will be placed in the Library.

Children's Homes

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to publish new guidelines concerning the management of difficult children in residential care homes.

Mr. Bowis: On 28 April 1993 the Department published guidance on permissible forms of control in children's residential care, which is available in the Library. In addition, we have commissioned the Open university to produce a catalogue of training material for staff who have to deal with difficult adolescents.

Hearing Aids

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hearing aids were supplied *(a)* by the NHS and *(b)* privately in each year for the past 10 years (i) in total and (ii) to people aged over 64 years.

Mr. Bowis: The number of hearing aids issued to national health service hearing aid centres since 1984 is shown in the table. No data are available prior to 1984 or on private provision.

Number of hearing aids issued to NHS hearing aid centres 1984-93

	Number
1984-85	601,203
1985-86	595,676
1986-87	640,949
1987-88	694,731
1988-89	628,470
1989-90	626,065
1990-91	591,468
1991-92	591,049
1992-93	591,228

Counterfeit Medicines

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information her Department has concerning *(a)* the current state of progress of the proposed EC directive on the distance selling of medicines and *(b)* the extent of the trade in the United Kingdom and the EC in counterfeit and reimported medicines.

Mr. Sackville: A European Commission proposal for a directive on distance selling is under discussion in Brussels. A first reading of the Commission's proposal has been completed. The European Parliament has recently submitted its opinion on the proposal. The Commission is now revising the text of the proposal to take account of that opinion and of the views of member states. It is expected the discussions of the revised text will begin in Brussels in September.

There has been one instance of a fake medicinal product in the last 12 months in the United Kingdom which was intercepted before it reached the public. Records are not maintained of medicinal products legitimately reimported.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health where the counterfeit medicines discovered in the United Kingdom during the last three years were produced.

Mr. Sackville: Three instances of fake medicines have been discovered in the last three years. Production sources were never proven but investigators believed that the products came from a variety of sources.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures her Department is taking to ensure that counterfeit and copycat versions of British medicines illicitly produced in Northern Cyprus are not reaching the NHS market.

Mr. Sackville: Any report of alleged counterfeit or copycat version of British medicines illicitly produced in northern Cyprus reaching the national health service market would be immediately investigated by the Medicines Control Agency. In addition, the agency

undertakes regular inspections of wholesale distribution and independently samples a range of products available to the public. Both inspection and sampling procedures include mechanisms to identify possible suspect products.

Mr. Dalyell: The ask the Secretary of State for Health what support the United Kingdom Government have given to the World Health Organisation campaign against counterfeit medicines.

Mr. Sackville: The United Kingdom Government are in regular contact with World Health Organisation (WHO) and actively support its campaign against counterfeit medicines. The United Kingdom has been at the forefront in assisting WHO with the development of a unified scheme for the certification of medicinal products which are traded internationally. The Medicines Control Agency shares with WHO its own experiences and strategies gained from investigations into counterfeit medicines.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in her Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Sackville: The information at 24 May is as follows:

	Number
Administrative Assistants	6
Administrative Officers	17
Executive Officers	81
Higher Executive Officers	58
Senior Executive Officers	30
Senior Principal Technical Officers	2
Unified Grade 7s	29
TOTAL	223

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list all those services or functions contracted out in her Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Sackville: Whether or not the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) applies in any particular case will depend on the specification for the work to be carried out and the contractor's own proposals for meeting the specification. Since November 1991, the following services and functions have been contracted out as a result of market testing, and have not been affected by TUPE:

Department of Health
Office and building services, Quarry house
Catering and building services, Skipton house
The health survey for England

National Health Service Estates Agency
Clerical and secretarial support services

Geriatric Beds

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the number of long-stay geriatric beds in England in total and by health authority each year from 1985; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Bowis: Information collected by the Department on numbers of geriatric beds does not separately identify those used for continuing care.

Racial Discrimination

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS employees or applicants for employment have won actions or had their actions settled in their favour for racial discrimination in selection or dismissal in the NHS in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

NHS Trusts Federation

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money the NHS Trusts Federation receives *(a)* from her Department and *(b)* from NHS trusts.

Mr. Sackville: The National Health Service Trusts Federation does not receive funding from the Department. Subscriptions from NHS trusts are a matter for the NHS Trusts Federation.

Water Disconnections

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what studies she has commissioned into the health consequences for families of having their water supplies disconnected; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: None.

Surgical Operations

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of surgical operations were carried out outside normal working hours in each of the last five years.

Mr. Sackville: The number of surgical operations carried out outside normal working hours is not available centrally. The table shows the percentage of operations performed outside scheduled sessions—ie notional half days, usually within the working day, Monday to Friday.

Year	*Percentage of operations outside scheduled sessions*
1987-88	16·3
1988-89	16·2
1989-90	16·2
1990-91	16·7
1991-92	16·0

Source: KHO8.

Young People

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints have been made by or on behalf of children and young people under the provision of the National Health Service (Service Committees and Tribunals) Regulations 1974 in each year since 1985.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints from children have been received to date by each social services department in England under section 26 of the Children Act 1989.

Mr. Bowis: The first report to Parliament of the working of the Children Act 1989, a copy of which is available in the Library shows that, at 30 June 1992, 3,810 complaints in total had been received of which 542 were from children. Information is not available centrally by local authority.

Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been identified as having contracted Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease according to the most recently available figures; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: Figures are contained in the second annual report on Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) in the United Kingdom produced by Dr. R. G. Will and colleagues from the national CJD surveillance unit, Edinburgh. The table shows definite and probable cases of CJD notified to the unit during the first three years of the prospective study:

Definite and probable cases of CJD in the United Kingdom

	Number
1 May 1990 to 30 April 1991	32
1 May 1991 to 30 April 1992	37
1 May 1992 to 30 April 1993	48

The figures for 1990-91 and 1991-92 update those in the first annual report.

Although there has been a rise in the annual incidence of cases of CJD notified to the unit, the report concludes that this is not statistically significant and is likely to be related to increased ascertainment of cases. The report also confirms that there has been no significant change in the epidemiological or clinical characteristics of CJD since the occurrence of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). A preliminary analysis of dietary history provides no convincing evidence of an increase in incidence of CJD in relation to possible dietary exposure to BSE. It will, however, be necessary to continue the study into the incidence of CJD for a decade or more to detect any change in the pattern of the disease.

Copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Anthrax Vaccine

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many locations are licensed for the *(a)* manufacture and *(b)* storage of anthrax vaccine.

Mr. Sackville: Two sites in England are licensed for the manufacture of anthrax vaccine and five sites for its storage.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has commenced into side effects of the administration of *(a)* anthrax vaccine and *(b)* penicillin-resistant anthrax vaccine; and what were the results.

Mr. Sackville: Anthrax vaccine is a licensed product in accordance with the Medicines Act 1968. As with all licensed medicinal products, administering physicians are expected to report all serious suspected adverse reactions to the Committee on the Safety of Medicines, using the "yellow card" system. Such reports are carefully scrutinised and followed up where necessary. Penicillin resistance or sensitivity of an infecting organism is not related to vaccine composition.

Centre for Applied Microbiological Research

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will place in the Library the corporate and business plans for the special health authority covering the Centre for Applied Microbiological Research;

(2) if she will place in the Library the accounts and corporate plans of the Centre for Applied Microbiological Research for the last three years and the current corporate plan, indicating if they are separate plans and reports or incorporated within the Public Health Laboratory Service reports;

(3) if she will list the chair and members of the special health authority covering the Centre for Applied Microbiological Research, together with their salaries, and other remuneration and their other present or previous occupations and employment;

(4) what resources are allocated to the Centre for Applied Microbiological Research in 1993-94; and what resources were allocated to it as part of the Public Health Laboratory Service in 1991-92 and 1992-93.

Mr. Sackville: The centre remains part of the Public Health Laboratory Service board (PHLSB) until its functions are transferred to a new body: it is likely that this will not be until after the end of this financial year. It obtains resources from a variety of sources, including sales of products under a distributorship and marketing agreement with Porton Products Ltd., contracts with other commercial companies and public sector bodies, and funding through the PHLSB for work undertaken for the board. It has not in the past published its own corporate plan, although it is referred to within the plans produced by the PHLSB. No chairman or members of a new authority have yet been appointed. However Mr. J. E. Everitt, at present chairman and chief executive of Vickers Medical, is acting as chairman-designate to steer the establishment of the new body.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many employees there are at the Centre for Applied Microbiological Research currently; and what were the figures for 1 April of each year since 1990.

Mr. Sackville: The information requested is:

Year	*Number*
1 April 1990	461
1 April 1991	440
1 April 1992	467
1 April 1993	457
1 July 1993	459

Porton International

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the agreement between the Government and Porton International comes to an end; and what was the revenue to her Department arising from the agreement in each of the last three financial years.

Mr. Sackville: The distributorship and marketing agreement between Porton Products Ltd. and the Public Health Laboratory Services board (PHLSB) can be terminated by either side in October 1998. The revenue arising to the PHLSB from the agreement was £3·7 million in 1990-91, £6·8 million in 1991-92 and £6·9 million in 1992-93.

NHS Trust Directors (Political Affiliations)

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what are her guidelines to regional health authorities and NHS trust chairpersons on vetting applications for NHS trust directors with respect to political party affiliation.

Mr. Sackville: My hon. Friend the Minister of Health has written to regional health authority chairmen seeking their recommendations for appointment of national health service trust non-executive directors, and providing guidance on the criteria to be followed. This guidance does not cover the issue of political affiliation: we do not seek information on this. People are appointed to health authorities and trusts for their personal qualities, and for the skills they bring to the management and strategic direction of the NHS trust. Copies of the guidance will be placed in the Library.

Nursing Education

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the responsibilities of regional health authorities for funding nurse education; and what monitoring is given to the discharge of these responsibilities.

Mr. Sackville: Regions use top-sliced funds to purchase the training places required by employers to ensure the number of qualified staff matches the demand employers identify. Regular monitoring is carried out through the national health service management executive.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the ring-fenced money allocated to regional health authorities to provide nurse pre-registration courses has actually been used for this purpose; and to what use any not so used has been put.

Mr. Sackville: In 1992-93, all the money allocated for pre-registration nurse training was used as intended.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nursing students there were in each of the four Thames regions, in the years 1990, 1991 and 1992.

Mr. Sackville: The figures show that the number of nursing students in each of the Thames regions as at 31 March 1990, 1991 and 1992.

	1990	*1991*	*1992*
North East Thames	6,030	5,730	6,310
North West Thames	3,940	3,740	4,150
South East Thames	4,170	4,300	4,460
South West Thames	2,830	2,740	2,810

Notes:
(1) The figures include those in pre-registration nursing, district nursing and district enrolled nursing courses.
(2) All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many students are projected to enter nursing education in each of the four Thames regions in the years 1993, 1994 and 1995.

Mr. Sackville: The four Thames regions will commission 5,767 training places for nursing in 1993-94. Information is not available centrally for projections to be made for 1994-95 and 1995-96.

Paediatrics

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many consultant paediatricians and senior registrars specialising in paediatrics are in post on a full-time equivalent in England and Wales.

Mr. Sackville: The available information is shown in the table.

Consultant and senior registrar paediatricians England and Wales at 30 September 1991
Paediatric Specialties

	Whole-time equivalent
Consultants	828·4
Senior Registrars	184·8

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* consultant paediatricians and *(b)* senior registrars specialising in paediatrics currently employed in England and Wales were trained in (i) the United Kingdom, (ii) other European Community countries and (iii) countries outwith the EC.

Mr. Sackville: The available information is shown in the table.

Consultant and senior registrar paediatricians by country of qualification in England and Wales—30 September 1991
Paediatric specialties

	United Kingdom	*Other European Community countries*	*Elsewhere*	*Total*
Consultant	812	8	81	901
Senior registrar	179	3	31	213

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many vacant posts of consultant paediatricians and senior registrars specialising in paediatrics have been notified in each of the past five years; on average how long it takes to fill such posts; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The available information is shown in the table.

Number of vacant posts for consultant and senior registrar paediatricians at 30 September 1987 to 1991 (England and Wales)

Year	Consultants	Senior Registrars
1987	14	6
1988	18	6
1989	22	9
1990	33	10
1991	30	6

Notes:
1. Data on time to fill such posts are not available.
2. Paediatrics is known to be a shortage specialty and the number of senior registrar posts is being increased.

General Practitioners (Drug Prescribing)

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish a table setting out the total of the amount by which general practitioners' expenditure on prescribed drugs exceeded indicative limits in each year since 1990.

Mr. Sackville: The indicative prescribing scheme started in April 1991, therefore figures for 1990-91 are not available. Information for 1991-92 and 1992-93 is shown in the table.

	1991-92 £	1992-93 £
Indicative amount	2,231,489,967	2,367,401,869
Expenditure	2,414,708,258	2,545,374,139
Difference	+183,218,291	+177,972,270

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to bring the budget for general practitioner prescriptions within the cash-limited budgets of health authorities or health commissions; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The cost of drugs prescribed by general practitioner fund holders are contained within fund-holding budgets, which in turn form part of the cash limited hospital, community and family health services budgets of regional health authorities. We have no plans to extend these arrangements to non-fund-holding general practitioners.

Locum Doctors

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will require all national health service provider authorities and trusts to take up references on applicants for locum clinical appointments; and if she will make a statement;

(2) if she will make a statement on the arrangements whereby locum doctors are appointed in the hospital service.

Mr. Sackville: Health authorities and national health service trusts are responsible for the appointment of locum doctors in the hospital service. There are clear guidelines from the Department, designed to ensure that locum doctors are of an adequate standard to carry out the duties required of them. These include both checks on qualifications and references from previous employers. Copies of the guidelines (EL(89)P/148 and EL(92)53) are available in the Library.

GP Fund Holders

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will provide an estimate for the value of funding allocations retained by general practitioner fund holders at the year end.

Mr. Sackville: This information will not be available until the final 1992-93 accounts have been audited.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 20 July, *Official Report*, column *14*, if she will estimate expenditure on trusts for 1993-94.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Greenwich (Mr. Raynsford) on 17 May at column *29*.

District Health Authority

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the average annual cost per whole-time equivalent at *(a)* current and *(b)* 1986-87 prices in each year from 1986-87 of an executive member of a district health authority.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Complaints Review

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she has appointed the members of the complaints review she announced at 18 June.

Mrs. Virginia Bottomley: I am pleased to announce that the following have agreed to be members of the National Health Service Complaints Review Committee chaired by Professor Wilson:

Professor Judy Allsop, Professor of Health Policy, South Bank University; member, Citizen's Charter Complaints Task Force.

Dr. Ewen Bramwell, General Practitioner.

Mr. Chris Dabbs, Chief Officer, Salford Community Health Council.

Mr. Steve Forster, Personnel Director, London and Scandinavian Metallurgical Co. Ltd; member, Rotherham FHSA.

Mrs. Vivienne Harpwood, Head of Medico-legal Department, University College of Wales, Cardiff.

Mrs. Deirdre Hutton, Chair, Scottish Consumer Council.

Mr. John James, Chief Executive, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster FHSA.

Mr. Pat Killen, Managing Director, Tyrone Crystal; Chairman, Northern Ireland Citizen's Charter Board.

Mr. Bruce MacGillivray, Consultant in Clinical Neurophysiology, Royal Free Hospital Trust.

Rabbi Julia Neuberger, Chair, Camden and Islington Community Trust; Vice President, Patients Association.

Ms Irene Scott, Nurse Executive Director, Christie Hospital

Empty Homes

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many vacant bed spaces were identified in the task force on empty homes as being in the ownership of NHS Estates but unsuitable for commercial or social lettings; and how many of them were *(a)* in nurses' hostels, *(b)* in doctors' residences, *(c)* inside hospital grounds, *(d)* outside hospital grounds and *(e)* in each regional health authority area.

Mr. Sackville: Vacant bed spaces in hostels were generally considered by the task force to be unsuitable for commercial or social lettings. Based on a survey which covered about 75 per cent. of the national health service, it is estimated that at 1 December last year there were 11,400 vacant hostel places, of which 9,280 were inside, and 2,120 outside hospital grounds. Analysis of this information by nurses' hostels, doctors' residencies and regional health authority area are not available. Ownership responsibility for NHS staff residential accommodation lies with health authorities and trusts. The Department is issuing guidance which will include examples of good practice to encourage and assist NHS authorities to make use of empty places wherever practicable.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many empty bed spaces identified by her Department for the empty homes task force were *(a)* in hostels with shared facilities where all the bed spaces are vacant, *(b)* in hostels with shared facilities where some of the bed spaces are occupied and *(c)* in hostels or homes without shared facilities.

Mr. Sackville: From the survey carried out last year, it is estimated that across the national health service at 1 December the number of empty bed spaces were *(a)* 200, *(b)* 11,200 and *(c)* 3,700. These figures include properties being refurbished, due for demolition, and in the process of disposal as well as those available for letting.

Dentistry (Sterilisation)

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consideration she has given to the provision of additional funding to NHS dental practices to cover the cost of heat-sterilising handpieces between the treatment of each patient.

Mr. Sackville: The Department reimburses in full to the profession, on an average basis, all dentists' national health service practice expenses. In 1987-88, 1988-89 and 1989-90 the health Departments, in their discussions with the profession in the dental rates study group (DRSG), explicitly recognised that dentists were likely to incur additional expenses for cross infection control and extra money was made available in those years. From 1990-91 onwards, any additional costs incurred from 1987-88 to 1989-90 are included in the baseline of dentists' practice expenses used by the DRSG to forecast dentists' future expenses and would have been reimbursed in the normal way.

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what data are held by her Department in relation to the different sterilisation practices employed by NHS dental practitioners for the cleaning of dental handpieces and the number of dentists who use each technique.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Alcohol and Drug Treatment

Mr. Rathbone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of whether sufficient residential treatment is now available for people with alcohol or drug problems;

(2) how many residential services for people with alcohol or drug problems have deregistered with their local authority since January; and how many bed spaces this involves;

(3) when she will make available the report from Goldsmiths college on the implementation of community care and its impact on the provision of residential treatment for people with alcohol or drug problems.

Mr. Bowis: Comprehensive information on residential services for people who misuse alcohol and drugs and on the scale of deregistration is not available centrally. It is expected that some data on these aspects of services provision will be included in the report by Goldsmiths college which has been commissioned to monitor the impact of community care on service provision for alcohol and drug misusers during the first three months of implementation. A copy of the report will be placed in the Library shortly.

Ultrasound

Mrs. Wise: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she had made of the evaluation carried out as to the long-term safety of ultrasound exposure of the foetus and newborn; and on what studies she had based her conclusions.

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* The available evidence on the safety of ultrasound in pregnancy is contained in the publication "Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth" (1989), a copy of which is available in the Library. It concluded that:

"so far, there is no evidence that ultrasonography in human pregnancy has any harmful biological or physical effects."

Details of trials conducted since 1989 are included in the Oxford database of perinatal trials. Copies of extracts from the database relating to ultrasound will be placed in the Library.

An ad hoc group of the Chief Medical Officer's radiological advisory committee is currently examining the general safety of ultrasound.

Hypnotherapy

Mrs. Ray Michie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans there are to introduce standardisation of training techniques, registration on a community basis and certification for hypnotherapists; if she will give details of her Department's response to the British Medical Association's report "Complementary Medicine —New Approaches to Good Practice"; and if she will make a statement about her Department's view of hypnotherapy services and their funding.

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* We support the efforts of reputable training institutes in hypnotherapy to develop standards of training, voluntary registration and certification of hypnotherapists. The

British Medical Association's report will make a significant contribution to aiding understanding in the field of complementary medicine and we shall consider its recommendations with interest and care. Hypnotherapy is, in some cases, already provided in the national health service as an adjunct to other treatment by doctors, dentists, psychologists and other health care professionals. We are currently reviewing these matters to examine whether there is a further role for Government in promoting safe and competent practice in this field.

NATIONAL HERITAGE

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Sproat: The Government continue to help small businesses through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

My Department has been an active participant in the Government's deregulation initiative. It is undertaking a thorough review of the impact of regulations, from whatever source, on the business sectors in which it has a policy interest, and I have recently commissioned a report on deregulation and the tourism industry, which includes a large number of small businesses. The Department will undertake a risk analysis and full compliance cost assessment before putting forward any new regulatory measures which might affect business, and aims to maintain and improve its links and consultation arrangements with businesses operating within the areas where I have a policy interest.

The Department's fundamental review of the public library service will reflect the extent to which public libraries play a key role in the provision of information for small businesses.

Businesses of various sizes have been successful in tendering competitively for the provision of contracted out services, in supplies and works for the Department, its agencies and its non-departmental public bodies.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Sproat: There are no staff employed in the automatic data processing functional specialism in the Department of National Heritage or its agencies.

Victoria County History

Mr. Alan Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what steps he is taking to ensure that sufficient financial support for the continuation of the Victoria county history.

Mr. Sproat: I am aware of the concerns about funding for the Victoria county history (VCH) and I know that my hon. Friend visited the Secretary of State for National Heritage with colleagues last December.

Funding for the VCH does not fall to the Department of National Heritage, but rests with the university of London and the county councils. However, my Department recognises the valuable work being done by the VCH and has identified some possible sources of additional funding, details of which have been passed to the Institute of Historical Research, which manages the project.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage (1) what arrangement his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape;

(2) what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Brooke: The Department of National Heritage keeps under review the need to make information available to blind and partially sighted people.

Last year, the Department made available Braille copies of the popular version of the BBC consultation document issued by the Department.

Royal Parks

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage when the next stage of the review of the royal parks will commence.

Mr. Sproat: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Royal Parks Agency under its chief executive, Mr. David Welch. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. R. Boyce to Mr. Nick Raynsford, dated 26 July 1993:

In the absence of the Chief Executive, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for National Heritage has asked me to reply to your Written Parliamentary Question asking:

When the next stage of the Review of the Royal Parks will commence.

The Review group chaired by Dame Jennifer Jenkins have recently completed their report on St. James's Park, The Green Park and Regent's Park. The programme for future reviews is still to be decided.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Church of England

45. **Mr. Mackinlay:** To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will make it his policy to review the amount of time given by Parliament to, and the cost to Parliament of, the consideration of Church of England matters.

Mr. Newton: I have no plans to do so.

Sittings of the House

46. **Mr. Skinner:** To ask the Lord President of the Council whether he is now in a position to respond to the report from the Select Committee on Sittings of the House (House of Commons Paper 20 of Session 1991-92).

50. **Mr. Ian Bruce:** To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will make a statement on the progress of amending the hours of sittings of the House.

Mr. Newton: In the light of further discussions I have had with the right hon. Member for Derby, South (Mrs. Beckett) I will want to consider how we might take this forward. I regret that we have been unable to make more progress before the recess.

Parliamentary Questions

47. **Mr. Jacques Arnold:** To ask the Lord President of the Council what proposals he has to implement the recommendations of the Procedure Committee's report on parliamentary questions, first report of 1992-93 (HC 687).

Mr. Newton: The Government are presently considering its further response to the Procedure Committee report in the light of that Committee's revised recommendations following the Government's original response.

Departmental Staff

48. **Mr. Purchase:** To ask the Lord President of the Council what is the total number of staff employed in his office; and how many are men and how many women.

Mr. Newton: The total number of staff employed in the Privy Council Office is 33 of which 16 are women. In my private office the figures are seven and four respectively.

Iraq

49. **Mr. Dalyell:** To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will set up a Select Committee to consider whether the House should be consulted before further military action is taken against Iraq.

Mr. Newton: No. Ample opportunity already exists for discussion of these issues and, in fact, I understand the hon. Member has one of the Consolidated Fund debates later this evening on matters relating to Iraq.

Nursery Facilities

Mrs. Helen Jackson: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if he will make a statement on the progress of the survey of possible users of nursery facilities within the Palace.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: The Administration Committee has reached agreement on which company should conduct the survey of potential demand for child care facilities. Arrangements are being made for the preparation of a questionnaire which will be circulated in the autumn to Members, their staff, staff of the House, and others employed on the parliamentary estate.

PRIME MINISTER

Japan (Visit)

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what specific representations he received from Japanese non-governmental organisations on *(a)* nuclear non-proliferation, *(b)* international trade in plutonium and other nuclear explosives and *(c)* nuclear waste management assistance for Russia, during his visit to Japan for the recent G7 summit.

The Prime Minister: I did not receive any representations from non-governmental organisations on these issues during my recent visit to Japan.

Sustainable Development

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to his answer of 19 May 1992 to the hon. Member for Harlow (Mr. Hayes), *Official Report*, column *113*, if he will list the members of the new ministerial committee on the environment, referred in paragraph 4.5 of the consultation paper "UK Strategy for Sustainable Development"; how often it intends to meet; and if he will provide details of its remit.

The Prime Minister: The remit and membership of the ministerial committee on the environment remain as stated in my answer of 19 May 1992, *Official Report*, column *113*. Meetings take place as necessary.

Drug Misuse

Mr. Rathbone: To ask the Prime Minister if he is satisfied with the present arrangements for co-ordinating Government action on drug misuse between the different Departments of State; and what proposals he has to improve them.

The Prime Minister: The Government are committed to bringing forward proposals to improve further the co-ordination of the control of drug misuse. Options are currently under consideration.

Top Salaries Review Body

Mr. Wolfson: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the Top Salaries Review Body.

The Prime Minister: The name of the Top Salaries Review Body (TSRB) has been changed to the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB). At the same time the Review Body's terms of reference have been revised. Both these changes have been introduced at the Review Body's request, and have been agreed with it. The revised terms of reference are as follows:

"To advise the Prime Minister on the remuneration of holders of judicial office; senior civil servants, senior officers of the armed forces; and such other public appointments as may from time to time be specified.

The Prime Minister may also ask the Review Body to advise from time to time on the pay and pensions of Members of Parliament and their allowances; Peer's allowances; and on the pay, pensions and allowances of Ministers and others whose pay is determined by a Ministerial and other Salaries Order.

Procedures

The Review Body will make other recommendations as it sees fit

in order that the level of remuneration for the groups covered by its remit is sufficient to ensure, over time, the recruitment and retention and motivation of suitably able and qualified people to exercise their different responsibilities;

to ensure that, as appropriate, the remuneration for the remit groups relates coherently to that of their subordinates, encourages efficiency and effectiveness, and takes account of the different management and organisational structures which may be in place from time to time;

to relate reward to performance where appropriate;

to maintain the confidence of those covered by the Review Body's remit that its recommendations have been properly and fairly determined; and

to ensure that the remuneration of those covered by the remit is consistent with the Government's equal opportunities policy.

In making recommendations, the review body shall consider any factors which the Government and other witnesses may draw to its attention. In particular it shall have regard to:

differences in terms and conditions of employment between the public and private sector and between the remit groups, taking account of relative job security and the value of benefits in kind;

changes in national pay systems, including flexibility and the reward of success; and job weight in differentiating the remuneration of particular posts; and

the need to maintain a broad linkage between the remuneration of the three main remit groups, while allowing sufficient flexibility to take account of the circumstances of each group.

The Review Body will take account of the evidence it receives about wider economic considerations and the affordability of its recommendations."

Overseas Visits

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister how many overseas visits he has made since he assumed office; and if he will list the venue, the duration, the purpose and the cost to public funds of the visits.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 22 July 1993]*: The information requested is as follows:

Venue	*Duration*	*Purpose*	*Cost (£)*
Italy	13-15 December 1990	European Council	60,805·00
USA	20-22 December 1990	Bilateral	33,871·00
Saudi Arabia	6-8 January 1991	Bilateral	45,098·00
Oman	8-9 January 1991	Bilateral	
Egypt	9 January 1991	Bilateral	
France	14 January 1991	Bilateral	1,857·00
France	20 January 1991	Bilateral	1,165·00
Germany	11 February 1991	Bilateral	1,388·00
Soviet Union	4-5 March 1991	Bilateral	50,352·00
Germany	11 March 1991	Anglo-German Summit	3,153·00
Bermuda	15-16 March 1991	Bilateral	24,670·00
Luxembourg	8 April 1991	Informal European Council	8,107·00
France	24 June 1991	Anglo-French Summit	10,422·00

Venue	Duration	Purpose	Cost (£)
Luxembourg	28-29 June 1991	European Council	45,323·00
Spain	2-13 June 1991	Holiday	9,560·00
USA	27-30 August 1991	Bilateral	53,951·00
China/Russia	1-6 September 1991	Bilateral	196,844·00
France	11-12 September 1991	Bilateral	10,325·00
Netherlands	18 September 1991	Bilteral	962·00
Zimbabwe	14-22 October 1991	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting	199,488·00
Italy	7-8 November 1991	NATO Summit Meeting	54,600·00
Germany	10 November 1991	Bilateral	1,340·00
Italy	27 November 1991	Bilateral	7,947·00
Germany	27 November 1991	Bilateral	
Netherlands	1 December 1991	Bilateral	1,736·00
Republic of Ireland	4 December 1991	Bilateral	2,684·00
Netherlands	8-10 December 1991	European Council	64,371·00
USA	30-31 January 1992	United Nations Security Council Meeting	58,928·00
Poland	25-26 May 1992	Bilateral	53,757·00
Czechoslovakia	26-28 May 1992	Bilateral	
Hungary	28-29 May 1992	Bilateral	
Germany	5 June 1992	Bilateral	1,012·00
USA	6-9 June 1992	Bilateral	318,146·00
Colombia	9-10 June 1992	Bilateral	
Brazil	10-12 June 1992	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development	
Portugal	25-27 June 1992	European Council	64,458·00
Germany	6-8 July 1992	G7 Economic Summit	140,908·00
Finland	9-10 July 1992	CSCE Summit	41,612·00
Spain	7-9 August 1992	Olympic Games	79,469·00
Spain	16-17 September 1992	Bilateral	2,293·00
France	30 September 1992	Bilateral	4,346·00
Egypt	23-25 October 1992	50th Anniversary Commemoration of El Alamein	74,616·00
Belgium	23 November 1992	Bilateral	7,041·00
Italy/Greece	27-28 November 1992	Bilateral	14,512·00
Luxembourg	30 November 1992	Bilateral	14,908·00
Spain	30 November to 1 December 1992	Bilateral	
Portugal	1 December 1992	Bilateral	
Denmark	2 December 1992	Bilateral	9,570·00
Netherlands	6-7 December 1992	Bilateral	8,148·00
Republic of Ireland	7 December 1992	Bilateral	
France	15-16 December 1992	European Parliament Plenary	7,910·00
Canada	17-18 December 1992	EC/Canada Talks	120,775·00
USA	18-20 December 1992	EC/United States Talks	
Bosnia	22 December 1992	Visit British Forces	10,828·00
India	23-28 January 1993	Republic Day Celebrations	179,512·00
Oman	28 January 1993	Bilateral	
Saudi Arabia	28 January 1993	Bilateral	
USA	23-25 February 1993	Bilateral	46,696·00
Switzerland	5-6 April 1993	Bilateral	n/a
Austria	6 April 1993	Bilateral	
France	27-28 May 1993	Bilateral	n/a
Denmark	20-22 June 1993	European Council	n/a
Japan	5-9 July 1993	G7 Economic Summit	n/a

n/a = Not yet available.

Deregulation (Construction Industry)

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the outcome of the meeting held on 20 July with representatives of the deregulation task force on the construction industry.

The Prime Minister *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* On 20 July I chaired a progress meeting on deregulation attended by Ministers and permanent secretaries from regulatory Departments, Lord Sainsbury and all the task force chairmen. We welcomed progress on specific deregulation measures to reduce the burden on business. Ministers agreed to address changes requiring primary legislation as soon as parliamentary time permits. Ministers also agreed to publish "Working with Business: A Code for Enforcement Agencies" and a report on the operation of European Community law in the United Kingdom; to review how duplication between enforcement agencies might be eliminated; to require a small business litmus test of the impact on them of any new regulations; and to set up an eighth task force focusing on charities and voluntary organisations.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Health and Safety Training

34. **Mr. Spellar:** To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, as representing the House of Commons Commission, what representations he has received about health and safety training for staff of the House.

Mr. Beith: None.

POLIS

35. **Mr. Fabricant:** To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, as representing the House of Commons Commission, what measures are being taken to facilitate the provision of POLIS within Members' offices via the parliamentary data and video network; and when the network will be extended to the Norman Shaw buildings.

Mr. Beith: The parliamentary data and video network is at present available to Members on the lower floors of Millbank and a small number of Members outside via a telephone link. The network has been authorised only as a pilot phase and is currently being reviewed by the Information Committee, which hopes to report later this year.

Any plans to extend the network, including POLIS, to the Norman Shaw buildings or elsewhere will need to await approval of the service by the House, following the report from the Information Committee and the provision of the necessary funds in the estimates.

Members' Children (Recess)

39. **Mr. Hanson:** To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, as representing the House of Commons Commission, what recent representations he has received about providing additional facilities for Members' children during the parliamentary recess; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Beith: The Commission itself has received no such representations on this issue. Details of the Westminster holiday play scheme, in which the children of Members, their staff and staff of the House may participate, were publicised in the all-party notice and circulated to staff. In addition, progress is being made in the preparation of a questionnaire, which will be circulated in the autumn, as part of a survey to determine potential demand for child care facilities.

Costs

40. **Mr. Flynn:** To ask the Chairman of the Finance and Services Committee what new proposals he has to reduce the costs for which the House of Commons Commission are responsible.

Mr. Channon: As part of its responsibility to improve the financial management of House Departments and to prepare the draft estimates for the House of Commons votes, the Finance and Services Committee continually seeks to improve the value for money of services provided to the House. Recent initiatives by House Departments which it has supported include revised arrangements for the telephone operator service and the introduction of least-cost routing; and the use of desk-top publishing in the Refreshment Department. The Committee has asked the Administration Committee to study the provision of documents, stationery, and office supplies to hon. Members with a view to reducing costs, and looks forward to receiving its recommendations. Other areas of expenditure will be examined in due course in consultation with the relevant domestic committees, Heads of Department and the internal auditor.

The level of expenditure on House services is affected by the degree of activity of the House, its Committees and individual Members. This matter is reviewed in more detail in the Fifteenth Annual Report of the Commission, to be published on 6 September as House of Commons Paper No. 820.

Terrace Dining Rooms

41. **Mr. Pickthall:** To ask the Chairman of the Finance and Services Committee what representations he has received about the use of the income from the use of the Terrace Dining Rooms.

Mr. Channon: None, although the use of income derived from banqueting services in the Terrace Dining Rooms was included in the Committee's review of the Refreshment Department trading fund.

SCOTLAND

Police Authority

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what method of election or appointment he will introduce for members of the new Police Authority arising from the proposed changes to local government in Scotland.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: All new councils in Scotland will be police authorities and their members will be elected in the usual way. Where police force areas cover more than one council area there will be joint police committees for those forces made up of representatives from the councils in the force area.

Transport Responsibilities

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has held with regional councils in Scotland relating to the transfer of their transport responsibilities following the move to single-tier authorities.

Mr. Stewart: My right hon. Friend has discussed a range of subjects related to local government reform, including transport issues, with a number of regional councils and other local authority interests. In addition we have paid careful attention to the many responses to our consultation paper, "Shaping the New Councils", from regional councils and others, which discussed transport arrangements under the new single-tier structure.

Community Care

Mr. Gallie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps he proposes to take to ensure that full use is made of the independent sector in the development of community care policy.

Mr. Lang: Two of the key objectives of our community care policy are the development of a flourishing mixed economy of care, alongside good quality public services, and securing better value for money. In order to achieve this I issued a direction on choice of residential care and I have asked all social work authorities to provide information about how this is implemented. I also consider it necessary that social work authorities should be aware of the full cost of their own provision and that this information should be publicly available. Under my powers under section 199 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 I am asking all authorities to let me have a statement of the full costs of their homes and will emphasise the need to have full regard to value for money when making decisions on the purchase of residential care places.

I am monitoring closely, through statistical returns made to my Department, the level of use of the independent sector by local authorities and in the light of this will consider whether any further action is needed.

Hospital Re-admissions

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish rates of re-admission to hospital following discharge.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* As I indicated in reply to the hon. Member's question on outcome measurements on 14 July 1993 at column *519*, pilot outcome measures including 28-day emergency re-admission rate after discharge from medical specialties were included in the discussion document "Clinical Outcome Measures" issued on 7 July 1993, a copy of which has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Yugoslavia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions took place at the meeting of the EC Foreign Ministers on 19 July regarding economic and diplomatic sanctions against the Republic of Croatia; what proposals on this issue were tabled by the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Foreign Ministers of the European Community agreed in Brussels on 19 July to consider withdrawing Croatia's preferential trading benefits with the European Community, in view of Croatia's continued involvement in the conflict in Bosnia. Croatia will have to change its ways if it wishes to have the kind of relationship that it seeks with the European Community.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will expel the Croatian ambassador to London and recall Her Majesty's ambassador to Zagreb in protest at the Croatian Government's support for the Bosnian-Croat regime.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Such measures are not under consideration. But as Heads of Government made clear at the Group of Seven economic summit in Tokyo, the Croats and the Serbs risk placing themselves beyond the pale of the international community and stronger measures cannot be excluded. European Community Foreign Ministers also agreed in Brussels on 19 July to consider the withdrawal of Croatia's preferential trading benefits with the European Community, in view of Croatia's continued involvement in the conflict in Bosnia.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received of conditions at Fojnica children's hospital in central Bosnia; how many children were found abandoned in the hospital; how many children have either died or are in a critical condition; what representations Her Majesty's Government plan to make to Alija Izetbegovic concerning the actions of his forces at Fojnica; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We share the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' concern about the desperate plight of the patients in the hospital in Fojnica. This is a further example of how innocent civilians have suffered as a result of the conflict in Bosnia. We have repeatedly urged all parties to respect the rights and interests of civilians.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the relationship between United Nations Security Council resolution 820 and World Health Organisation resolutions 41.31 and 42.24; what restrictions there are on the importation of medicines and medical equipment into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: United Nations Security Council resolution 820 is fully compatible with the terms of the World Health Assembly resolutions 41.31 and 42.24. Medical supplies and foodstuffs are specifically exempted from the sanctions imposed on Serbia and Montenegro under United Nations Security Council resolution 820.

Supplies intended strictly for medical purposes are permitted to enter Serbia and Montenegro under United Nations Security Council resolutions 757 and 820 following notification to the Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 724.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made of the effect on the economy of *(a)* Romania and *(b)* Hungary of the economic sanctions applied against the former Yugoslavia; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The economies of Romania, Hungary and other neighbouring countries have suffered damage from sanctions against former Yugoslavia. It is difficult to quantify this, particularly given the problem of isolating the effects of sanctions from the other factors influencing these economies. In our view, the international financial institutions, especially the International Monetary Fund, are the best placed to make this assessment. This they are already doing as part of their regular activities and programmes with these countries. We have been active in encouraging the IMF's efforts in this area.

We have also strongly supported action by the Yugoslav Sanctions Committee under the provisions of article 50 of the United Nations charter. The Committee, and subsequently the Security Council, has endorsed Romanian, Hungarian and other requests for assistance under article 50. Their recommendations have included a request that the international financial institutions be invited to consider how their assistance programmes and facilities might be helpful to affected states.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the total number of detainees in Bosnia-Herzegovina held in *(a)* Serbian prisons or camps, *(b)* Muslim prisons or camps and *(c)* Croat prisons or camps; and what is his estimate in each case of the number of detainees who are civilians.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) regularly visits 1,098 prisoners held by Bosnian Serbs in detention camps in Bosnia, 951 held by Bosnian Muslims and 398 held by Bosnian Croats. No figures are available as to how many of these are civilians.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees regarding the establishment by Bosnian-Croat forces of a detention camp for Muslim males at the Mostar heliodrome; how many are estimated to be detained; what requests have so far been made to visit these prisoners by UNHCR or the International Committee of the Red Cross; what response such requests have had; and if he will publish the reports he has received regarding this detention camp; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have received no reports on this centre from UNHCR. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) regularly visits 15 prisoners held by the Bosnian-Croats in a detention centre at Mostar Rodoc, but we have received no details of ICRC's findings, in accordance with its rules over confidentiality.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the total number of prisons and camps currently operating in Bosnia-Herzegovina; how many are under the control of *(a)* Muslims, *(b)* Croats and *(c)* Serbs; and to how many such camps or prisons in each case international organisations have been denied access.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) regularly visits six places of detention under the control of Bosnian Croats: 15 places of detention under the control of Bosnian Muslims; and 13 places of detention under the control of Bosnian Serbs. ICRC suspect that further places of detention in unknown locations may exist.

Bougainville

Dr. Marek: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is his policy towards the conflict in Bougainville.

Mr. Goodlad: We regard the conflict in Bougainville as an internal matter for the Government of Papua New Guinea, but we have made known to the PNG authorities our concern that a lasting solution should be achieved by peaceful means.

Dr. Marek: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Government of Papua New Guinea about access for humanitarian organisations including the International Committeee of the Red Cross to Bougainville.

Mr. Goodlad: There have been no such discussions. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) withdrew from Bougainville after operating an emergency relief programme between April 1991 and February 1992 which the IFRC reported to have achieved most of its set objectives.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Goodlad: There are 155 officers in the FCO and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Ninety-eight are in the diplomatic wing, in the following grades:

Grade	*Number*
SEO	16
HEO	25
EO	15
AO	8
AA	1
DS7M	8
DS9	18
DS10	7

Forty-six in the Overseas Development Administration, in the following grades:

Grade	*Number*
SEO	1
HEO	11
EO	22
AO	12

Eleven in the Natural Resources Institute (an ODA agency), in the following grades:

Grade	*Number*
HEO	3
EO	4
AO	4

United Nations Arms Register

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many countries from the far east have deposited their entries for the United Nations arms register.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: To date we understand that 10 countries from the Asia Pacific region have submitted data to the United Nations register of conventional arms. The United Nations Secretary General will report in the autumn on the register's first year of operation and on the data received from member states. The United Nations Resolution establishing the register requests that such data be forwarded to the United Nations Secretary General. We do not therefore see copies of other member states' returns as a matter of course. With our European partners, we are actively encouraging those states who have yet to submit data to do so.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Her Majesty's Stationery Office has a broad-ranging licence with the Royal National Institute for the Blind for the ad hoc reproduction of any Her Majesty's Stationery Office publication without fee, including Foreign Commonwealth Office material when published with HMSO.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Inquiries to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Overseas Development Administration from members of the public who identify themselves as blind or partially sighted are infrequent, but are dealt with by telephone.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Goodlad: The tables list the computer consultancies employed by the diplomatic and aid wings of the Department and its agencies since November 1991. The total cost in each wing is £7,252,824 and £430,803 respectively. In the diplomatic wing the consultancies have been employed on the implementation of the information systems strategic plan, at home and overseas. The tasks include feasibility studies, programme and project management, baselining and enhancements to systems, software development and installation, contingency planning and information technology training, and systems maintenance. More detailed information on the tasks of individual consultancies could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Diplomatic Wing Computer Consultancies

Transaction Point
Computer Park
Stoy Hayward Consulting
Lynwood Scientific Dev Ltd.
Griffin Factors Ltd.
NCR Ltd.
International Factors Ltd.
International Computers Ltd.
Towngate Software Ltd.
Eurostar HQ
Duhig Berry Ltd.
Computer Learning Centres Ltd.
Compass
SAS Software Ltd.
James Duncan and Associates
Desoft UK Ltd.
Hogg Robinson (GFA) Ltd.
Mega Consultancy
Digitus Ltd.
Admiral Computing Ltd.
J. M. Consulting Ltd.
Brookgate Solutions
Admiral Management Serv Ltd.
Churchill Software Ltd.
The SSADM College Ltd.
Ernst and Young
S. R. L. Data
Hoskyns Group PLC
UCL UK Ltd.
Nameprime Ltd.
Sema Group Systems Ltd.
Uni Tech Complete Computing
TMS Computer Authors Ltd.
Sema Group Consulting Ltd.
Crownshield Computers Ltd.
Casu Elec Ltd.
Insight Consulting
Ferranti International PLC
BT Customer Services
Human Aspects Ltd.
Griffiths Associates Ltd.
Office Network Solutions Ltd.
Firman Jack Ltd.
Consult
BIS Applied Systems Ltd.
Logica UK Ltd.
Secure Information Systems Ltd.
Informix Software Ltd.
Praxis Systems PLC
Videcom Customer Services Ltd.
KRCS Group PLC
B. H. Blackwell Ltd.
IBM United Kingdom Ltd.
The Thomas Cook Group Ltd.
F. W. Kensett and Son
Price Waterhouse
Siemens Nixdorf Info Sys Ltd.
CSC Computer Sciences Ltd.
OSPL Group
Phoenix Tech Publications Ltd.
Coopers and Lybrand
Magic Computer Services Ltd.
Lombard Natwest Factors Ltd.
Digitext Ltd.
Easams Ltd.
Triad Special Systems Ltd.
Fraser Williams (London) Ltd.
Electronic Fac Design Ltd.
ITIMF Ltd.
C. K. Brightwell
ITE Consultancy and Training Group
Paton-Brown Ltd.
Able Translations Ltd.
Instruction Set
M. Chadha
Manton Office Equipment
Kinesis Computing Ltd.
Wang (UK) Ltd.
Alphabyte Computer Systems
Learning Tree International Ltd.
Act Logsys Ltd.
Mang Services and Design Ltd.
Venture Factors PLC

Aid wing computer consultancies

	Consultancy
Rothesay Consulting	IT Strategy Study
Matrix Logic	Office Automation/Local Area Network
Charlton Associates	Training
Charlton Associates	Financial Analysis
O. C. Gardner and Co.	Training
BIS Information System	Training
HM Customs	Asycuda
S. P. D. Swan Consultants	Training
Enever Systems	System Analysis and Programme Support
Hewlett Packard	Network Consultancy
Patent Systems	Network Consultancy

	Consultancy
Minch Consultants	Network Consultancy
Matrix Logic	Network Consultancy
J. Hinks	IT Efficiency Review
A. Brazier	Monitoring and Backstopping Computer
M. Radosevic	Support for W.H.O.
D. Gostellow	Stores System
J. C. Shephard	Maintenance Systems
Dr. Smyrrell	Finite Element Analysis
M. Walmshley	Training
D. Filer	Data Management
J. Snell	Highway Computing and Assessment
Mr. Robertson	Lesotho Government Computer Centre

Armaments

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the increase in armaments of *(a)* China, *(b)* Japan, *(c)* the Korean peninsula and *(d)* Indochina over the past five years.

Mr. Goodlad: A number of countries in the Asia Pacific region are in the process of modernising their armed forces. As yet there is no significant increase in their power projection capabilities. Despite prospects for improved stability in Indo-China, potential troublespots remain in the Asia Pacific, not least North Korea.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Goodlad: We continue to place a high priority on helping small businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

Small firms are given full opportunity to bid for business with the Department. It is also our policy to pay invoices on time.

Business transacted by the Department with small firms in the United Kingdom has increased from £24·2 million in the financial year 1991-92 to £35·8 million in 1992-93. In 1992-93 26·9 per cent. of total expenditure on the purchase of goods and services was with small firms.

Israel

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, column 725, what approaches he has made to other members of the western European group in support of the admission of Israel.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have discussed Israel's membership of the Western European and Others Group on a number of occasions with our EC partners, to whom we have made our position clear.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Goodlad: Since November 1991, the diplomatic wing of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has contracted out the adminstration of the diplomatic service world-wide all risks insurance scheme and some aspects of purchasing services for office supplies and machinery. In neither case were the regulations applied. The aid wing has not contracted out any activities during this period.

Overseas Land

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list all the land overseas which is owned by the Government for non-military purposes, giving the number of hectares; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Goodlad: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office owns freehold land at the 144 overseas diplomatic posts listed.

The total land area of the compounds, office sites and residence sites in the list is about 240 hectares. The land area of the staff houses listed is not readily available, but is estimated to be of the order of 40 hectares. The balance of the land occupied by diplomatic posts overseas is held on various leasehold or condominium terms.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office keeps the overseas estate under continuous review, and rationalises its land holdings and disposes of any surplus land where it is practicable, necessary and cost-effective to do so.

Abu Dhabi: compound
Addis Ababa: compound
Alexandria: compound
Algiers: residence
Amman: office, residence, one staff house
Amsterdam: office, residence
Ankara: compound
Asuncion: residence
Athens: office, residence, two staff houses
Atlanta: residence, one staff house
Auckland: residence, two staff houses
Baghdad: compound
Bahrain: compound
Bangkok: compound
Banjul: residence
Belgrade: office, one staff house
Belmopan: office, residence, three staff houses
Berlin: site
Berne: office
Bogota: residence
Bonn: office, residence, two staff houses
Bordeaux: residence
Boston: residence
Brasilia: compound, seven houses
Bridgetown, residence, four staff houses
Brisbane: residence, one staff house
Brussels: residence, 15 staff houses
Bucharest: office
Budapest: residence, one staff house
Buenos Aires: office, residence, two staff houses
Cairo: compound, five staff houses
Calcutta: compound
Cape Town: residence, eight staff houses
Caracas: residence
Casablanca: site
Castries: residence

Chicago: two staff houses
Cleveland: residence
Colombo: office, two staff houses
Copenhagen: residence, 13 staff houses
Dakar: compound, two staff houses
Damascus: site, residence
Dar es Salaam: residence, 28 staff houses
Doha: compound
Dubai: compound
Dublin: office, residence, 14 staff houses
Durban: residence
Edmonton: residence
Gaborone: office, residence, eight staff houses
Geneva: residence, three staff houses
Georgetown, office, two staff houses
Guatemala City: residence
The Hague: office, residence, 10 staff houses
Harare: residence, 13 staff houses
Helsinki: office, residence, four staff houses
Ho Chi Minh City: office, residence
Houston: residence, one staff house
Istanbul: compound site
Jerusalem: compound
Johannesburg: residence, nine staff houses
Kabul: compound
Kampala: 11 staff houses
Karachi: compound
Kathmandu: compound
Khartoum: office, residence
Kingston: compound, six staff houses
Kingstown: office, residence
Kinshasa: compound, residence
Kuala Lumpur: compound, residence, four staff houses
Kuwait: compound
La Paz: office, residence
Lille: residence
Lilongwe: office, residence, 22 staff houses
Lima: residence, one staff house
Lisbon: office, residence, three staff houses
Los Angeles: residence, one staff house
Luanda: compound
Lusaka: residence, 23 staff houses
Luxembourg: residence
Lyons: residence
Madras: compound
Madrid: office, residence, 18 staff houses
Manila: residence
Maputo: office, residence, two staff houses
Marseilles: residence
Maseru: compound, four staff houses
Mbabane: office, residence, six staff houses
Melbourne: residence, three staff houses
Mexico City: office, residence
Montevideo: office, residence
Montreal: residence, one staff house
Munich: residence
Muscat: compound, 13 staff houses
Nairobi: residence, 17 staff houses
Naples: office/residence
Nassau: residence, two staff houses
Nicosia: office, residence, three staff houses
Osaka: residence
Oslo: compound, two staff houses
Ottawa: office, residence, 20 staff houses
Palma: residence
Paris: offices, residences, 15 staff houses
Perth: residence, one staff house
Port Louis: office, residence, four staff houses
Port of Spain: residence, five staff houses
Port Vila: one staff house
Prague: compound
Pretoria: office, residence, 23 staff houses
Quito: sites, residence
Rabat: residence
Rangoon: office, compound, one staff house
Reykjavik: site, residence
Riga: compound
Rome: office, residence
St. George's: residence
St. John's: residence
San Franciso: residence
San José: residence
Santiago: residence, six staff houses
Sao Paulo: residence
Seattle: residence
Seoul: compound, one staff house
Singapore: residence, one staff house
Sofia: residence
Stockholm: office, residence, two staff houses
Strasbourg: residence, one staff house
Suva: office
Sydney: residence, two staff houses
Tehran: compounds
Tel-Aviv: office, residence, nine staff houses
Toronto: residence, one staff house
Tunis: office, residence
Valletta: one staff house
Vancouver: residence
Victoria: residence
Vienna: office, residence, two staff houses
Vientiane: residence, six staff houses
Vilnius: compound
Warsaw: one staff house
Washington: office, residence, 25 staff houses
Wellington: offices, residence, 16 staff houses
Windhoek: office, residence, five staff houses
Zurich: residence

Libya

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has had from the Arab League about proposals for reviewing UN sanctions against Libya.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have received no such representations about the forthcoming sanctions review.

Nigeria

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is his policy towards Nigeria in the light of the failure of the military government to transfer power to democratically elected political leadership.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on 1 July at column *589*.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Nigerian authorities about the detention without charges of the author Mr. Ken Saro-Wiwa.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We are extremely concerned by the detention of Mr. Saro-Wiwa on charges of sedition and treason, and by reports that he has been denied proper medical treatment. The detention of Mr. Saro-Wiwa is only one of a number of recent detentions of civil and human rights activists by the Nigerian military authorities. These arrests have been carried out under military decrees. This is one of the reasons why we attach so much importance to the military handing over power to democratic civilian rule by 27 August.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Nigeria about their decision to hold fresh elections on 31 July.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The new national electoral commission has proposed the holding of fresh elections on

14 August. We have repeatedly made clear our wish to see a transfer to a democratic civilian administration by 27 August.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has received from the high commission in Nigeria about the outbreak of violence since the election; and what measures he is taking to ensure the safety of United Kingdom citizens in Nigeria.

Mr. Lennox Boyd: Our high commission reported widespread unrest and disorder in south-west Nigeria in late June and early July, from which a number of deaths resulted. We deeply regret the loss of life and very much hope that the current political crisis can be resolved without further bloodshed.

The British community in Nigeria has been advised, through the warden system, to exercise caution, and that residents without essential business, especially dependants, should consider advancing their summer leave plans and postponing school children's holiday visits to Nigeria.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will take action with other countries and with international organisations including the World bank and the International Monetary Fund to encourage General Babangida to implement the democratically expressed wish of the Nigerian people.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Throughout the current political crisis in Nigeria, caused by the annulment of the 12 June election results by the federal military Government, we have consulted closely with our partners and allies. The European Council and the United States have issued statements expressing their concern at the cancellation of the elections and the hope that the transition to democratic civilian rule will take place by 27 August, and have announced measures aimed at the Nigerian military similar to those taken by the United Kingdom on 24 June. The Commonwealth Secretary General and many other countries have also issued similar statements of concern, including Japan, Russia, Australia, Norway and Canada.

Freehold Land

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will list all the land overseas which is owned by the Government for non-military purposes, giving the number of hectares; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Goodlad: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office own freehold land at the 144 diplomatic Posts overseas, listed as follows.

The total land area of the compounds, office sites and residence sites in this list is about 240 hectares. The land area of the staff houses listed is not readily available, but is estimated to be of the order of 40 hectares. The balance of the land occupied by diplomatic posts overseas is held on various leasehold or condominium terms.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office keep the overseas estate under continuous review and rationalise its land holdings, and dispose of any surplus land, where it is practicable, necessary and cost-effective to do so.

Abu Dhabi: compound
Addis Ababa: compound
Alexandria: compound
Algiers: Residence
Amman: office, Residence, 1 staff house
Amsterdam: office, Residence
Ankara: compound
Asuncion: Residence
Athens: office, Residence, 2 staff houses
Atlanta: Residence, 1 staff house
Auckland: Residence, 2 staff houses
Baghdad: compound
Bahrain: compound
Bangkok: compound
Banjul: Residence
Belgrade: office, 1 staff house
Belmopan: office, Residence, 3 staff houses
Berlin: site
Berne: office
Bogota: Residence
Bonn: office, Residence, 2 staff houses
Bordeaux: Residence
Boston: Residence
Brasilia: compound, 7 houses
Bridgetown: Residence, 4 staff houses
Brisbane: Residence, 1 staff house
Brussels: Residences, 15 staff houses
Bucharest: office
Budapest: Residence, 1 staff house
Buenos Aires: office, Residence, 2 staff houses
Cairo: compound, 5 staff houses
Calcutta: compound
Cape Town: Residence, 8 staff houses
Caracas: Residence
Casablanca: site
Castries: Residence
Chicago: 2 staff houses
Cleveland: Residence
Colombo: office, 2 staff houses
Copenhagen: Residence, 13 staff houses
Dakar: compound, 2 staff houses
Damascus: site, Residence
Dar es Salaam: Residence, 28 staff houses
Doha: compound
Dubai: compound
Dublin: office, Residence, 14 staff houses
Durban: Residence
Edmonton: Residence
Gaborone: office, Residence, 8 staff houses
Geneva: Residence, 3 staff houses
Georgetown: office, 2 staff houses
Guatemala City: Residence
The Hague: office, Residence, 10 staff houses
Harare: Residence, 13 staff houses
Helsinki: office, Residence, 4 staff houses
Ho Chi Minh City: office, Residence
Houston: Residence, 1 staff house
Istanbul: compound site
Jerusalem: compound
Johannesburg: Residence, 9 staff houses
Kabul: compound
Kampala: 11 staff houses
Karachi: compound
Kathmandu: compound
Khartoum: office, Residence
Kingston: compound, 6 staff houses
Kingstown: office, Residence
Kinshasa: compound, Residence
Kuala Lumpur: compound, Residence, 4 staff houses
Kuwait: compound
La Paz: office, Residence
Lille: Residence
Lilongwe: office, Residence, 22 staff houses
Lima: Residence, 1 staff house
Lisbon: office, Residence, 3 staff houses
Los Angeles: Residence, 1 staff house
Luanda: compound
Lusaka: Residence, 23 staff houses
Luxembourg: Residence
Lyons: Residence
Madras: compound
Madrid: office, Residence, 18 staff houses
Manila: Residence
Maputo: office, Residence, 2 staff houses

Marseilles: Residence
Maseru: compound, 4 staff houses
Mbabane: office, Residence, 6 staff houses
Melbourne: Residence, 3 staff houses
Mexico City: office, Residence
Montevideo: office, Residence
Montreal: Residence, 1 staff house
Munich: Residence
Muscat: compound, 13 staff houses
Nairobi: Residence, 17 staff houses
Naples: office/Residence
Nassau: Residence, 2 staff houses
Nicosia: office, Residence, 3 staff houses
Osaka: Residence
Oslo: compound, 2 staff houses
Ottawa: office, Residence, 20 staff houses
Palma: Residence
Paris: offices, Residences, 15 staff houses
Perth: Residence, 1 staff house
Port Louis: office, Residence, 4 staff houses
Port of Spain: Residence, 5 staff houses
Port Vila: 1 staff house
Prague: compound
Pretoria: office, Residence, 23 staff houses
Quito: sites, Residence
Rabat: Residence
Rangoon: office, compound, 1 staff house
Reykjavik: site, Residence
Riga: compound
Rome: office, Residence
St. George's: Residence
St. John's: Residence
San Francisco: Residence
San José: Residence
San Salvador: Residence
Santiago: Residence, 6 staff houses
Sao Paulo: Residence
Seattle: Residence
Seoul: compound, 1 staff house
Singapore: Residence, 1 staff house
Sofia: Residence
Stockholm: office, Residence, 2 staff houses
Strasbourg: Residence, 1 staff house
Suva: office
Sydney: Residence, 2 staff houses
Tehran: compounds
Tel Aviv: office, Residence, 9 staff houses
Toronto: Residence, 1 staff house
Tunis: office, Residence
Valletta: 1 staff house
Vancouver: Residence
Victoria: Residence
Vienna: office, Residence, 2 staff houses
Vientiane: Residence, 6 staff houses
Vilnius: compound
Warsaw: 1 staff house
Washington: office, Residence, 25 staff houses
Wellington: offices, Residence, 16 staff houses
Windhoek: office, Residence, 5 staff houses
Zurich: Residence

TRANSPORT

Bus Station, London SE16

11. **Mr. Simon Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on London Transport's capital commitment to an enclosed bus station at Canada Water, London SE16.

Mr. Norris: I understand that LT is currently assessing the costs and benefits of building a roofed bus station at Canada Water.

Public Transport, London

12. **Mr. Carrington:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects next to meet the chairman of London Transport to discuss improvements to public transport in London.

Mr. Norris: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I meet the chairman of London Transport regularly to discuss a variety of issues, including future improvements and standards of service.

Rail Privatisation

13. **Mrs. Dunwoody:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the consultants who have been working on rail privatisation; and what is the cost to date of such consultants.

Mr. Freeman: I will write to the hon. Member with full details, but the Department employs 10 consultants. The cost for the financial year 1993-94 is estimated at £12 million.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the extent to which British Rail would be able to undercut private sector enterprises tendering for rail franchises.

Mr. Freeman: No such estimates are possible, but I am concerned that it would be very difficult to have a fair and equal competition if British Rail was a bidder.

Mr. Day: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ensure that the proposed creation of RailTrack in April 1994 and the introduction of a new track charging regime will not result in additional financial burdens falling on metropolitan local authorities.

Mr. Freeman: I have given a commitment to the metropolitan local authorities that, if the restructuring of the railway industry results in higher charges in 1994-95 for the service levels that they currently support, measures will be taken, including, if necessary, the payment of special grants, to ensure that these changes do not result in an additional financial burden falling on them in 1994-95. I will be discussing the position for future years with them.

Road Closures (City of London)

14. **Mr. Tony Banks:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to monitor the effect on other parts of London arising from the City Corporation's current road closure scheme.

Mr. Norris: I have a quasi-judicial role if a permanent scheme is brought forward and I am advised it would be improper for my Department to collect its own data. If the City of London Corporation does wish to make the scheme permanent, it will require the consent of the traffic director and will need to provide him with information about the effects on the strategic road network on all parts of London.

West Coast Main Line

15. **Mr. Olner:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he last met the chairman designate of RailTrack to discuss services on the west coast main line.

Mr. Freeman: Current services on the west coast main line are a matter for the British Railways Board.

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations Her Majesty's Government have made to European institutions with a view to securing financial support for investment in the west coast main line.

Mr. Freeman: We have recently announced the appointment of Hambros Bank Limited to examine the scope for a joint venture to renew the infrastructure of the west coast main line. During the course of its study it will undoubtedly examine closely the possible use of funds from European sources.

Air Pollution

16. **Mr. Win Griffiths:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement about the monitoring of transport related air pollution.

Mr. MacGregor: The Department of the Environment monitors air quality across a range of sites. It issues daily bulletins of recorded levels and a forecast of the next day's air quality.

My Department publishes annual calculations of emissions from the transport sector.

Fishing Fatalities

17. **Dr. Godman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fishermen, serving as crew members of United Kingdom registered fishing vessels, lost their lives in each of the past five years; and in how many cases of such fatalities vessels were lost.

Mr. Norris: The number of United Kingdom fishermen who lost their lives as a result of accidents to United Kingdom fishing vessels in the years 1988 to 1992 is 18, 19, 22, 25 and eight. The number of United Kingdom fishing vessels lost in those years is 22, 22, 17, 41, and 32.

Bypasses

18. **Mr. Devlin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bypasses he plans to start in the current financial year.

Mr. Norris: We plan to start 19 new bypasses in this financial year. Many of the 22 other schemes we plan to start this year will also remove traffic from local communities.

Merchant Marine

19. **Ms Eagle:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the prospects for the British Merchant Marine.

Mr. Norris: I refer the hon. Lady to the statement that I made in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Waterson) on Monday 28 June 1993, *Official Report*, column 642.

Docklands and Jubilee Lines Extensions

20. **Ms Gordon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects agreement to be reached to enable work to begin on both the Jubilee line extension and the Docklands light railway Lewisham extension.

Mr. Norris: Once negotiations have been satisfactorily concluded between LT and the parties involved with the financing of Canary Wharf on the basis of their contribution to the Jubilee line extension and once the Olympia and York Company comes out of administration, the Secretary of State will be able to authorise the start of construction.

A private Bill enabling construction of an extension of the Docklands light railway to Lewisham received Royal Assent on 27 May. We have made it clear that this scheme should be undertaken by the private sector. The means by which proposals can best be placed before investors, consistent with our manifesto commitment to privatise DLR as a whole, are under consideration.

Second Severn Bridge

21. **Mr. Roy Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of progress on the construction of the second Severn bridge; and what is the likely opening date.

Mr. Key: Good progress is being made on the construction of the second Severn bridge, which is on schedule for opening to traffic in spring 1996.

Bus Deregulation

22. **Mr. Pike:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies his Department has made of the effect of bus deregulation on through and joint ticketing schemes.

Mr. Freeman: No specific studies have been made of the effect of bus deregulation on through and joint ticketing schemes. Ticketing arrangements are a matter for operators and local authorities. Successful multi-operator ticketing schemes are in operation in the metropolitan areas and in several counties.

M4 (Widening)

23. **Mr. Simon Coombs:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the progress of his plans to widen the M4 between junctions 5 and 15.

Mr. Key: We expect to start public consultation in the autumn on a scheme for the improvement of the M4 between junctions 4B and 8/9. Work is proceeding satisfactorily on other commissions to study the need and options for increasing the capacity of the motorway between junction 8/9 and junction 15. Public consultation on these schemes will take place once this work is completed.

Train Leasing

24. **Mr. Rowe:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects British Railways Board to announce the results of the tender process for new trains under the recent £150 million leasing facility.

Mr. MacGregor: I expect British Rail to advise me of its decision within the next two months.

Motorway (Charges)

26. **Mr. Heald:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the plans of other European countries to impose charges for the use of their motorway networks.

Mr. Key: The Green Paper "Paying for Better Motorways" (Cm 2200) describes the charging systems for motorways already in use in a number of countries in Europe and elsewhere.

Since then, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands have announced their intention to develop a joint motorway permit system for heavy goods vehicles. Germany intends to begin field trials of the technology for electronic motorway charging in 1994. Several other countries are investigating the possibility of electronic charging.

British Rail Rolling Stock

27. **Mr. David Evans:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what was the total investment in British Rail rolling stock in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1992.

Mr. Freeman: Total British Rail investment in rolling stock in 1979 (excluding service vehicles) was £93 million (£232 million at 1992-93 prices). Total British Rail investment in rolling stock in 1992-93 (excluding service vehicles) was £386 million.

Bournemouth Central Station

28. **Mr. David Atkinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the restoration of Bournemouth Central station.

Mr. Freeman: I understand that British Rail hopes that work on the restoration of Bournemouth station can begin in 1996-97, and should take about 15 months to complete. This project will be the responsibility of Railtrack, which will own station freeholds.

Railways (Noise Insulation)

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the proposed noise insulation regulations for new railway lines will be issued for consultation.

Mr. Freeman: A consultation document about the draft regulations and associated technical memorandum will be issued shortly and copies will be placed in the Library of the House. I shall also be writing to all Members in the south east and London whose constituencies may be affected. The consultation period will extend until mid-November.

Rail Privatisation

Mr. Dunn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what role he envisages for the passenger transport authorities and passenger transport executives in the process of specifying and granting franchises for passenger railway services in their areas under the railway privatisation proposals; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Freeman: I have today written to Councillor Joe Clark, chairman of the Association of Municipal Authorities public transport committee, setting out the role we envisage for the passenger transport authorities and passenger transport executives under our railway privatisation proposals, in the following terms:

Letter from Mr. Roger Freeman to Councillor Joe Clarke:

It is our intention that under our railway privatisation proposals the PTAs and PTEs will continue to have essentially the same role as now in specifying local rail services and paying subsidy, where necessary, to support their specification.

But, as we have discussed, some changes to the present system are going to be necessary to ensure that PTAs and the PTEs fit in properly with the new, privatised structure of the railway, and I promised to write to you explaining how the new system would work.

Many of the trains that serve PTA passengers run on beyond a single PTA area, and it would not be operationally sensible to think of letting franchises covering only parts of a a service. That is why our proposal is that the PTAs and PTEs should be jointly involved with the Franchising Director in specifying and granting the franchises for their services.

That means PTAs/PTEs being fully involved in specifying the service to be franchised, with each PTE specifying the local services to be supported within its area in terms of service level, service quality and fares, and agreeing that specification with the relevant PTA. The Franchising Director will then invite tenders jointly with the PTE, evaluate the bids and negotiate alongside the PTE with prospective franchisees. The PTE will then sign the franchise agreement, subject to the relevant PTA havving agreed the terms.

The PTEs will need to agree with the Franchising Director how franchisees' performance is to be monitored to ensure that they are meeting their contractual obligations, and will be fully involved in the monitoring system, receiving all relevant information on the performance of the franchisee in respect of the services specified by the PTEs. The PTEs will be similarly involved with the Franchising Director in deciding jointly what measures should be taken where a franchisee fails to perform satisfactorily, including, ultimately, termination of the franchise agreement.

The PTAs/PTEs' service specifications will largely determine the trainpaths that will be needed by the franchisee to run their services, and the Franchising Director will involve the PTEs in negotiating the necessary access rights.

I hope this is helpful and reassures you that the PTAs and PTEs will have a full rôle to play in the privatised railway.

Bus Information

Sir Michael Neubert: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what studies are under way in his Department on the provision of information for bus users.

Mr. Freeman: The Transport Research Laboratory is conducting a research project for my Department to examine gaps in the current provision of information for bus users, the types of information passengers value most highly, and the extent to which cost-effective information provision can increase bus patronage. The project will include surveys in four selected study areas. The research should be completed next spring.

Concessionary Fares

Mr. Dunn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what provision he is making to require franchised train operators to participate in the concessionary fares scheme administered by passenger transport authorities, passenger transport executives and other local authorities in their respective areas.

Mr. Freeman: The way such schemes work is by ensuring that the operator of the services suffers no net loss as a result of participating in the scheme. We therefore expect that passenger railway service operators will be willing to participate on a voluntary basis following privatisation, as British Rail does now.

Nevertheless, under the new clause added to the Railways Bill at Committee stage in the House of Lords in respect of fares and discount schemes, every franchise

agreement will include a provision requiring the franchise operator to participate in, charge fares in accordance with, and otherwise comply with the requirements of discount fares schemes approved by the franchising director. The Secretary of State also intends to instruct the franchising director to include a provision in franchise agreements which will enable the franchising director to require franchisees to take part in local authority concessionary fares schemes, provided that there is no net cost to the franchisee or the franchising director. It would thus be possible for a local authority which wanted a franchisee to join its scheme to request the franchising director to invoke this provision in the franchise agreement.

It would also be possible for the PTAs/PTEs to seek to include a provision in the franchise agreements to which they are a party requiring the franchisee to join in their concessionary fares schemes.

Vehicle Inspectorate

Mr. Dunn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Vehicle Inspectorate Executive Agency annual report will be published.

Mr. Key: The inspectorate's annual report is being published today. Copies are being placed in the Library.

Official Travel

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he last travelled in an official capacity on a London midibus; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: My right hon. and hon. Friends and I regularly use various forms of public transport, including midibuses.

Large Goods Vehicle Driver Training

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to his answer of 17 November 1992, *Official Report*, column *161*, when he expects the Driving Standards Agency to publish an official learner syllabus for large goods vehicle drivers to help trainers and trainees; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The Driving Standards Agency, in collaboration with Her Majesty's Stationery Office, plans to publish a book for lorry drivers towards the end of the year. The book will contain not only the official recommended syllabus for learning to drive a large goods vehicle, but also useful information for trainers, experienced drivers and operators.

Lorry Weights

Mr. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many officers are authorised to check lorry weights in each local authority area; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: At 31 May 1993, 197 vehicle inspectorate (VI) traffic examiners were authorised by the chief executive to check lorry weights. Traffic examiners are integrated into VI"s district structure and it is not possible to give a breakdown by local authority area.

Weighing is also carried out independently by local authority trading standards officers and the police.

Mr. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many prosecutions were made against transport companies for overweight loads in each region for 1992 and 1993 to the most recent practicable date.

Mr. Key: The numbers of successful prosecutions obtained by the vehicle inspectorate against goods vehicle operators for overloading offences for the year 1992 and from 1 January to 30 June 1993 are given in the table. During 1992 the inspectorate implemented a change in policy; it now only normally prosecutes where the vehicle is overloaded by 10 per cent. or 1 tonne.

Traffic area regions	*Number of successful prosecutions*	
	1992	[1,2]*1993*
Eastern	378	143
North Eastern	1,289	411
North Western	774	309
Scotland	523	138
South Eastern	546	224
South Wales	155	54
West Midlands	417	218
Western	1,008	254
Total	5,090	1,751

[1]1 January to 30 June.
[2]These are provisional figures. Some data from this period has not yet been processed.

East London River Crossing

Mr. Dunn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what are his current plans for the route of the east London river crossing in the light of the exclusion of Oxleas wood from the original route; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: It is too early to say where and in what form future proposals will be developed. Any new proposals will be designed to have less impact on the local environment. As with all departmental road schemes, at the appropriate stages, there will be analyses of alternatives, full environmental assessments and, if necessary, a public inquiry.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Norris: The number of staff in the automatic data processing specialism, and in receipt of the ADP pay allowance, is set out in the table.

Department/Agency	*Grade*	*Number*
Department of Transport (central)	SEO	19
	HEO	36
	EO	42
	AO	22
Total		119
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	SEO	3
	HEO	12
	EO	5
	AO	37
	AA	267
Total		324

Department/Agency	*Grade*	*Number*
Drivers, Vehicles and Operators Information Technology Agency	SEO	32
	HEO	74
	EO	192
	AO	22
	AA	17
Total		337
Vehicle Inspectorate Agency	HEO	1
	EO	2
Total		3

Some more senior staff have responsibilities for ADP but are not separately recorded as ADP specialists.

Birmingham Relief Road

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will give details of land acquisition consequential upon the Birmingham northern relief road with particular reference to *(a)* land purchased to date, *(b)* the identity of the purchaser and current owner and *(c)* the amount of land still needing to be purchased.

Mr. Key: The Department has so far purchased 59 properties under the blight provisions since the original road proposals were announced in 1984; a further 16 are in the process of acquisition. The properties will remain in the department's ownership until they are taken for the road scheme or can be declared surplus and sold.

The compulsory purchase orders will be published this autumn and the total land required for the scheme is 596 hectares, of which 482 hectares are agricultural land.

The land already purchased in advance of the compulsory purchase orders (under the blight provisions) does not all fall within the boundaries of the land required for the scheme. Therefore, it would be disproportionately expensive to calculate the exact amount of land still required.

Crossrail

Mr. Deva: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what grants have been made under section 12 of the London Regional Transport Act 1984 or other powers, to London Regional Transport in respect of the acquisition of land blighted by the crossrail project under section 62 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991; and how much has so far been spent or authorised to be spent for this purpose since the Crossrail Bill was deposited in Parliament in November 1991.

Mr. Norris: A ring-fenced provision is made for all aspects of the Crossrail project. How in detail it is spent is a matter for London Regional Transport. I am advised that it has as yet purchased no blighted properties.

Mr. Deva: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has approved, under section 32(2) of the London Regional Transport Act 1984, the lines upon which London Regional Transport and the promoters of crossrail shall exercise their discretion under section 62 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 in relation to the acquisition by agreement of land in cases where it becomes apparent that the enjoyment of the land will be seriously affected by the carrying out or operation of the crossrail works.

Mr. Norris: No; London Regional Transport has made no proposal to my right hon. Friend in respect of its exercise of the power conveyed by section 62 of the Planning and Compensation Act.

Non-insured Vehicles

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is his estimate of the amount of revenue that is lost to the insurance industry each year through non-insured vehicles.

Mr. Key: The insurance industry's best estimate is that about 5 per cent. of all drivers are uninsured, though it is not possible to verify this figure. At that level, the industry estimate that they are losing about £375 million a year in premium income.

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures he is taking to limit the number of road tax evaders.

Mr. Key: The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency and the police are taking vigorous and effective action against vehicle excise duty (VED) evaders.

Last year over 435,000 evaders were penalised with £37·5 million recovered. In addition an estimated 180,000 evaders relicensed as a direct result of enforcement action, recovering a further £14 million. The number of evaders brought to book has steadily increased over the last 10 years and this trend is planned to continue. Factors involved include the streamlining of the enforcement effort following an efficiency scrutiny, the introduction of new technology, the continuing programme of joint campaigns with the police and most recently the red windscreen warning notice scheme.

Furness and Cumbria Coastal Lines

Mr. Hutton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects tenders to be invited to operate the Furness and Cumbria coastal lines.

Mr. Freeman: The Barrow to Carlisle line will be tendered as part of North-West regional railways. The precise timing will be decided by the franchising director after his appointment under the Railways Bill when it has received Royal Assent.

Civil Aviation (Competition)

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proposals he has to increase competiton in the civil aviation industry; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: The EC third package of aviation liberalisation measures, which came into effect on 1 January, has already created very considerable opportunities for competition in civil aviation in the European Community. The Government will remain keen to ensure that obstacles are not created to hinder airlines wishing to make use of these opportunities. Elsewhere, our aim is to increase the opportunities for competition by seeking to liberalise the United Kingdom's bilateral air service agreements.

Heathrow Airport

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on current Government policy towards a fifth Heathrow terminal.

Mr. Norris: The objectives for airports policy were set out in the 1985 White Paper "Airports Policy"; this noted that the possibility of a fifth terminal at Heathrow would be kept under review, without commitment. The Secretary of State for the Enviornment has called in the planning application for a fifth terminal at Heathrow airport lodged by BAA plc on 17 February 1993. This will be for joint decision by him and my Secretary of State following a public inquiry. Because of this quasi-judicial role, it would not be proper for me to comment on the proposal.

MV Avon

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will undertake appropriate inquiries concerning the cause of the incident at approximately 2 pm on Wednesday 21 July when the MV Avon, en route from Southampton to China, ran aground off Browndown, Gosport; and if he will publish his findings.

Mr. Norris: The accident is being investigated by the Department's marine accident investigation branch. Any lessons to be learnt and how best they can be promulgated and acted upon will be considered by the chief inspector of marine accidents on completion of the investigation; this may include publication of the inspector's findings.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Market Testing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he vets bids for market testing of contracts to establish whether firms' directors have been found to be unfit to act as directors; and what vetting procedures he institutes to check this.

Mr. Nelson: The names of directors of firms bidding for market testing contracts in Her Majesty's Treasury, are checked with Companies House prior to a shortlist being announced. Directors who are unfit to act must be removed from all dealings with their firm and cannot act in a similar capacity within other firms. In the event of the Treasury finding one of its shortlisted firms listing an unfit director, further investigations would take place, through Companies House and the firm itself, to ensure that the director was no longer associated with the firm. If this proved to be the case and the firm had a good reputation and references, it would still be considered for the contract. However if there was still a serious doubt about the firm and/or its directors, it would be removed from the shortlist.

Criminal Offences

Sir Richard Body: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criminal offences he has introduced in the last five years under delegated legislation.

Mr. Nelson: No central records are kept of information in the form requested. However, the available information shows that since 1988 the following instruments have created new criminal offences by way of delegated legislation:

(a) Regulations made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer: the European Communities (Restriction on Disclosure) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2779).

(b) Regulations made by Her Majesty's Treasury: the Banking Co-ordination (Second Council Directive) Regulations 1992 (S.I. 1992/3218).

(c) Regulations made by the Commissioners of Customs and Excise: the Customs and Excise (Common Transit) Regulations 1988 (S.I. 1988/1476); the Customs Controls on Importation of Goods Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2724); the Customs Warehousing Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2725); the Free Zone Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2727); the Statistics of Trade (Customs and Excise) Regulations 1992 (S.I. 1992/2790); the Statistics of Trade (Customs and Excise) (Amendment) Regulations 1993 (S.I. 1993/541); and the Customs and Excise (Transit) Regulations 1993 (S.I. 1993/1353).

All these regulations were made in exercise of powers under section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972.

Customs and Excise

Sir Richard Body: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will place in the Library copies of the recruitment leaflets in various Asian languages that were referred to in "News Update", issue No. 20, published in February by Her Majesty's Customs and Excise.

Sir John Cope: Copies of the brochures are being placed in the Library. They demonstrate the commitment of Her Majesty's Customs and Excise to equal opportunities and are aimed at the parents and advisers of ethnic minority school leavers.

VAT

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what is his estimate of the impact on VAT revenues if new residential housing construction was subject to VAT at *(a)* 5 per cent., *(b)* 8 per cent. and *(c)* 17½ per cent. in (i) 1993-94, (ii) 1994-95 and (iii) 1995-96;

(2) what would have been the impact on VAT revenues, if the rate of VAT for *(a)* new residential house construction and *(b)* home improvement and repair work had been respectively (i) 17½ per cent., (ii) 8 per cent., (iii) 5 per cent. and (iv) zero per cent. in 1992-93; and what is his estimate of the impact of such changes on VAT revenues in 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96;

(3) what is the expected total revenue from VAT in 1993-94 in respect of *(a)* all construction work and *(b)* home improvements and repair work; and what is his forecast for revenue in 1994-95 and 1995-96 from these sources;

(4) if he will publish a table showing the total revenue from VAT in respect of *(a)* all construction work and *(b)* home improvement and repair work in each year since 1985-86.

Sir John Cope: No estimates are available for the total revenue yield from all construction or for home improvement and repair work.

The estimates of the revenue yield from applying VAT to new residential house construction for 1992-93 and 1993-94 are as follows:

	1992-93	*1993-94*
(i) 17½ per cent.	1,800	1,700
(ii) 8 per cent.	800	800
(iii) 5 per cent.	500	500
(iv) 0 per cent.	0	0

No estimates have been made for beyond 1993-94. These estimates are approximate and subject to revision. Also, they make no allowance for the likely behavioural response to changing the rate of VAT applied to these items so the actual revenue effect could differ from the figures shown.

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what information he has as to the rates of VAT currently applicable to *(a)* new residential housing construction, *(b)* home improvement and repair work and *(c)* other construction work in each other country of the EC.

Sir John Cope: The information requested is shown in the table. The data given are the latest available.

VAT on new residential construction; repairs, maintenance and alterations; and other construction work in the EC

Country	*New residential housing construction* *Per cent.*	*Repairs, maintenance and alterations* *Per cent.*	*Other new construction work* *Per cent.*
Belgium	[1]19·5 [2]12·0	[2] 6·0 12·0	19·5
Denmark	[1]25·0	25·0	25·0
France	18·6	18·6	18·6
Germany	Exempt	15·0	Exempt
Greece	18·0	18·0	18·0
Ireland	12·5	12·5	12·5
Italy	[2] 4·0 19·0	19·0	19·0
Luxembourg	15·0	15·0	15·0
Netherlands	17·5	17·5	17·5
Portugal[3]	16·0 (12·0) [4] 5·0 (4·0)	16·0 (12·0) [4] 5·0 (4·0)	16·0 (12·0) [4] 5·0 (4·0)
Spain	[5] 3·0 [5] 6·0 15·0	15·0	15·0
United Kingdom	0·0	17·5	[6]17·5

[1] The standard rate applies to the sale of new buildings by a person who is a professional building contractor.

[2] The lower rate applies to subsidised housing.

[3] The rates in brackets apply to Madeira and Azores archipelagoes.

[4] The lower rate applies to contracted services relating to the construction of immovable property where the holders of the works contract are either (a) housing and building co-operatives providing that the services are contracted directly between them and the contractor and that the contracted services relating to the construction of the immovable property are performed by companies engaged in building publicly financed dwellings within the scope of the development contracts; or (b) local government agencies, provided that the services in question are contracted directly with the contractor.

[5] Three per cent. applies to dwellings defined administratively as having official protection status under special arrangements, when the supplies are made by the promoters thereof. Six per cent. applies to sales of buildings or parts thereof suitable for use as dwellings, including their garages and outbuildings which are transferred jointly. This excludes business premises, even where the dwellings are transferred jointly with the business premises.

[6] Authorised alterations to listed buildings are zero rated.

Source: VAT in Europe (International Bureau of Fiscal Documentation).

Sir Keith Speed: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his estimate of the latest annual yield of 17·5 per cent. VAT on newspapers, magazines and periodicals.

Sir John Cope *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* It is estimated that the yield of VAT at 17·5 per cent. on newspapers, magazines and periodicals would be £1,100 million in 1993-94. This figure does not take account of any behavioural response to applying the standard rate of VAT to these items.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what would be the estimated yield in 1994-95 from levying VAT at 17·5 per cent. on *(a)* children's clothing, *(b)* passenger transport, giving separate figures for bus, coach, rail and air transport, *(c)* food and *(d)* newspapers and periodicals.

Sir John Cope: Latest estimates available are for 1993-94 and are as follows:

	£ million
(a) Children's clothing	600
(b) domestic passenger transport	1,150
international passenger transport	1,000
(c) food	7,200
(d) books, newspapers and magazines	1,100

Separate estimates have not been made for bus, coach, rail and air transport. Consumers' expenditure data suggests that they comprise respectively, 42 per cent., 44 per cent., 8 per cent. and 6 per cent. of domestic passenger transport. Consumers' expenditure data also suggests that around 87 per cent. of the figure for international passenger transport is in respect of transport by air, and 13 per cent. in respect of transport by sea.

Separate estimates have not been made for newspapers and periodicals. Consumers' expenditure data suggest this may be around 70 per cent. of the total figure for books, newspapers and magazines.

Japanese Companies

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been paid in corporation tax by Japanese companies in the United Kingdom each year since 1983.

Mr. Dorrell: Mainstream and advance corporation tax liabilities of United Kingdom subsidiaries and branches of Japanese companies are estimated to be:

	£ million
1987	140
1988	200
1989	210
1990	140
1991	150

Information for earlier years is not readily available.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in Treasury and Treasury agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Nelson: The information requested is as follows:

	Number
Senior Executive Officer	11
Higher Executive Officer	16
Executive Officer	24
Administrative Officer	12

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in Inland Revenue in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Dorrell: The Inland Revenue's information technology office employs some 2,350 civil servants of which 1,149 currently receive an advanced data processing allowance in recognition of their specialism.

Grade (Civil Service Equivalent)	*Numbers*
SEO	195
HEO	452
EO	502
Total	1,149

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape.

Mr. Nelson: No specific arrangements are currently in place but Her Majesty's Treasury will consider sympathetically any request recieved from blind or partially sighted people for access to information it produces. Facilities are available to enable us to produce information in Braille or large print.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Nelson: No information produced by Her Majesty's Treasury is currently available in this form, but the Department would consider sympathetically any requests for its information to be produced in Braille, tape or large print. Facilities are available for information to be produced in Braille or large print.

Of other Departments for which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has responsibility, the board of Inland Revenue will make available its revised leaflet "You and the Inland Revenue" in Braille, large print and audio rapes. Her Majesty's Customs and Excise are currently considering the possibilities of issuing notice 1—allowances to travellers and the travellers charter in Braille and on audio cassette, and the Department for National Savings is planning to produce an all-in-one product leaflet next year and a tape version will be made available. A tape version of its "Guide to Savings for Non-Taxpayers" was available when that publication was current.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by the Inland Revenue, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Dorrell: The Inland Revenue has awarded contracts to the following computer consultancies since November 1991:

	Task
Abraxas Computer Services Ltd.	Computer project support
The Berwyn Partnership	Computer project support
Boldon James Ltd.	Computer project support
CSS Trident plc	Computer project support
Computer People Ltd.	Computer project support
Computer Sciences Co. Ltd.	Computer project support
Cornwall Affiliates Ltd.	Business support
DPLACE	Business support
DP Support Services Ltd.	Computer project support
Duhig Berry Ltd.	Project management support
Frost Berkeley Associates Ltd.	Computer project support
IBM (UK) Ltd.	Computer project support
ICL	Computer project support
ICS (Sales) Ltd.	Computer project support
IEMIT Ltd.	Computer project support
Intertech Computer Consultants Ltd.	Computer project support
LBMS plc	Computer project support
Lorien Technical Services Ltd.	Computer project support
Lucidus Ltd.	Market testing
Macleod Group	Computer project support
MDS Consultants Ltd.	Computer project support
Oracle Corporation Ltd.	Computer project support
Organisation and Systems Innovations Ltd.	Project support
PA Consulting Group	Business systems
Panacea Ltd.	Computer project support
P-E International Ltd.	Computer project support
Rand Information Systems Ltd.	Computer project support
Price Waterhouse	Strategy support
Quality Testing Ltd.	System testing
Sequel Ltd.	Computer project support
Softlab Ltd.	Systems support
SPAN Contracts	Computer project support
Starfield Management Ltd.	Business support
Systems Resources Ltd.	Computer project support
Task Force IT	Computer project support
Touche Ross	Communications support
VNG Nationwide	Communications support
Winnow Ltd.	Business support
World Systems plc	Computer project support
YCS Ltd.	Computer project support

The spend on computer consultancy is recorded over successive financial years from 1 April each year. Since April 1991, the Inland Revenue has spent the following total amounts on computer consultancy:

	£
1991-92	20,296,949
1992-93	19,427,849

In the current financial year 1993-94, the Department expects to spend up to £18,900,000 on computer consultancy.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by Customs and Excise, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Sir John Cope: The computer consultants engaged by the central information technology function together with the nature of their contracts and total cost are set out.

Company	*Amounts paid since 1 November 1991* £	*Nature of work*
LOGICA	8,183,300	Central four-year contract providing on call development support
BIS	2,473,500	
MFT Computer Systems	*3,300*	*Amendments to Tariff* Quota File
Aspire	44,500	Market Testing advice
Adbury Electronics	3,900	VAT Software Development
Coopers and Lybrand	63,000	Market Testing advice
Haymark communications	11,800	Software support
Capita Management Consultant	51,500	Market Testing advice
Interchange Associates	84,700	IT advice to Board
Dove Communications	91,400	Telecomms. support
Comshare	322,000	Technical specs. and analysis
Datafit	574,000	VAT Programming
Hedra	51,900	Information System Strategy Support
Valid Consultancy	87,100	Telecomms. support
TCSL Group	33,100	Prototype development
CCTA	80,200	Management studies/ development
Firefox Communications	2,400	Software Support
Sun Microsystems	1,000	Technical assurance
Data General	49,500	Testing and configuration support
ACTLOGSYS	26,100	Technical Support
Total	12,238,200	

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by the Treasury and Treasury agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Nelson: The Department's spend on computer consultancies since 1991-92 to date amounts to £64,220, including VAT. Information on individual consultancies and by task is not held centrally in the same way and cannot be provided except at disproportionate cost.

Agricultural Partnership Tenancies

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) pursuant to his answer of 26 February, *Official Report*, column *765*, when he expects the issue of jurisdictional problems over the valuation of agricultural partnership tenancies to be solved; and if he will make a statement;

(2) how many cases relating to the valuation of agricultural partnership tenancies are outstanding with the Lands Tribunal; and when he expects them to be resolved.

Mr. Dorrell: The case referred to in my earlier answer is due to be heard by the Lands Tribunal in early October. No other such cases are currently outstanding with the Lands Tribunal. In future, any such cases reaching the Lands Tribunal after this year's Finance Bill receives Royal Assent should benefit from clause 200 of the Bill, which proposes to allow the special commissioners to refer to the Lands Tribunal questions as to the value of land without the need for a fresh appeal.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in Customs and Excise, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Sir John Cope: There have been no cases where Customs and Excise have contracted out existing in-house services where TUPE did not apply. To date, there has been only one contract involving the transfer of staff awarded to an outside bidder, London HQ catering, and the staff were transferred under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in Treasury and Treasury agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Nelson: No previously in-house services have been contracted out since November 1991.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in Inland Revenue, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Dorrell: The information requested is set out in the table:

Records management (off-site store at Nottingham)
Valuation banding for council tax
Bulk mailing (employers' annual pack)
Typing, secretarial and office support services (Nottingham)
Catering (St. Albans)
Catering (Leicester)
Training Office—Writing of Training materials
Estate management (south-east, Wales)
Estate management (Scotland)
Estate management (west midlands, East)
Estate management (London and headquarters)

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Portillo: The Government's economic policies are designed to maintain an environment in which business and enterprise can develop and prosper. The Treasury therefore places a high priority on helping small businesses. Developments in the last year include:

reduction of inflation to 1·2 per cent., its lowest level for nearly 30 years;

reductions in interest rates since leaving the exchange rate mechanism which, when fully passed through, will be worth over £5 billion a year off companies' interest payments.

In addition, the March Budget included:

further transitional help on business rates, worth £370 million, so that no business will face a real increase in rates in 1993-94;

changes to the loan guarantee scheme to improve the supply of bank finance to small businesses;

allowing VAT relief on bad debts after six months rather than a year;

increases in the VAT registration threshold from £36,600 to £37,600 and in the turnover limit of the VAT cash accounting scheme from £300,000 to £350,000;

reductions in VAT penalties on late returns and misdeclarations, and new flexibility in applying penalties;

a new entrepreneurs' relief from capital gains tax where gains from the sale of a person's own business are reinvested in new businesses, and an extension of capital gains tax retirement relief.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what requests have been received from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to release frozen funds from banking institutions in London for the purpose of purchasing medical supplies; how many of these requests have been granted; how many have been denied; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Nelson: The information requested is not readily available. The Bank of England, which administers financial sanctions on behalf of Her Majesty's Treasury, has given delegated authority to individual banks to release funds in respect of the export of humanitarian goods to Serbia and Montenegro from the United Kingdom, provided that a licence has been issued by the Department of Trade and Industry and that a letter of authorisation has been issued by the United Nations sanctions committee.

Nuclear Companies

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what cash contributions he has estimated that British Nuclear Fuels plc, Nuclear Electric and Scottish Nuclear will make to the national loans fund for each year from 1993 to 1998.

Mr. Portillo: No such estimates are available. All three companies may deposit cash surpluses in the national loans fund. But all three also have access to other deposit facilities. They take decisions on where to deposit surpluses from time to time as appropriate.

Inland Revenue

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement about the organisation of executive officers in the Inland Revenue.

Mr. Dorrell: The Inland Revenue has today announced moves towards a smaller number of large executive offices.

With effect from 1 October 1993, the Controller, Inland Revenue Wales will assume responsibility for Inland Revenue midlands and the two executive offices will be combined and managed as a single executive office from 1 April 1994.

Also from 1 April 1994, the tax offices in London responsible for some of the largest groups of companies, principally in the financial sector, will be brought together in a new executive office, top be known as the large groups office. This office will also incorporate a number of audit and investigative functions currently in the Department's head office.

Responsibility for the remaining tax and collection offices in the three present London regional executive offices will be brought together under a single controller in charge of a new executive office, to be known as Inland Revenue, London.

Budget Council

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the outcome of the recent meeting of European Ministers at the Budget Council.

Sir John Cope: The Budget Council met in Brussels on 22 July. I represented the United Kingdom.

The council established a first reading draft budget for 1994, totalling 72·4 billion ecu—£55·7 billion—in commitment appropriations and 69·0 billion ecu—£53·1 billion—in payment appropriations, respectively 760 million ecu—£585 million—and 1,088 million ecu—£837 million—below the figures proposed by the Commission in its preliminary draft budget. The draft budget would require own resources totalling 1·18 per cent. of Community gross national product, compared with the own resources ceiling for 1994 of 1·2 per cent.

The draft budget respects the financial perspective expenditure ceilings agreed at the Edinburgh European Council in December 1992. The summary table compares the outcome of the Budget Council to the proposals in the Commission's preliminary draft budget by reference to the financial perspective ceilings.

	Financial perspective expenditure ceilings		*Preliminary draft budget*		*Budget council draft budget*	
	mecu	*£ million*[1]	*mecu*	*£ million*	*mecu*	*£ million*
Commitment appropriations						
1. Common agricultural policy	36,465	28,063	36,465	28,063	36,465	28,063
2. Structural operations	23,176	17,836	23,176	17,836	23,176	17,836
3. Internal policies	4,325	3,328	4,243	3,265	3,638	2,800
4. External action	4,236	3,260	4,174	3,212	4,020	3,094
5. Administrative expenditure	3,579	2,754	3,579	2,754	3,578	2,754
6. Reserves	1,530	1,177	1,530	1,177	1,530	1,177
Total commitments	73,311	56,419	73,167	56,308	72,407	55,723
Total payment appropriations	70,232	54,050	70,099	53,947	69,011	53,110

[1] Throughout this reply the rate of £1 = 1.2994 ecu has been used—the rate notified in the *Official Journal* as prevailing on the last working day of last month (30 June).

The European Parliament will consider the draft budget for 1994 at its plenary session in October. The Parliament's amendments and modifications will be considered at the second Budget Council in November. The European Parliament's second reading is set for mid-December.

The Council took no formal votes, the presidency concluding that there was the necessary majority to establish the draft budget for 1994.

The Budget Council also considered the Commission's proposed supplementary and amending budget for 1993. It believed that further consideration of the proposal was necessary before any decision could be reached.

Sterling Deposits

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his estimate of the gross figures for sterling deposits held by financial institutions and banks in *(a)* the Bahamas, *(b)* Bermuda, *(c)* the Grand Cayman islands, *(d)* the Channel islands and *(e)* the Isle of Man for the latest year available.

Mr. Nelson *[holding annswer 15 July 1993]:* Neither the Treasury nor the bank collects this information. The following figures have been supplied by the relevant authorities in the Channel islands, the Isle of Man and the Cayman islands, and cover all banks with a presence in these centres. They do not cover other financial institutions.

£ billion

Financial Centre	*Total sterling deposits*
Jersey[1]	22·35
Guernsey	8·9
Isle of Man[2]	8·04
Cayman Islands[3]	2·98

[1]March 1993 figure.
[2]December 1992 figure.
[3]December 1992 figure for total sterling liabilities—including loans.

Overseas Funds

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much had been placed in offshore and overseas funds by individual and corporate investors by summer 1983; and what is the amount at the latest date for which figures are available.

Mr. Nelson *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* The data requested are not available.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. David Davis: The Cabinet Office, of which the Office of Public Service and Science and its agencies are a part, employs the following numbers of civil servants in automatic data processing posts:

106 senior executive officers
124 higher executive officers
102 executive officers
31 administrative officers
39 administrative assistants

Scientific and Technological Options

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what plans he has to meet the chairman and secretariat of the European Parliament's scientific and technological options assessment programme to discuss the prospect for collaborative work; and whether his Office of Science and Technology receives copies of the scientific and technological options assessment research reports on a routine basis.

Mr. David Davis: The European Parliament's scientific and technological options assessment programme (STOA) advises the European Parliament on science and technological issues. I do not anticipate developing a programme of collaborative work. Nevertheless, I have instructed my officials to develop closer links with the STOA secretariat to ensure better mutual understanding of science and technology policy issues, and obtain copies of relevant reports.

Central Scrutiny Programme

Mr. Paice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what topics have been covered in the efficiency unit's central scrutiny programme in the last financial year; and which scrutiny reports can be made available to the general public.

Mr. Waldegrave: Fourteen efficiency scrutinies or similar reviews have been undertaken by Departments in 1992-93 in association with the Prime Minister's adviser on efficiency and the efficiency unit. The programme, including those which are not yet completed, is as follows:

Department/Title of Scrutiny Completed	*Report: Publicly available*
HM Customs and Excise	
External Consultants	No
Ministry of Defence	
VIP Flying	Under consideration
Department of the Environment	
LA Superannuation Scheme	Yes
Department for Education	
Information Needs	Under consideration
Inland Revenue	
Valuation Office	Under consideration
Northern Ireland Office	
Community Economic Regeneration Scheme	Under consideration
Department of Social Security	
Property Management	Under consideration
Document Retention	Under consideration
Welsh Office	
Health Promotion	Yes
HM Treasury	
Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme	Yes
Purchasing Group	Under consideration
Not Completed	

Department/Title of Scrutiny Completed	Report: Publicly available
Inland Revenue	
Common Causes of Error	
Department of Social Security	
Fraud and Security	
Customer Satisfaction	

Decisions on the publication of scrutiny reports are taken by the Ministers responsible for the scrutinies concerned. In a number of cases, where a scrutiny has been recently completed or is not yet complete, no decision on publication has been made.

Government Estate

Mr. Matthew Banks: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what will be the terms of reference for the scrutiny of the management of the Government estate.

Mr. Waldegrave: The terms of reference are as follows:

To consider what arrangements would be needed to enable Departments and/or agencies to take as much responsibility as possible for the management, including acquisition and disposal, of all their civil estate properties, including those which are listed buildings.

In particular, to consider:

- What financial and other systems should be retained or established to ensure efficient and effective property management, value for money for the Exchequer and to safeguard the position of Accounting Officers;
- Best public and private sector practice on property management issues;
- What central advice/support is needed for Departments on property management issues, including the employment of consultants; procurement of work services; measures against fraud; standards; health and safety; fire precautions; conservation and environmental issues;
- What co-ordination mechanism would need to be retained or established to ensure the development and implementation of strategic plans for estate rationalisation, to exploit fully Government's strong position in the market place, to make Departments aware of accommodation across Government and to avoid them bidding against each other for properties;
- What arrangements should be retained or established for any Department which cannot approximately take responsibility for the management of their civil estate. To make recommendations.

The Prime Minister has asked his efficiency adviser, Sir Peter Levene, to review how the Government currently manages the properties it occupies, to consider the alternatives for their management and to report to him by the end of the year.

As public service reforms gather pace, it is important to consider whether Departments and agencies should take on more direct responsibility for managing their property, and the means of ensuring that Government property is managed efficiently and effectively to achieve the best value for money for the tax payer.

The scrutiny is being led by a team from the efficiency unit of the OPSS and began work on 19 July. Members will be drawn from other Departments and the private sector. Their report will be published.

EDUCATION

A-levels

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what have been the total numbers of A-level entrants in *(a)* physics, *(b)* chemistry, *(c)* biology, *(d)* mathematics and *(e)* other or combined sciences in each year since 1988; and what was the total number of entrants to those subjects each year as a percentage of A-level entrants in all subjects.

Mr. Robin Squire: The exact information requested is not available on a comparable basis for each year since 1988.

The number of candidates aged 18 and below at the beginning of the academic year in schools and further education colleges in England entered for A-level in a *(a)* physics, *(b)* chemistry, *(c)* biology, *(d)* mathematics and *(e)* other or combined science in 1991-92 are shown:

	Number entered	*Per cent. of total entrants*
(a) Physics	34,892	15·7
(b) Chemistry	35,659	16·1
(c) Biology	39,327	17·7
(d) Mathematics	56,222	25·4
(e) Other/combined science	4,749	2·1

GCSE

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what has been the number of GCSE entrants in *(a)* physics, *(b)* chemistry, *(c)* biology, *(d)* mathematics and *(e)* combined sciences in each year since 1989; and what has been the total number of entrants in those subjects each year as a percentage of the total entrants in all subjects.

Mr. Robin Squire: The estimated numbers of 16-year-old pupils in schools in England entering GCSE *(a)* physics, *(b)* chemistry, *(c)* biology, *(d)* mathematics and *(e)* combined science in each year since 1989 are shown in the table. The percentage of the total entrants are also shown.

School examination survey
GCSE attempts by 16 year old pupils in England

Subject taken	*1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*[1]1991-92*
Physics				
Number (000's)	196·92	152·34	100·08	54·87
Per cent. of any subject	34	28	19	10
Chemistry				
Number (000's)	179·07	143·66	97·95	55·14
Per cent. of any subject	31	26	19	10
Biology				
Number (000's)	216·96	171·36	[p]110·14	58·87
Per cent. of any subject	37	31	21	11

Subject taken	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	[1]1991-92
Mathematics				
Number (000's)	532·26	490·26	471·41	460·21
Per cent. of any subject	92	90	90	87
Combined science				
Number (000's)	142·11	203·75	300·92	396·71
Per cent. of any subject	24	37	58	75
Any subject				
Number (000's)	581·3	544·4	521·15	530·5

School Inspections

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make it his policy to extend school inspections to cover *(a)* methods of punishment, *(b)* complaints procedures, *(c)* the views of pupils and *(d)* provision for children with special needs.

Mr. Robin Squire: All inspections of schools must report on quality of education and standards of achievement, financial efficiency and development of pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social values. Inspections must be carried out in accordance with the framework of inspection published by the Office for Standards in Education. I have asked Professor Sutherland to write to the hon. Member.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Boswell: Whether or not the TUPE regulations apply in any particular case depends on the nature of the work awarded and the contractors' own proposals for carrying it out. TUPE regulations did not apply to either of the Departmental functions contracted out since November 1991—the publications dispatch service and the pilot study of professional scrutiny and control of school building projects.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape.

Mr. Robin Squire: The Department ensures that most publications with key messages are available on tape for blind or partially sighted people. We do not make alternative arrangements when this is not practical.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Robin Squire: The Department ensures that most publications which have important information for parents are made available on tape. It also pays for the Royal National Institute for the Blind to produce the annual booklet "Student Grants and Loans—a brief guide" in Braille.

Medical Training

Mr. Rowe: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what proposals he has received for altering the arrangements for training medical, paramedical or other students of subjects principally aimed at careers in the NHS and similar employees.

Mr. Boswell: My right hon. Friend has received no general proposals for change in this area. Officials of the Department for Education have held discussions with officials at the Department of Health about the arrangements for funding undergraduate courses in speech and language therapy, dietetics and chiropody. No decisions have yet been reached. Any proposals for change which may emerge from these discussions will be considered in consultation with higher education institutions, professional bodies and the NHS.

Technology Teaching

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what efforts are being undertaken by his Department to secure an increased supply of approximately qualified teachers of technology in schools.

Mr. Forth: The shortage subject bursary scheme for teacher training has included technology since the start. The Open university's postgraduate certificate in education, which the Department has funded, will provide 100 training places a year in technology from February 1994. The school-centred initial teacher training scheme incorporates 100 places available for secondary technology teachers to be organised through the City Technology College Trust. Sixty 20-day designated courses of in-service training for technology will take place in 1993-94, with support under the grants for education support and training (GEST) programme, to enhance primary teachers' subject knowledge. GEST funding can be used for secondary in-service training in technology and other subjects. The Department's teaching taster courses have always featured technology amongst the subjects offered. Special courses have been offered to encourage highly qualified technologists facing redundancy to consider careers in teaching.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what arrangements will be undertaken by his Department to allocate appropriate capitation, resources, workshop facilities and ancillary staff to assist with the teaching of technology in schools.

Mr. Robin Squire: The Government make unhypothecated grant available to local authorities, which decide on

their spending priorities between and within services, or directly to grant-maintained schools. In either case, it is for governing bodies to allocate their funds as they think best between different priorities, including technology. It is not for central Government to prescribe how much should be spent locally on any one area, but in 1993-94 we are making available grants for education support and training support in England for £179 million related to the implementation of the national curriculum generally, of which £30 million is specifically for information technology in schools. The Department is also supporting £24 million of expenditure through the technology schools initiative.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will outline the changes planned by his Department to *(a)* curriculum materials and *(b)* testing and examination arrangements following the production of the National Curriculum Council's interim report on the teaching of technology in schools.

Mr. Robin Squire: The present national curriculum requirements for technology will remain in force until revised ones are introduced in respect of pupils in key stages 1 to 3 from the autumn of 1995, and in key stage 4 from the autumn of 1996. My right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Education and for Wales will decide towards the end of this year how best to take forward the development of these new curriculum requirements and the arrangements for their implementation, taking into account the findings of Sir Ron Dearing's wider review of the national curriculum and its assessment.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Boswell: The number of staff by grade employed in the Department in the automatic data processing functional specialism is as follows:

	Number
SEO	18
HEO	50
EO	66
AO	14
AA	20
Total	168

None is employed in the Teachers' Pensions Agency, although a proportion are employed in account management, developmental and support work for the agency.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Forth: This Department has spent an estimated £942,000 on computer consultancies since November 1991. Contracts awarded are as follows:

Contractor and Consultancies

Microsoft Ltd.—Graphical User Interface Development
BIS Systems Ltd.—Office Systems and Infrastructure Strategy
BIS Systems Ltd.—Upgrading Core Resource Information System (CRIS-F)
Sema Group Ltd.—Dissemination of Information Study
Microsoft Ltd.—Policy Branch Information System (PBIS)
Forvus Ltd.—Unix conversion and Migration
BIS Systems Ltd.—Telecommunications Scoping Study
Coopers and Lybrand—Information Systems Branch Scoping Study
Insight Ltd.—Pensions Administration System security
Hoskyns Ltd.—Training on Pensions Administration System
Hoskyns Ltd.—Course Development on Pensions Administration System
Duhig Berry—Preparation and provision of specialist IS related training
Kinesis Computing—Programming advice to Information Systems Branch
BBT Statistical Computing—Conversion of Data to Quicktab format
BIS Systems Ltd.—Development of a Bursary Payments System
Coopers and Lybrand—Preparation of ISB Corporate Plan
Insight Consulting—Review of Data Collection and Processing System
MSL Ltd.—Programming advice to Information Systems Branch
OCTS Ltd.—Advice on Superbase software
MFT Computer Services—Novell Hardware Platform Consultancy
Oracle Ltd.—Transfer of Data to Oracle Case format
Mikrofaxt Ltd.—Development work on Purchasing System
Granada Computer—Troubleshooting on Purchasing System
AMTEC Consulting—Development of Information System for the Office for Standards in Education
Forvus Ltd.—Development and Processing of Continuous Student Record
Admiral Ltd.—Guidance on Word For Windows Project
BBT Statistical Computing—Call off Contract for Conversion of Data
Shreeveport Ltd.—Assistance to In-house team on Market Test
Mircosoft Ltd.—Integration of Core Resource Information System and Policy Branch Information System
BIS Systems Ltd.—Desk Top Integration Project
OCTS Ltd.—Advice on Excel software
Express Computer—Advice on the Capital Grants System
ICL (UK) Ltd.—Consultancy to Upgrade TME40 Hardware
Kinesis Computing—Enhancements to Conference Room Booking System
CMG Ltd.—Advice on Relational Database software
Uden Consulting—Review of Pensions Administration System Project
Terry Kinnard—Prototyping of Data for Parents Charter
MFT Computer Services—Porting of Secretariat System software to a UNIX hardware platform
Kinesis Computing—Viability advice on Clipper System
KPMG Consulting—Advice on Business Systems for Grant Maintained Schools
Commercell—Development of Personnel System for the Office for Standards in Education
Ingres Ltd.—Technical Audit of the Pensions Administration System
Kinesis Computing—Provision of Technical Report on Grant Maintained Schools System
Express Computer Consultants—Changes to Grant Maintained Schools Payments System
Oracle Ltd.—Advice on Relational Database software

Education Support Grant

Mr. Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much education support grant was given to each local education authority for each year since 1979, for health education.

Mr. Forth: Details of allocations for education support grant (ESG) and the parallel LEA training grant

(LEATG) for health education are given in the table. The table shows expenditure allocations for ESGs and LEATGs to each LEA as announced in the circular for that year. Final take-up of allocations by LEAs may have been slightly less.

The health education grants began in 1990-91, building on earlier grants to combat drug abuse which began in 1986-87; the footnote to the table gives details of the national total of expenditure supported by these grants.

Education support grants and local education authority training grants: allocation for health education

	1990-91 Support for Health Education ESG £'000	*1990-91 Training for Health Education LEATGS £'000*	*1991-92 Support for Health Education ESG £'000*	*1991-92 Training for Health Education LEATGS £'000*	*1992-93 Support for Health Education ESG £'000*	*1992-93 Training for Health Education LEATGS £'000*
City	0·0	0·0	0·0	0·3	0·0	0·0
Camden	25·0	8·0	26·3	9·5	24·6	3·3
Greenwich	23·0	14·0	24·5	16·7	23·1	5·6
Hackney	25·0	10·0	26·3	11·9	24·7	3·9
Hammersmith	23·0	7·0	23·0	7·0	21·5	2·6
Islington	25·0	9·0	26·3	10·7	24·6	3·5
Kensington	25·0	5·0	26·3	5·9	24·5	1·6
Lambeth	26·6	11·0	27·9	12·0	26·2	4·1
Lewisham	25·0	13·0	26·3	15·5	24·7	5·0
Southwark	38·0	12·0	10·3	14·3	9·9	4·8
Tower Hamlets	25·0	10·0	26·3	11·9	24·7	4·9
Wandsworth	25·0	11·0	26·3	13·1	24·7	4·4
Westminster	25·0	8·0	25·0	9·5	23·4	2·6
Barking	16·8	10·0	26·3	6·5	24·7	3·8
Barnet	25·0	17·0	26·3	17·0	24·8	6·7
Bexley	25·0	14·0	26·3	10·0	24·7	5·3
Brent	25·0	14·0	26·3	16·7	24·7	5·3
Bromley	25·0	15·0	25·0	16·0	24·0	5·8
Croydon	25·0	18·0	26·3	18·0	24·8	6·9
Ealing	26·2	15·0	27·5	14·6	25·9	6·1
Enfield	28·5	16·0	29·9	16·0	28·1	6·3
Haringey	25·0	11·0	26·3	11·0	24·7	4·2
Harrow	25·0	13·0	26·3	14·0	24·7	4·3
Havering	20·0	15·0	22·0	15·5	20·8	5·8
Hillingdon	25·0	13·0	26·3	11·0	24·7	5·2
Hounslow	32·7	13·0	32·7	13·0	30·7	5·1
Kingston-upon-Thames	30·8	8·0	32·3	9·5	30·2	2·8
Merton	25·0	9·0	26·3	9·0	24·6	3·3
Newham	53·1	15·0	55·8	17·8	52·2	5·8
Redbridge	25·0	13·0	26·3	15·5	24·7	5·1
Richmond-upon-Thames	25·0	7·0	26·3	7·0	22·0	2·7
Sutton	18·9	10·0	26·3	11·9	24·6	3·7
Waltham Forest	25·0	13·0	26·3	13·2	24·7	5·0
Birmingham	140·9	72·0	147·9	54·8	139·1	28·2
Coventry	27·0	21·0	28·4	25·0	26·8	7·8
Dudley	30·0	20·0	26·5	22·4	25·1	7·4
Sandwell	25·0	21·0	26·8	21·7	25·4	8·0
Solihull	23·6	14·0	25·5	12·1	24·0	5·3
Walsall	25·0	19·0	26·6	22·6	25·2	7·5
Wolverhampton	0·0	17·0	26·3	18·4	24·8	6·5
Knowsley	72·0	11·0	75·6	11·0	70·5	4·5
Liverpool	44·0	33·0	28·2	39·3	27·0	12·9
St. Helens	25·0	14·0	26·3	16·7	24·7	5·0
Sefton	32·7	19·0	34·3	22·6	32·3	7·5
Wirral	51·0	22·0	53·6	24·0	50·3	3·6
Bolton	25·0	19·0	26·3	22·6	24·9	7·2
Bury	24·2	11·0	25·0	0·0	23·5	0·0
Manchester	38·8	31·0	40·7	36·9	38·5	11·5
Oldham	26·2	16·0	27·5	0·0	25·9	6·4
Rochdale	25·0	15·0	26·3	17·8	24·8	5·8
Salford	25·0	15·0	26·3	15·0	24·8	6·0
Stockport	25·6	19·0	26·9	21·3	25·4	7·0
Tameside	25·0	15·0	26·3	15·0	24·8	5·9
Trafford	25·0	13·0	26·3	15·5	24·7	4·7
Wigan	29·4	23·0	30·9	22·3	29·2	8·4
Barnsley	25·0	14·0	26·3	16·7	24·8	5·6
Doncaster	27·2	21·0	28·6	23·1	27·0	8·0
Rotherham	25·0	18·0	26·3	19·6	24·8	6·9
Sheffield	44·2	31·0	46·4	35·0	43·8	11·3
Bradford	45·9	35·0	48·5	38·5	45·9	13·5
Calderdale	25·0	14·0	26·3	16·5	24·7	5·2
Kirklees	32·0	26·0	33·9	27·0	32·1	10·0
Leeds	59·7	44·0	63·0	52·3	59·5	17·2
Wakefield	27·4	20·0	27·0	23·8	25·6	7·9

	1990-91 Support for Health Education ESG £'000	1990-91 Training for Health Education LEATGS £'000	1991-92 Support for Health Education ESG £'000	1991-92 Training for Health Education LEATGS £'000	1992-93 Support for Health Education ESG £'000	1992-93 Training for Health Education LEATGS £'000
Gateshead	25·0	12·0	26·1	14·3	24·5	4·9
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	29·8	17·0	31·3	18·2	29·5	6·5
North Tyneside	25·0	13·0	26·3	14·0	24·7	5·0
South Tyneside	25·0	11·0	26·3	10·5	24·7	4·0
Sunderland	23·0	21·0	27·0	25·0	25·6	8·0
Isles of Scilly	0·5	0·0	0·0	0·0	0·0	0·0
Avon	80·0	57·0	83·3	67·8	64·7	21·8
Bedfordshire	42·7	36·0	44·8	31·0	42·4	13·8
Berkshire	54·3	47·0	57·4	47·0	54·4	17·4
Buckinghamshire	52·5	39·0	55·4	43·4	52·4	15·5
Cambridgeshire	54·6	41·0	57·6	43·4	50·8	16·2
Cheshire	51·0	66·0	50·0	50·0	44·0	22·0
Cleveland	32·5	41·0	34·1	47·6	32·7	15·5
Cornwall	33·8	29·0	36·0	28·6	34·1	11·2
Cumbria	42·0	32·0	42·0	31·1	39·7	12·1
Derbyshire	48·4	59·0	57·9	64·5	55·2	22·9
Devon	75·0	58·0	65·0	50·0	61·7	21·9
Dorset	46·3	35·0	48·6	33·6	45·9	12·0
Durham	42·0	40·0	46·6	47·6	44·2	15·4
East Sussex	40·0	35·0	40·3	41·3	38·2	13·4
Essex	61·5	97·0	65·7	115·4	63·2	36·7
Gloucestershire	42·9	34·0	34·7	40·4	33·0	12·4
Hampshire	90·7	94·0	101·7	90·0	96·6	35·1
Hereford and Worcester	110·8	43·0	57·6	48·1	54·5	15·0
Hertfordshire	58·0	65·0	63·3	62·8	60·3	24·1
Humberside	62·6	58·0	69·5	62·0	65·9	22·8
Isle of Wight	25·0	8·0	26·3	6·0	24·6	2·9
Kent	74·5	95·0	69·0	113·0	54·0	4·1
Lancashire	100·0	94·0	105·0	77·5	99·7	35·3
Leicestershire	43·4	59·0	53·7	70·2	51·4	22·7
Lincolnshire	40·0	36·0	42·0	42·8	39·8	13·8
Norfolk	58·6	45·0	61·5	52·9	58·1	16·8
North Yorkshire	35·9	43·0	38·7	51·1	36·9	16·4
Northamptonshire	42·6	40·0	45·0	38·8	42·7	15·5
Northumberland	18·4	20·0	21·0	17·0	0·0	8·0
Nottinghamshire	48·5	64·0	59·1	76·1	56·4	24·3
Oxfordshire	41·5	32·0	43·6	31·0	41·2	12·0
Shropshire	33·5	27·0	35·6	30·0	33·7	10·1
Somerset	36·1	29·0	37·9	0·0	35·8	10·3
Staffordshire	66·5	69·0	72·8	62·6	55·7	26·4
Suffolk	51·4	39·0	51·0	34·9	48·3	13·2
Surrey	44·1	53·0	48·6	46·5	46·3	19·7
Warwickshire	40·0	32·0	42·0	32·5	39·7	11·8
West Sussex	51·8	39·0	54·4	39·0	51·4	14·9
Wiltshire	44·9	36·0	47·1	39·5	44·5	12·9
TOTAL	4,061·0	3,000·0	4,200·0	3,100·0	3,899·9	1,099·9

Note: *In addition, the following grants were available to combat drug misuse:*

	1987-88 £ million	1988-89 £ million	1989-90 £ million
ESG	2·0	2·4	2·0
LEATGS	1·5	1·6	1·7
Total	3·5	4·0	3·7

Figures for 1986-87 are not readily available.

Grant-maintained Schools

Mr. Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will give approval for a school opting out of local authority control where a local authority proposes to close that school as part of a review of surplus places.

Mr. Robin Squire: We have made it clear recently that my right hon. Friend would not normally aprove an application for grant-maintained status from a school already proposed for closure as part of a rationalisation scheme, particularly where the school concerned had a large number of surplus places.

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list the higher education institutions which are providing in-service training for teachers from grant-maintained schools.

Mr. Robin Squire: This information is not collected centrally.

Mrs. Ann Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how long grant-maintained schools will be able to rely on the facility to bring in services from their local education authority once grant-maintained status has been approved.

Mr. Robin Squire: This will vary from authority to authority. There is provision in the current Education Bill to enable grant-maintained schools to trade with LEAs for two years beyond what current legislation allows.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is his policy on officials of his Department participating in meetings for parents or members of the public concerning grant-maintained status other than those meetings organised by his Department.

Mr. Robin Squire: The Department's activities in providing information on grant-maintained status are governed by a code of conduct, a copy of which is in the Library. The detailed wording of that code is currently being revised following discussions with the Society of Education Officers, local authority associations and others. Under the code, officials do not normally participate in such meetings.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list those grant-maintained schools about which his Department has received representations from parents about (i) non-admission and (ii) exclusion of their children.

Mr. Robin Squire: The Department receives numerous letters and telephone inquiries from parents about matters relating to admission to and exclusion from maintained schools. The Department does not keep a record of every such inquiry.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education in what circumstances his Department will pay head teachers of grant-maintained schools to attend as invited speakers at meetings on grant-maintained status other than at their own schools; and what amount of funding would be paid in those circumstances.

Mr. Robin Squire: Headteachers of grant-maintained schools who are invited to speak at schools considering grant-maintained status about the arrangements for that and their own experiences may claim travel and subsistence expenses from the Department. Such expenses are reimbursed at normal public service rates.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education which grant-maintained schools have *(a)* applied for and *(b)* been approved to include as part of their admissions policy a process involving (i) pupil and (ii) parent interview; and in which schools the admissions policy has remained unchanged since the school became grant maintained.

Mr. Robin Squire: It is common practice for church schools, whether or not grant maintained, to make use of an interview to help decide whether the religious ethos of the school would be appropriate for the child concerned. Other schools may have arrangements which involve a senior member of staff meeting parents and children prior to admission. Such interviews, which do not affect the child's chance of gaining admission, can be extremely valuable for all concerned. The great majority of grant-maintained schools do not use interviews as part of their formal admission procedures. Relatively few schools have applied for changes in admission arrangements, of whatever kind, since acquiring grant-maintained status.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list the amounts of payments made under section 79(3)(a)(iii) of the Education Reform Act 1988 and under sections 79(3)(b) of the Education Reform Act 1988 to grant-maintained schools, giving in each case the name of the school and the purposes of the payments.

Mr. Robin Squire: The only payment that has been made to grant-maintained schools under section 79(3)(a)(iii) of the Education Reform Act 1988 was to Kirkbie Kendal school. The amount was £22,000, and the funds were made available in recognition of extra expenditure incurred by the school on meeting the needs of statemented pupils.

Tables giving the other information requested have been placed in the Library.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list the schools about which his Department has received representations from parents about the conduct of ballots held under section 61 of the Education Reform Act 1988.

Mr. Robin Squire: The Department does not collate information on representations received about the conduct of ballots held under section 61 of the Education Reform Act 1988, of which there have now been more than 1,240. Any complaints are considered individually on their merits.

Testing

Mr. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is the total number of representations he has received about testing in schools so far in 1993; and what was the proportion *(a)* in favour and *(b)* against.

Mr. Robin Squire: Since the beginning of the year my right hon. Friend has received about 10,000 letters on the subject of testing in schools. They cover a number of different issues. The Department does not keep statistical information about their content.

Standard Assessment Tasks

Mr. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will give the number of schools in each local authority out of the total number of schools in each case which have transmitted SAT results to their education authority.

Mr. Robin Squire: All primary schools maintained by a local education authority are required to send their key stage 1 test results to their authority for onward transmission to the Department. These must be sent to the authority by the end of the summer term. The end date for the authority's returns is 31 July. Secondary schools are required to submit their results through the GCSE examining groups by no later than 15 September. It is, therefore, too soon to have accurate figures on the number of schools that have transmitted their results as required.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, columns *33-36*, when the information requested on pupils in schools for 1993 will be available.

Mr. Forth: This information from the January 1993 schools' census will become available towards the end of the year.

Selection

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list those grant-maintained schools which have *(a)* applied for and *(b)* been approved to include as part of their admissions policy (i) an element of selection based on pupils' ability or aptitude and (ii) a fully selective system of admissions based upon ability; and if he will list those schools where the admissions policy has remained unchanged since the school became grant maintained.

Mr. Robin Squire: Most grant-maintained schools operate the admissions policies agreed at the time of incorporation. The schools which have subsequently applied for changes in respect of the selection of pupils by aptitude or ability are as follows:

Approved for element of selection
Heathside school, Surrey
Southlands school, Berkshire
Langley Park school, Bromley
Beaverwood school, Bromley
Canterbury high school, Kent
Cooper's school, Bromley
Abbs Cross school, Havering
King Edward VI grammar school, Essex

Approved for fully selective intake
Queen Elizabeth grammar school, Cumbria

Application for element of selection pending
North Kesteven, Lincolnshire
Robert Pattinson school, Lincolnshire
Mill Hill school, Barnet
Budmouth school, Dorset

Application for fully selective intake not approved
Castle Hall school, Kirklees

Surplus School Places

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list for each local education authority the latest estimate of the number of surplus school places in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools.

Mr. Forth: The table shows the number of surplus places in each local authority in England during the academic year 1990-91, the latest available figures. The figures are derived from information provided by LEAs in response to a survey by the Department.

Surplus places in LEA-maintained primary and secondary schools 1990-91

	Primary	*Secondary*
Corporation of London	21	—
Camden	972	1,148
Greenwich	2,718	3,260
Hackney	3,019	1,780
Hammersmith	2,981	3,251
Islington	2,958	1,715
Kensington and Chelsea	1,090	1,046
Lambeth	4,479	3,852
Lewisham	1,609	3,223
Southwark	5,511	3,837
Tower Hamlets	2,864	1,051
Wandsworth	9,096	[3]3,908
Westminster	891	868
Barking	1,368	717
Barnet	1,463	983
Bexley	2,914	3,436
Brent	6,585	4,480
Bromley	2,259	[3]1,309
Croydon	3,389	3,149
Ealing	3,016	3,533
Enfield	765	3,976
Haringey	[1]—	[1]—
Harrow	888	466
Havering	1,971	3,229
Hillingdon	3,754	3,693
Hounslow	1,226	2,598
Kingston-upon-Thames	485	1,117
Merton	1,639	2,544
Newham	4,587	3,899
Redbridge	796	695
Richmond-upon-Thames	1,845	643
Sutton	1,619	[2]513
Waltham Forest	1,445	2,706
Birmingham	8,711	17,171
Coventry	6,022	5,657
Dudley	2,551	5,134
Sandwell	328	7,722
Solihull	3,332	6,645
Walsall	3,823	4,667
Wolverhampton	6,116	5,740
Knowsley	4,004	3,925
Liverpool	19,481	11,545
St. Helens	1,886	3,621
Sefton	1,944	4,519
Wirral	1,953	6,580
Bolton	1,602	1,612
Bury	−150	1,013
Manchester	7,617	13,350
Oldham	1,319	1,692
Rochdale	1,784	2,525[3]
Salford	4,171	3,711
Stockport	3,357	2,732
Tameside	968	1,854
Trafford	1,878	2,955
Wigan	7,811	4,025
Barnsley	4,220	2,644
Doncaster	7,076	8,550
Rotherham	4,346	3,761
Sheffield	9,048	8,730
Bradford	6,370	8,331
Calderdale	3,324	2,891
Kirklees	3,291	6,222
Leeds	8,335	15,684
Wakefield	4,314	7,763
Gateshead	6,422	2,941
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	4,515	5,425
North Tyneside	3,802	4,942
South Tyneside	2,619	3,528
Sunderland	4,674	2,566[3]
Isles of Scilly	78	233
Avon	6,359	14,904
Bedfordshire	9,782	9,409
Berkshire	14,013	8,825
Buckinghamshire	11,252	5,564
Cambridge	9,401	2,642
Cheshire	17,045	11,149
Cleveland	10,391	11,298
Cornwall	744	3,209
Cumbria	5,674	9,673
Derbyshire	10,230	12,487
Devon	10,575	9,012
Dorset	1,165	5,941
Durham	11,516	13,626
East Sussex	7,955	6,350
Essex	22,611	24,319
Gloucestershire	5,506	5,756
Hampshire	24,719	13,601
Hereford and Worcester	9,296	9,570
Hertfordshire	20,503	15,153
Humberside	16,347	14,891
Isle of Wight	357	1,101
Kent	15,431	26,589
Lancashire	6,754	20,135
Leicestershire	7,204	16,644
Lincolnshire	7,236	5,440
Norfolk	10,842	7,682

	Primary	Secondary
North Yorkshire	9,524	7,404
Northamptonshire	4,714	8,058
Northumberland	4,902	3,727
Nottinghamshire	17,253	26,198
Oxfordshire	10,004	9,589
Shropshire	5,936	5,718
Somerset	2,524	3,793
Staffordshire	24,485	7,783
Suffolk	7,902	8,015
Surrey	11,084	8,400
Warwickshire	8,673	7,277
West Sussex	6,940	7,634
Wiltshire	9,682	9,987

[1] Not available.
[2] Figures for secondary schools in these LEAs are incomplete.
[3] Figures for secondary schools in these LEAs are calculated on a slightly different basis since directly comparable figures are not available.

Assisted Places

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what were the fees charged by each school taking part in the assisted places scheme in 1992-93.

Mr. Forth: The fees charged to the parents of assisted pupils in each of the participating schools in the academic year 1992-93, and which are remitted either in whole or in part by the Department, are given in the table:

Assisted places scheme

School name	*Average fee charged for assisted pupils in academic year 1992-93* £
Abbey School, Reading	3,405
Abingdon	4,212
Ackworth	3,906
Aldenham	6,762
Alice Ottley	3,849
Alleyns, Dulwich	5,205
Ardingly College	8,145
Arnold School, Blackpool	3,189
Ashford	4,505
Ashville College	4,299
Austin Friars	3,693
Bancrofts	4,224
Barnard Castle	4,014
Bath High GPDST	3,189
Batley Grammar	2,973
Bedales	7,797
Bedford	5,628
Bedford High	4,148
Bedford Modern	3,751
Belvedere GPDST	3,189
Berkhamstead Girls	4,234
Berkhamsted	5,299
Birkenhead	3,033
Birkenhead High GPDST	3,189
Bishop's Stortford College	7,030
Blackheath High GPDST	3,609
Bloxham, Banbury	6,454
Bolton School Boys	3,855
Bolton School Girls	3,855
Bootham, York	5,292
Bradfield College	8,324
Bradford Girls Grammar	3,506
Bradford Grammar School	3,411
Brentwood School	4,388
Brighton College	6,285
Brighton/Hove High GPDST	3,189
Bristol Cathedral	3,608
Bristol Grammar	3,423
Bromley High GPDST	3,609
Bromsgrove	5,076
Bruton Girls	3,099
Burgess High Girls	5,448
Bury Grammar Boys	3,000
Bury Grammar Girls	3,000
Canford	7,586
Carmel College	7,202
Casterton	4,624
Caterham	4,626
Central Newcastle High GPDST	3,189
Charterhouse	9,210
Cheadle Hulme	3,570
Cheltenham Ladies College	6,640
Chigwell	5,542
Christ's Hospital	6,264
Churchers College	4,440
City of London	5,090
City of London Freemans	5,138
City of London Girls	4,393
Clifton College, Bristol	5,064
Clifton High, Bristol	4,066
Colfes	3,982
Colston's Girls	3,165
Colston's, Bristol	3,165
Coventry, Bablake	3,099
Coventry, King Henry VIII	3,099
Cranleigh	4,500
Croham Hurst	3,742
Croydon High GPDST	3,609
Culford	5,377
Dame Alice Harpur	3,555
Dame Allans Boys	3,084
Dame Allans Girls	3,084
Dauntseys	5,604
Denstone College	6,160
Derby High	4,992
Douai, Reading	4,992
Dover College	5,970
Downe House, Newbury	6,774
Dulwich College	5,685
Durham	6,063
Edgbaston College Girls	3,774
Edgehill College	4,433
Ellesmere College	6,300
Eltham College, London	4,576
Emanuel, London SW11	4,110
Epsom College	6,789
Exeter	3,529
Farnborough Hill	3,767
Felixstowe College	5,545
Felsted, Dunmow	7,935
Forest School	4,132
Framlingham College	5,502
Francis Holland	4,180
Friends, Saffron Walden	5,225
Giggleswick, Settle	5,061
Godolphin and Latymer	4,950
Godolphin, Salisbury	5,523
Greshams	7,296
Guildford High Girls	4,314
Haberdashers Askes Boys	4,794
Haberdashers Askes Girls	3,258
Haileybury & ISC	7,195
Hampton	3,967
Harrogate College	5,166
Headington	3,864
Hereford Cathedral	3,951
Highgate	5,815
Hipperholme Grammar	2,718
Holy Child	3,847
Hulme Grammar Boys	3,210

School name	Average fee charged for assisted pupils in academic year 1992-93 £
Hulme Grammar Girls	3,210
Hurstpierpoint College	8,160
Hymers College	3,048
Ipswich	4,322
Ipswich High GPDST	3,189
James Allens Girls	5,130
John Lyons	4,467
Kent College	5,484
Kimbolton School	4,356
King Edward VI High	3,538
King Edward VI Norwich	3,717
King Edward VI Southampton	3,900
King Edward VII Lytham	2,919
King Edwards at Bath	3,507
King Edwards Birmingham	3,919
King Edwards Witley	5,169
Kings College Wimbledon	5,400
Kings High Girls, Warwick	3,305
Kings Bruton	6,541
Kings, Chester	3,900
Kings, Macclesfield	3,725
Kings, Rochester	5,491
Kings, Tynemouth	3,097
Kings, Worcester	4,527
Kingsley	3,577
Kingston Grammar	4,166
Kingswood School, Bath	5,054
Kirkham Grammar	3,000
La Sagesse Convent	3,210
Lady Eleanor Holles	4,662
Latymer Upper	4,032
Laxton	4,224
Leeds Girls High	3,579
Leeds Grammar	3,546
Leicester Grammar	3,161
Leighton Park	7,450
Leys, Cambridge	7,411
Liverpool College	3,702
Lord Wandsworth College	6,240
Loreto Convent Grammar	2,604
Loughborough Grammar	3,658
Loughborough High	3,306
Magdalen College	4,026
Malvern College	7,680
Manchester Grammar	3,468
Manchester High	3,369
Marist Convent Senior	3,403
Maynard	3,435
Merchant Taylors Girls	3,204
Merchant Taylors, Liverpool	3,204
Merchant Taylors, Northwood	5,710
Mill Hill	6,414
Monkton Combe	5,178
Mount Carmel, Cheshire	2,790
Mount St. Mary's College	4,911
Mount, York	5,412
Newcastle Under Lyme	2,993
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Church High	3,210
North London Collegiate	4,089
Northampton High	3,642
Norwich High GPDST	3,189
Notting Hill/Ealing High GPDST	3,609
Nottingham Girls High GPDST	3,189
Nottingham High	3,413
Oakham	5,565
Old Palace, Croydon	3,464
Oxford High GPDST	3,189
Pangbourne College	5,100
Perse School for Boys	3,948
Perse School for Girls	3,454
Plymouth College	3,736
Pocklington	4,122
Polam Hall	3,648
Portsmouth Grammar	3,594
Portsmouth High GPDST	3,189
Prior Park College	4,093
Putney High School GPDST	3,609
Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Bristol	3,519
Queen Elizabeth, Blackburn	3,371
Queen Elizabeth, Wakefield	3,400
Queen Mary, Lytham	2,919
Queens College, London	4,662
Queens College, Taunton	5,032
Queens School, Chester	3,075
Ratcliffe College	4,905
Red Maids, Bristol	3,420
Redland High, Bristol	3,341
Reed's School, Cobham	6,192
Reigate Grammar	3,922
Rendcomb College*	6,128
Repton	5,190
Rossall	6,569
Royal Grammar, Guildford	5,016
Royal Grammar, Newcastle	3,113
Royal Grammar, Worcester	3,929
Ryde School	3,522
Salesian College	2,178
Scarborough College	4,426
Sedbergh	7,411
Sevenoaks, Kent	5,778
Sheffield High GPDST	3,189
Shrewsbury High GPDST	3,189
Silcoates	4,764
Sir William Perkins	3,364
Solihull	3,729
South Hampstead High GPDST	3,609
St. Albans	4,306
St. Albans High Girls	3,966
St. Ambrose College	2,817
St. Anselms College	2,787
St. Bede's College	3,438
St. Bees	6,180
St. Benedict's	4,466
St. Catherine's	5,082
St. Dunstan's College	3,980
St. Edmund's College	4,954
St. Edward's College	3,016
St. Felix, Southwold	5,142
St. George's College	5,550
St. Helen and St. Katherine	3,387
St. Helen's, Northwood	4,134
St. John's College, Southsea	3,091
St. John's, Leatherhead	6,030
St. Joseph's College, Ipswich	3,824
St. Joseph's College, Stoke	2,806
St. Joseph's Convent, Reading	3,465
St. Lawrence College, Ramsgate	6,210
St. Margaret's, Bushey	4,506
St. Margaret's, Exeter	3,261
St. Mary and St. Anne	6,344
St. Mary's College, Crosby	3,166
St. Mary's Convent, Cambridge	3,274
St. Mary's Hall, Brighton	5,139
St. Maurs Convent, Weybridge	3,705
St. Paul's Girls, Hammersmith	5,251
St. Paul's, Barnes	6,660
St. Peter's, York	5,595
Stafford Grammar	3,399
Stamford	3,546
Stamford High	3,549
Stockport Grammar	3,483
Stoneyhurst College	6,614
Stowe	7,518
Streatham Hill/Clapham High	3,609
Surbiton High	4,080
Sutton High GPDST	3,609

School name	Average fee charged for assisted pupils in academic year 1992-93 £
Sutton Valence	6,222
Sydenham High GPDST	3,609
Talbot Heath	3,759
Taunton	5,744
Teesside High	3,075
Tonbridge	7,404
Tormead	4,082
Trent College	5,269
Trinity of John Whitgift	4,533
Truro	3,810
Truro High	3,414
University College School, London	5,662
Upton Hall Convent	2,388
Ursuline Convent, Kent	4,338
Ursuline High, Ilford	3,700
Wakefield High	3,400
Walthamstow Hall	4,838
Warwick	3,864
Wellingborough	4,784
Wellington College	7,824
Wellington, Somerset	3,774
Wells Cathedral	4,635
West Buckland	4,176
Westholme	2,955
Westminster	5,013
Whitgift, Croydon	4,671
William Hulme Grammar	3,613
Wimbledon High GPDST	3,609
Winchester College	8,250
Wisbech Grammar	4,021
Withington Girls	3,150
Wolverhampton Grammar	3,882
Woodbridge	4,935
Woodhouse Grove	4,241
Worksop	5,460
Wrekin College	6,418
Wycliffe College	7,456
Yarm	4,005

Sex Education

Mr. Alan Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will require schools to issue guidance to parents who withdraw their children from sex education; and if he will provide schools with a model of such guidance including information on HIV and AIDS and the responsibilities associated with them.

Mr. Forth: My right hon. Friend has no powers to require schools to do so. We intend, however, to issue a circular of guidance which will encourage schools to offer support to those parents who do withdraw their children from all or part of sex education in deciding how best to provide their children with the information and guidance they will need.

Student Unions

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what information he has on the number of *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time staff employed by each campus union in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Boswell: This information is not available centrally.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Immigration

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons detained under Immigration Act powers applied to his Department to be allowed to depart voluntarily under *(a)* the supervised departure provisions and *(b)* the voluntary departure provisions of the immigration rules in each quarter since January 1992.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The readily available information relates to persons subject to deportation action who were removed under the supervised departure procedures, or left voluntarily, and persons dealt with as illegal entrants who left voluntarily. This information is given in the table. Most of these persons will have been detained prior to departure. A number will have been subject to restrictions as an alternative to detention, but such cases could be separately identified only at disproportionate cost.

	1992					1993
	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter	Year	1st [2]quarter
Persons subject to deportation action						
Supervised departures	475	339	385	367	1,566	[1]—
Left voluntarily	21	9	15	36	81	[1]—
Illegal entrants:						
Left voluntarily	82	75	67	66	290	68

[1] Not yet available.
[2] Provisional data.

Doctors (Work Permits)

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what are the criteria governing the issue of work permits to doctors from non-EC countries wishing to continue in training grade posts in the NHS after the expiry of their permit-free four-year period; (2) what consideration is given to extending permit-free training status beyond the maximum of four years for hospital training posts undertaken by doctors from non-EC countries.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Under the immigration rules there is no provision for a non-EC national doctor coming here for postgraduate training in a hospital to switch to work permit employment. Where a doctor requires longer than

four years to complete his or her postgraduate training, we are prepared to consider, exceptionally, granting further leave to remain on a permit-free basis for a limited period.

Anabolic Steroids

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effect of abuse of anabolic steroids on the incidence of violent crime; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has recently completed a review of the misuse of anabolic steroids, including the available evidence on their behaviourial side effects and the possible link with violent crime. We are currently considering the council's conclusions and recommendations, together with other ministerial colleagues.

Young Runaways

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has of the number of young people aged under 17 years who have run away from home within each police force area in Wales in each year since 1989.

Mr. Maclean: Figures are not available centrally. Limited information on missing persons is contained in the four Welsh forces' chief constables' annual reports.

Bank Customers (Political Views)

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will institute an inquiry on the keeping of records regarding the party political views of bank customers; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what assessment he has made of whether the Data Protection Registrar has sufficient funds and staff to initiate a full inquiry into the keeping of records on individuals' party political views by commercial organisations.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: It is for the Data Protection Registrar to determine whether a breach of the Data Protection Act has occurred in any particular case. I understand that the registrar is making some preliminary inquiries in the banking sector, following the stories which have appeared about the holding of data on political affiliations. He will consider whether further inquiries are appropriate, and what the resource implications of these may be.

Sheehy Report

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many copies of the Sheehy committee report on the police have been distributed free of charge to the police officers and other interested parties; and how much expenditure has been incurred.

Mr. Charles Wardle: A total of 875 copies of the report of the inquiry into police responsibilities and rewards were produced for distribution by the inquiry to interested parties. The chief officer of each police force in the United Kingdom received two copies, as did the clerk to each police authority. Copies were also circulated to each organisation and individual who gave oral evidence to the inquiry. The cost of distribution was £20,000.

Prisons (Racial Discrimination)

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many official complaints have been made by prison inmates in England and Wales of racial discrimination being shown or used against them during each of the last three years.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. D. Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated 26 July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent question about the number of complaints of racial discrimination recorded over the last three years.

Information is not held in the form requested. The request and complaints system does not record racial discrimination as a separate category, nor does it separate out requests from complaints.

Governors are required to record all racial incidents and report them quarterly to Area Managers, and annually in aggregated statistical form. However, the definition of a racial incident goes wider than complaints of racial discrimination and includes, for example, incidents between prisoners and between staff. It is not therefore possible to separate out complaints of racial discrimination from the information available.

Fines (Non-payment)

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many men and women were imprisoned for non-payment of fines for *(a)* not having television licences and *(b)* other offences involving fines in the last two years for which figures are available.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The available information is for 1991. A total of 258 males and 136 females were received into prison service establishments in England and Wales for defaulting on a fine after conviction for operating a television without a licence; and 17,740 males and 840 females were received for fine default following other offences.

Hong Kong

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proposal he has to grant full British citizenship to members of non-Chinese ethnic minorities in Hong Kong who will be without a right of abode elsewhere after 1997; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: My right hon. and learned Friend has no plans for new legislation to provide British citizenship for this group. All British members of the non-Chinese ethnic minorities in Hong Kong will be entitled to retain or acquire an appropriate form of British nationality after 1997 and will be assured of full British consular protection. They are guaranteed the right of abode in Hong Kong, and the Government have given an assurance, repeated on many occasions, that if, against all expectations, members of this group came under pressure to leave Hong Kong and had nowhere else to go, the Government of the day would be expected to consider with considerable and particular sympathy their case for admission to the United Kingdom.

Mr. Mark Jarvis

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the report of the Winsom Green prison security department on the suitability of Mark Jarvis for home leave.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. D. Lewis to Ms Lynne Jones, dated 26 July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the publication of the report on the suitability of Mr. Mark Jarvis for home leave.

In considering applications for home leave, the home leave board will receive reports from a number of sources, including staff responsible for security. In the case of Mr. Jarvis, the home leave board considered these reports which, with the exception of the security report, indicated that his recent behaviour was much improved and that he had shown a marked change since arriving at Birmingham in 1991. In view of his history, the board decided that the decision should be deferred and further reports commissioned about the suitability of the place he intended to stay. His good behaviour continued over the next two months and the board was advised that his home leave address was suitable. The social services were also consulted, and his home leave was approved.

The report from the security department at Birmingham had referred to his criminal record, his failure on temporary release the year before and his having been refused four applications for parole. The report was compiled by a prison officer and expressed the view that Mr. Jarvis was not suitable for home leave at the time, but having taken that report into consideration, alongside other reports of a more positive nature, the home leave board decided he should be released.

I am very concerned about any temporary release failure. The procedures were changed in October last year to improve the effectiveness of risk assessment. A further review is currently in progress. I have also written recently to all Governors to remind them of the need for great care before releasing a prisoner for home leave and reminding them to exercise caution in favour of public safety. It is right to refuse any application where there is doubt about a prisoner's likely behaviour while at liberty. Good behaviour in prison is a factor to be taken into account when considering a request for home leave, but the protection of the public has to be the overriding factor.

Alcohol

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many persons under the age of 18 years were found guilty or cautioned for buying intoxicating liquor within each police force area in Wales in each of the last three years; and how many licensees were found guilty or cautioned for selling intoxicating liquor to persons aged under 18 years;

(2) how many children and young people under the age of 18 years have been found guilty or cautioned for offences of drunkenness within each police force area in Wales in each of the last three years.

Mr. Maclean: The information requested is given in the tables. Data for 1992 will not be available until the autumn.

Table A
Persons found guilty or cautioned under the Licensing Act 1964 by police force area in Wales 1989-91

Police force area	*Year*	*Found guilty*	*Cautioned*	*Found guilty or cautioned*
Persons under 18 buying intoxicating liquor[1]				
Dyfed—Powys	1989	—	23	23
	1990	3	27	30
	1991	—	10	10
Gwent	1989	8	53	61
	1990	37	54	91
	1991	1	46	47
North Wales	1989	32	60	92
	1990	15	78	93
	1991	5	31	36
South Wales	1989	8	52	60
	1990	6	76	82
	1991	—	21	21
Wales	1989	48	188	236
	1990	61	235	296
	1991	6	108	114
Selling intoxicating liquor to persons under 18[2]				
Dyfed—Powys	1989	4	16	20
	1990	7	7	14
	1991	—	4	4
Gwent	1989	16	41	57
	1990	29	22	51
	1991	6	12	18
North Wales	1989	12	14	26
	1990	11	3	14
	1991	1	10	11

Police force area	Year	Found guilty	Cautioned	Found guilty or cautioned
South Wales	1989	16	11	27
	1990	19	15	34
	1991	14	8	22
Wales	1989	48	82	130
	1990	66	47	113
	1991	21	34	55

[1]Section 169(2) Licensing Act 1964.
[2]Section 169(1) Licensing Act 1964.

Table B
Persons found guilty or cautioned for offences of drunkenness by age and police force area in Wales 1989—1991

Police force area	Year	Found guilty	Cautioned	Found guilty or cautioned
Aged 10 to under 14 years				
Dyfed—Powys	1989	—	1	1
	1990	—	1	1
	1991	—	—	—
Gwent	1989	—	4	4
	1990	—	7	7
	1991	—	1	1
North Wales	1989	1	—	1
	1990	—	—	—
	1991	—	—	—
South Wales	1989	—	—	—
	1990	—	2	2
	1991	—	—	—
Wales	1989	1	5	6
	1990	—	10	10
	1991	—	1	1
Aged 14 to under 18 years				
Dyfed—Powys	1989	8	12	20
	1990	12	13	25
	1991	8	11	19
Gwent	1989	72	77	149
	1990	69	59	128
	1991	29	38	67
North Wales	1989	29	9	38
	1990	36	15	51
	1991	26	15	41
South Wales	1989	114	68	182
	1990	89	52	141
	1991	69	29	98
Wales	1989	223	166	389
	1990	206	139	345
	1991	132	93	225
Aged 10 to under 18 years				
Dyfed—Powys	1989	8	13	21
	1990	12	14	26
	1991	8	11	19
Gwent	1989	72	81	153
	1990	69	66	135
	1991	29	39	68
North Wales	1989	30	9	39
	1990	36	15	51
	1991	26	15	41
South Wales	1989	114	68	182
	1990	89	54	143

Police force area	*Year*	*Found guilty*	*Cautioned*	*Found guilty or cautioned*
	1991	69	29	98
Wales	1989	224	171	395
	1990	206	149	355
	1991	132	94	226

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Howard: Our criteria are to target publicity material in alternative media, according to need, within available funding. My Department currently makes available the following:

"Fire Safety Advice for Disabled People" in 18 pt bold type.

"Fire Safety in the Home" audio cassette.

"Practical Ways to Crack Crime—Family Version" audio cassette.

We have not produced any material in Braille.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape.

Mr. Howard: Publicity material produced by the Home Office is available, free of charge, to the public from relevant local services such as police forces and fire brigades. Blind and partially-sighted people can obtain such material by contacting those services.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Whether or not the regulations apply in any particular case will depend on the nature of the work awarded and the contractors' own proposals for carrying it out. The replies of 9 March at column *476* and 18 June at column *753* listed the areas of the Home Office which have been contracted out. The regulations did not apply to the following:

Management of Wolds prison
Management of Blakenhurst prison
Court escort and custody services in Humberside and the east midlands
Catering services (Downview, Belmarsh, Bullingdon, Holme House, Woodhill, Highdown and Lancaster Farms)
Forensic Science Service waste disposal

Information concerning whether the regulations applied to any other Home Office services for which contracts have been awarded since November 1991 could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Wandsworth Prison

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the building projects and their cost now being undertaken at Wandsworth prison as of 16 July.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. D. Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated 26 July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the building projects, and their cost, now being undertaken at Wandsworth prison.

After completion of the modernisation of D Wing in March 1993, at a cost of £5·5 million, enabling works are under way to allow the modernisation of C Wing. The enabling works (including the removal of asbestos and electrical wiring) will be completed in September 1993, at an estimated cost of £175,000. Work on the 15 month refurbishment of C Wing will then commence in September 1993, at an estimated cost of £7·15 million.

Jason Georgiou

Mr. Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what was the cost of custody for Jason Georgiou; for what period he was held in custody; and if he will list the prosecution witnesses.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. D. Lewis to Mr. Peter Bottomley, dated 26 July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Question about the costs of holding Jason Georgiou in custody and the period for which he was held.

Jason Georgiou was held at Belmarsh Prison from 27 October 1992 until 30 April 1993 when he was transferred to Brixton Prison where he remained until his release on 12 July 1993.

We do not collect costs of individual prisoners, but the average cost of holding a person in custody for this period in local and remand prisons would have been £17,197 at 93/4 prices.

I regret that we are unable to furnish you with details of the prosecution witnesses in the case since the Lord Chancellors Department have advised that none of them were called to give evidence and therefore their details are not a matter of public record.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against

the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Howard: The Government continue to help small businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

During the past 12 months my Department has substantially increased the resources it devotes to taking forward the Government's deregulation initiative and has taken a number of steps to help small businesses. We have proposed legislation which aims to clarify the law on Sunday trading; we have withdrawn draft fire regulations which representatives of some small businesses feared would be unduly burdensome and we are preparing new regulations which take account of these concerns; we have undertaken consultation exercises on greyhound racing and liquor licensing; and we have set in hand a full review of all regulations affecting business for which the Home Office has responsibility. We propose to remove the restrictions on weekday shop opening hours in England and Wales (and throughout the week in Scotland) as soon as parliamentary time permits.

The main deregulatory achievements in 1991 were in betting and gaming. The greyhound industry was given greater flexibility to set deductions according to market forces by increasing from 17·5 per cent. to 29 per cent. the maximum permitted amount which may be retained by the operators of a totalisator on a dog racecourse. Gaming clubs were allowed to increase from one to two the number of multiple bingo games that can be played on a Saturday.

The target is to complete the current review of Home Office regulations by April 1994. Targets have also been set for other work such as consultative exercises and developing proposals for legislation. In addition the Home Office will contribute to the Department of Trade and Industry's central record of Government regulations against which progress on deregulation is being monitored.

The work on deregulation complements continuing efforts to assist firms who wish to bid for Home Office business. Over the last 12 months we have again revised and reissued a booklet entitled "Selling to the Home Office" which details the Home Office's purchasing needs and gives specific contact points for initial approaches. A central contact point for general enquiries is also available. It is Home Office policy to give encouragement and assistance to small businesses wherever possible. The Home Office does not hold statistical information regarding the volume of business placed with small firms.

Drug Addicts

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug addicts in Wales notified to his Department are aged under 21 years; and how many of them are *(a)* female and *(b)* male.

Mr. Maclean: The information requested is contained in tables A9 and A10 of the Home Office statistical bulletin "Statistics of drug addicts notified to the Home Office, United Kingdom, 1992" (area tables), a copy of which is in the Library.

Ethnic Minorities (Employment)

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to his answer of 8 June, *Official Report*, columns *178-80*, how many letters of representation regarding proposed cuts in funding under section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966 he has received from, or on behalf of, *(a)* school governing bodies, *(b)* schools, *(c)* other educational institutions and *(d)* parents and other individuals.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The numbers are:
(a) 119; *(b)* 192; *(c)* 10; *(d)* 311.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The Home Office has committed approximately £4·5 million to 186 computer consultancy contracts let since 1 November 1991. During this period the statistical database has been automated and the tasks are not recorded in a manner which enables a general description to be provided without incurring disproportionate cost. The suppliers of the consultancies are as follows (figures in brackets indicate the number of contracts to that company if more than one):

Supplier
Admiral (×3)
Aims systems (×3)
Axis Consultants Ltd. (×2)
Bristol Transputer Centre
Bull Information Systems (×2)
CCTA (×7)
Civil Service College
CMG Information Services
Computer Capacity Management
Computer People North
Concorde Services
Coopers Lybrand and Deloitte (×2)
CSC (×2)
CSS Trident (×4)
Data Sciences UK
Database Management
Daton Systems
Daymount Computing
DBI Associates Limited (×5)
DEC (×2)
Dell Computer Corporation (×3)
Doric Computer Systems
Easams
Edinburgh Parallel
EDS Scicon Defence
Ernst and Young (×2)
Express Computer Consultants
Ferranti International
Grafton (×4)
Hans Grefte (×3)
Harvey Consultants
HDX
Hedra (×2)
Holdene Group Plc (×2)
Hoskyns Group Plc (×7)
Hunterskil (×7)
IBIS
ICL (×4)
ITA
Kermon (×9)
Keyford Precision
KGB Micros
Kode

Lancare (×2)
LBMS (×2)
Liverpool Polytechnic Service
Logica (×3)
Logical Systems International
Lorien Group Plc
Mancos Computers
Marketing Generics
Metier
Microprism (UK) Limited
MSG Business Systems
Myriad Computer Services (×3)
National Transputer

Ofice (×2)
Oracle Corporation UK
Origin IQ
PA Consulting Group (×12)
Paradis Consultants (×3)
P-E International
Price Waterhouse (×2)
Recognition Research (×2)
Retix
Riverside Training (×3)
Robin Verney Associates (×3)
S-Com (×2)
Sanderson Insight
Sema Group (×4)
Siemens Nixdorf (×9)
Smith Associates (×2)
Software AG (×2)
Span Contracts (×3)
Strategy and Vision Research
TABS Limited (×2)
Touche Ross (×2)
VNG Nationwide (×4)
Winway Systems Limited
World Quality Systems (×5)

Uninsured Vehicles

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were prosecuted for driving an uninsured vehicle in 1992.

Mr. Maclean: A total of 364,035 proceedings were taken in England and Wales in 1991 for the offence of "using a motor vehicle vehicle uninsured against third party risks".

The number involved is likely to be less because some may have been proceeded against for more than one of these offences.

Figures for 1992 are not yet available.

Police Computer System

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the designated computer system for the police national criminal intelligence service will be ready.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The interim computer system which is currently used by the National Criminal Intelligence Service is expected to be replaced early in 1995.

Traffic Offences and Burglaries

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* traffic offences and *(b)* burglaries were recorded in (i) 1980 and (ii) 1992.

Mr. Maclean: Figures for the number of notifiable offences recorded by the police are published annually in the Home Office Bulletin "Notifiable Offences, England and Wales". They include offences of burglary, causing death by reckless driving and (from April 1992) causing death by aggravated vehicle-taking. All other traffic offences are not notifiable. However, statistics giving the action taken for offences relating to motor vehicles (written warnings, vehicle defect rectification scheme notices, fixed penalty notices and court proceedings) are published annually in Home Office Statistical Bulletin "Motor Offences, England and Wales", although 1992 figures have not yet been published. Copies of these publications are in the Library.

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received concerning the amount of police time that is spent on traffic control compared with burglary prevention and investigation; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: My right hon. and learned Friend has received a number of representations from hon. Members and from the public in the last 12 months about the time spent by the police on traffic control as opposed to dealing with other crime matters. The police have a key role in the enforcement of traffic legislation. The deployment of police officers to meet the various duties undertaken by the police is an operational matter for individual chief officers of police.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Howard: The information is as follows:

Grade	*Number*
Administrative assistant	83
Administrative officer	79
Executive officer	202
Higher executive officer	176
Higher professional and technology officer	1
Senior executive officer	94
Total	635

Prison Population

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what are the latest figures for the total prison population; and what those figures were in 1990, 1991 and 1992.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. D. Lewis to Mr. Jim Callaghan, dated 26 July 1993:

The Secretary of State has asked me to write to you directly in reply to your Parliamentary Question about the latest figures for the total prison population and what those figures were in 1990, 1991 and 1992.

The prison population was 44,901 on 23 July. The figures for 30 June each year between 1990 and 1993 are shown in the attached table.

Prison population, England and Wales: 1990—1993

Date	*Number of persons*[2]
30 June 1990	45,466
30 June 1991	45,626
30 June 1992	46,832
30 June 1993[1]	44,225

[1] Provisional figure.
[2] Includes prisoners held in police cells (943 in 1990, 872 in 1991, 1,346 in 1992 and none in 1993).

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many neighbourhood watch schemes now exist in England and Wales.

Mr. Charles Wardle: According to the latest information available, there were over 115,000 neighbourhood watch schemes in England and Wales at the end of December 1992. These schemes covered some 5 million households.

Police, Newham

Mr. Leighton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the reasons for the reduction in numbers of police officers in the London borough of Newham in the last year.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Deployment of personnel within the Metropolitan police is a matter for the commissioner, but I understand that the reduction is due to civilianisation of some posts, employment of the manpower allocation formula at area level affecting manpower available to divisions, and the transfer of responsibility for court staff, and Whitehall security staff, from division to area or headquarters.

Road Tax Evasion

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were prosecuted for road tax evasion offences in each year since 1989.

Mr. Maclean: The following table shows the number of proceedings taken in England and Wales in the years 1989 to 1991 for the offence of "motor vehicle licence—failing to pay appropriate duty":

	Number
1989	166,575
1990	160,731
1991	174,828

The number of people involved is likely to be less because some of them may have been prosecuted against for more than one of these offences.

Figures for 1992 are not yet available.

Victim Support Schemes

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many victim support schemes now operate in England and Wales.

Mr. Maclean: I understand there are some 360 local victim support schemes and branches in England and Wales. In addition there are 36 schemes operating in the Crown court as the Crown court witness service of Victim Support.

Traffic Offences and Burglaries

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information he collects about the priorities exercised by each police constabulary in allocating resources to *(a)* traffic offences and *(b)* burglary.

Mr. Charles Wardle: This information is not collected centrally.

Fatal Stabbings

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fatal stabbings have been recorded by each police constabulary in each of the past five years.

Mr. Maclean: The table shows the number of offences currently recorded as homicide involving the use of a sharp instrument in England and Wales for the years 1987 to 1991:

Offences currently recorded as homicide involving the use of a sharp instrument

England and Wales Police force area	*Number of offences* 1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Avon and Somerset	9	2	2	2	3
Bedfordshire	4	3	2	2	3
Cambridgeshire	2	2	1	1	2
Cheshire	1	2	2	3	2
Cleveland	—	3	6	3	3
Cumbria	—	—	—	3	—
Derbyshire	—	2	4	2	3
Devon and Cornwall	4	6	1	3	3
Dorset	—	1	—	1	2
Durham	1	—	—	3	—
Essex	3	6	5	1	7
Gloucestershire	—	1	3	1	3
Greater Manchester	14	12	6	4	7
Hampshire	4	1	2	6	3
Hertfordshire	—	7	2	1	5
Humberside	3	4	2	3	2
Kent	4	6	2	4	2
Lancashire	9	5	5	6	3
Leicestershire	—	—	1	5	3
Lincolnshire	2	—	2	—	2
London, City of	—	—	—	—	—
Merseyside	3	7	4	6	11
Metropolitan Police District	70	57	59	52	73
Norfolk	1	1	1	7	8
Northamptonshire	5	4	1	1	—
Northumbria	5	3	6	6	5
North Yorkshire	2	1	4	2	2
Nottinghamshire	5	1	—	4	5
South Yorkshire	4	7	3	5	8
Staffordshire	2	3	2	3	3
Suffolk	—	—	4	2	2
Surrey	3	2	2	1	2
Sussex	1	2	4	4	3
Thames Valley	2	6	7	5	7
Warwickshire	2	—	1	—	1
West Mercia	1	1	—	2	1
West Midlands	15	9	10	8	12
West Yorkshire	10	7	13	10	15
Wiltshire	2	1	4	1	3
Dyfed-Powys	2	2	—	—	1
Gwent	2	3	1	—	—
North Wales	1	4	—	—	2
South Wales	3	6	6	11	1
England and Wales	201	190	182	184	223

Secured by Design Initiative

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to promote the Secured by Design initiative.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Secured by Design is a police initiative which has had the Government's full support since its inception, and we publish publicity material promoting its merits. The initiative will be further promoted in forthcoming guidance to local planning authorities on crime prevention to be issued by the Department of the Environment in consultation with the Home Office.

Dog Breeders

Mr. Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria local authorities must use when considering applications or renewal of licences for dog breeders.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Applications for licences for dog breeders are considered against the criteria set out in Section 1(4) of the Breeding of Dogs Act 1973.

Violent Crime

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he plans to take to curb the increase in violent crimes.

Mr. Charles Wardle: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to his question on 7 June 1993 at column *76*.

Knives

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were convicted for possession of a knife in public without good reason in each of the last five years.

Mr. Maclean: Information available centrally, which is given in the table, relating to the number of persons found guilty for possession of knives under the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 section 1, and the Criminal Justice Act 1988, section 139 for the years 1987 to 1991. Information for 1992 is not yet available.

Number of offenders convicted of offences of possession of knives 1987 to 1991
England and Wales

	1987	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*
Carrying of offensive weapons without lawful authority or excuse[1] (found guilty)	5,896	5,793	5,097	4,281	3,907
Carrying article with blade or point in public place[2] (found guilty)	[3]—	130	1,544	1,578	1,737

[1] Prevention of Crime Act 1953, section 1. May include a small number of offences involving truncheons etc.
[2] Criminal Justice Act 1988, section 139.
[3] Not available.

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have been brought under the Criminal Justice Acts provisions banning the public carrying of knives.

Mr. Maclean: Information is given in the table. 1992 data will not be available until the autumn.

Number of prosecutions for the offence of carrying an article with blade or point under section 139 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988[1]. 1988-1991

Year	*Prosecutions*
1988	150
1989	2,018
1990	2,146
1991	2,397

[1] Came into force in October 1988.

Bail Hostels

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many bail hostels, and how many bail hostel places, are situated in each police authority area in England and Wales; and how many additional places the Government aims to provide by 1995 in each police authority area.

Mr. Maclean: There are bail hostels in 20 police authority areas as listed:

Bail Hostels in England and Wales in 1993

Police Authority	*Hostel*	*Beds*
Cheshire	Bunbury House	22
Cheshire	Linden Bank	22
Cleveland	South Bank	24
Devon and Cornwall	Dudley Centre	22
Greater Manchester	Chorlton Hostel	27
Gloucestershire	Ryecroft	16
Hampshire	Dickson House	28
Hampshire	Southampton	22
Kent	Dover Bail	18
Lancashire	Blackburn	18
Leicestershire	Howard House	20
Merseyside	Merseybank	28
Metropolitan	Canadian Avenue	23
Metropolitan	Corlton Road	20
Metropolitan	Kelley House	28
Metropolitan	Kew	14
Metropolitan	Tulse Hill	27
North Wales	Ty Newydd	12
Northumbria	Cuthbert House	22
Northumbria	Pennywell	22
Oxfordshire	Clarks House	27
South Wales	Emroch House	15
Staffordshire	Lichfield Road	20
West Midlands	Marshall House	22
West Midlands	Stonnall Road	12
West Midlands	Sycamore Lodge	32
West Midlands	Welford	26
South Yorkshire	Town Moor	25
West Yorkshire	Howden House	27
West Yorkshire	Walmer Villas	18
	Beds	659
	Hostels	30

There are approved probation/bail hostels in 36 police authority areas as listed:

Probation/Bail Hostels in England and Wales 1993

Police Authority	*Hostel*	*Beds*
Avon and Somerset	Ashley House	20
Avon and Somerset	Bridge House	15
Avon and Somerset	Brigstocke Road	29
Avon and Somerset	Glogan House	16
Bedfordshire	Bedford	25
Bedfordshire	Napier Road	23
Cambridgeshire	Peterborough	26
Cheshire	Bewsey Street	20
Cleveland	The Crescent	25
Cumbria	Bowling Green	24
Derbyshire	Burdett Lodge	25
Devon and Cornwall	Lawson House	20
Devon and Cornwall	Meneghy House	18
Dorset	Bournemouth	25
Dorset	Weston	27
Durham	Fir Tree Grange	28
Essex	Basildon	32
Essex	Windyridge	30
Greater Manchester	Ascot House	22
Greater Manchester	Bradshaw	27
Greater Manchester	Hopwood	18
Greater Manchester	St. Josephs	29
Greater Manchester	Wilton Place	29
Greater Manchester	Withington Road	37
Hampshire	The Grange	18
West Mercia	Braley House	23
Herts	St. Albans	26
Humberside	Queens Road	19
Kent	Fleming House	23
Kent	Hollywood Manor	30
Lancashire	Highfield House	18
Lancashire	Hoole House	24
Leicestershire	Charnwood Lodge	18
Leicestershire	Kirk Lodge	35
Lincolnshire	Wordsworth House	28
Merseyside	Adelaide House	22
Merseyside	Canning House	27
Merseyside	Southwood	23
Metropolitan	Beckenham Road	20
Metropolitan	Bedford/Shenley	30
Metropolitan	Camden House	29
Metropolitan	Ellison House	25
Metropolitan	KPH	19
Metropolitan	Seafield Lodge	14
Metropolitan	St. Edmunds	25
Metropolitan	St. Mungo	25
Metropolitan	St. Vincents	24
Metropolitan	West Park	22
Metropolitan	Westbourne House	40
North Wales	Plas-y-wern	12
Norfolk	John Boag House	29
Northamptonshire	Bridgewood	23
Northamptonshire	Stone House	24
Northumbria	Ozanam House	27
Northumbria	St. Christophers	22
Nottinghamshire	Astral Grove	15
Nottinghamshire	Southwell House	16
Nottinghamshire	Trent House	22
South Wales	Mandeville House	26
Staffordshire	Wenger House	42
Suffolk	Lightfoot House	22
Suffolk	The Cottage	18
Surrey	St. Catherines	19
Sussex	Brighton	15
Thames Valley	Abingdon Road	22
Thames Valley	Elizabeth Fry	20
Thames Valley	Manor Lodge	27
Thames Valley	Milton Keynes	16
Thames Valley	St. Leonards	23
Thames Valley	Wellesley House	18
West Midlands	Bilston	15
West Midlands	Carpenter House	16
West Midlands	Crowley House	18
West Midlands	Stoke Green	22
Warwickshire	Kenilworth Road	18
Warwickshire	McIntyre House	18
South Yorkshire	Centre 45	36
South Yorkshire	Norfolk Park	49
South Yorkshire	Rookwood	37
West Yorkshire	Albion Street	24
West Yorkshire	Cardigan House	23
West Yorkshire	Elm Bank	17
West Yorkshire	Ripon House	17
West Yorkshire	St. Johns House	28
	Beds	1,993
	Hostels	84

The approved hostel expansion programme aims to provide 1,365 additional places between April 1988 and March 1996. Of these, 914 are already on stream and are included in the tables. The remaining places have been provisionally allocated but until the appropriate properties or sites are identified the precise numbers cannot be determined.

Mr. Michael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the bail hostels and combined probation and bail hostels in England and Wales currently operated by voluntary organisations; and what target he has set for increasing this number by 1995.

Mr. Maclean: The approved hostels that are currently operated by voluntary managing committees are as listed:

Approved bail hostels in England and Wales managed by voluntary managing committees.

Probation area	*Hostel*	*Location*	*Beds*
London Inner	Kelley House	London	28

Probation and bail hostels in England and Wales managed by voluntary managing committees.

Probation area	*Hostel*	*Location*	*Beds*
Avon	Ashley House	Bristol	20
Berkshire	Elizabeth Fry	Reading	20
Essex	Windyridge	Nayland	30
Kent	Hollywood Manor	Sevenoaks	30
London Inner	KPH	London	19
London Inner	St. Edmunds	London	25
London Inner	St. Mungo	London	25
London Inner	St. Vincents	London	24
Merseyside	Adelaide House	Liverpool	22
Northants	Stone House	Northampton	24
Northumbria	Ozanam House	Newcastle/Tyne	25
Northumbria	St. Christophers	Newcastle/Tyne	22
Warwickshire	McIntyre House	Nuneaton	18
Yorkshire West	Cardigan House	Leeds	23
Yorkshire West	Ripon House	Leeds	17
Yorkshire West	St. Johns House	Leeds	28

The approved hostel expansion programme aims to provide 1,365 additional places between April 1988 and March 1996. Of these 914 are already on stream. The remaining places have been provisionally allocated but until appropriate properties or sites are identified the precise numbers cannot be determined. Within the overall programme there is no specific target for expansion by voluntary hostels.

Prison Ships

Ms. Eagle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what companies his Department has been in contact with regarding the proposal to moor prison ships in Birkenhead and Barrow;

(2) what timetable he is considering for the possible establishment of floating prisons;

(3) what is the estimated cost of hiring staffing and maintaining prison ships in the Wallasey or Birkenhead docks.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the director general of the prison service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. D. Lewis to Ms Angela Eagle, dated 26 July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent Questions about prison ships.

Maritime detention facilities are one of the options being considered as part of a Prison Service contingency planning exercise. This exercise is intended to identify options for coping with levels of prisoner population that exceed the available accommodation. A number of sites with the necessary docking facilities are being reviewed, but no decision has been taken on the feasibility of this option.

As consideration of the option is at such an early stage, it is not possible to give the details of costs. Nor have there been any decisions on which companies could supply the accommodation.

As the contacts so far have been of a very preliminary nature and any decision to proceed with this option might involve a competitive tender, details of individual companies interested could not properly be revealed at this stage.

Fines

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money was levied in fines after convictions under the criminal law for each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; what amounts were actually collected in fines paid for each year; and in aid of which vote fines collected for breaches of the criminal law are appropriated.

Mr. Maclean: Information on the amount of fines imposed at all courts following conviction under criminal law for the years 1986, 1989, 1990 and 1991 is given in the table. Comparable data for years prior to 1986 and for 1987 and 1988 are unavailable. It is not possible to identify fines separately from other similar receipts such as confiscation orders, forfeit bail sureties or magistrates' courts fees. All monies collected from magistrates' courts are surrendered direct to the Consolidated Fund and are not appropriated in aid of any vote.

Amount of fines imposed at all courts for all offences under criminal law, 1986, 1989, 1990 and 1991

England and Wales	*Millions*
1986	£118·7
1989	£140·8
1990	£150·9
1991	£141·5

Empty Homes

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list, by *(a)* location and *(b)* region, the empty homes in the ownership of his Department which are (i) vacant for security reasons, (ii) vacant awaiting redevelopment, (iii) vacant for demolition and (iv) surplus.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The number of vacant residential properties owned by the Department as at 1 April 1993 was as follows:

	Number
(a) Retained for redevelopment or security reasons	70
(b) Retained for essential reallocation	86
(c) To be demolished	50
(d) Surplus and on the open market for sale	86
Total	292

The above figures do not include properties owned by the Metropolitan police or other police authorities.

Listing by locations is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Board

Mr. Jopling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what is the cost of administering the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board for each of the last five years; and what was the ratio of these costs to the amount paid out in claims;

(2) what was the total number of claims made to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board in each of the last five years; and what proportion were paid out within *(a)* three, *(b)* six, *(c)* nine, *(d)* 12 and *(e)* over 12 months.

Mr. Maclean: The information requested is summarised in the table. Fuller details can be found in the published annual reports of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. Copies are held in the Library of the House.

Financial year	*Applications made*	*Compensation paid £ million*	*Administration costs £ million*	*Total costs £ million*	*Administration as percentage*	*Percentage of cases resolved within months* 3	6	9	12	*Over 12*
1988-89	43,385	69·381	7·481	76·86	9·7	1·0	2·1	4·8	19·0	73·1
1989-90	53,655	72·722	9·064	81·79	11·1	0·5	1·5	3·8	13·9	80·3
1990-91	50,820	109·330	10·293	119·62	8·6	0·7	2·6	5·9	16·3	74·5
1991-92	61,400	143·660	13·102	156·76	8·4	2·6	8·4	15·8	22·0	51·2
1992-93	65,977	152·490	14·249	166·74	8·5	2·0	8·9	19·7	26·3	43·1

Note: The percentage relating to cases resolved do not necessarily relate to claims received in that year. The figures for 1992-93 are provisional at this stage.

Prisoners (Drugs)

Mr. Rathbone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to improve community care assessment arrangements for drug misusing prisoners remanded in custody or sentenced.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Mr. D. Lewis to Mr. Tim Rathbone, dated 26 July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to reply to your recent question about plans to improve community care assessment arrangements for drug misusing prisoners remanded in custody or sentenced.

The arrangements for assessment for community care for people in contact with the Criminal Justice System were published recently in Home Office Circular 29/1993. A copy of this Circular is enclosed, it is also available in the library. We are currently undertaking a review of services provided for drug misusers in prison with the aim of producing a comprehensive strategy to address drug misuse. Preparation for discharge and aftercare arrangements will be included in this review.

Electoral Registration

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he is taking in his review of electoral registration procedures to address the difficulties experienced by homeless people in registering to vote.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: As part of our post-election review, the electoral registration working group recently met representatives of the Church of England, the Salvation Army, Shelter and CHAR—the campaign for the homeless and rootless—to discuss the difficulties experienced by homeless people in registering as electors. We intend to hold further discussions later in the year.

Football Pools

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from Vernons Pools about the sale of pools coupons through retail outlets; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The managing director of Vernons Pools wrote to me earlier this month about the timing of the commencement of clause 56 of the National Lottery Etc., Bill which will remove the prohibition on the use of premises for the delivery of football pools coupons and stakes. In order to ensure that the national lottery is not disadvantaged, we intend to defer the commencement of clause 56—and indeed of the other provisions of part IV of the Bill—until the launch of the lottery.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Wind Power

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make it his policy to commence a tendering process to construct a demonstration offshore wind farm.

Mr. Eggar: I have no plans to construct a demonstration offshore wind farm.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make it his policy to allow community-based wind power schemes to advertise for local investment; and if he will seek to place a statutory duty on local authorities to identify suitable sites for such developments.

Mr. Eggar: I am not aware of any impediment to community-based wind power schemes advertising for local investment. *Planning Policy Guidance Note 22: Renewable Energy* advises local authorities to include renewables in their development plan and provides guidance on how this should be done. It includes an annex on wind power.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he expects to make an announcement of when wind power developers can next apply for contracts under the non-fossil fuel obligation; and if he will make a statement concerning the procedure for the award of such contracts.

Mr. Eggar: I refer the hon. Member to my reply of 21 July to the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire, North-East (Mr. Moss), *Official Report*, column *339*.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make it his policy that the next tranche of wind power contracts should be for not less than 700 MW.

Mr. Eggar: I currently expect to make the third renewable energy order under the non-fossil fuel obligation for approximately 300 to 400 MW of new capacity in total but will review this in light of the quality and cost of proposals received. I am considering a separate band for wind power within that total.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what amount of money was allocated to Government sponsored research and development for renewable energy which is non-nuclear and does not involve the production of energy through waste incineration in each year since 1987.

Mr. Eggar: The amount of Government expenditure on research and development for renewable energy, not involving the production of energy through waste incineration, in each year since 1987 is as follows:

Year	*Spend (£ millions)*
1987-88	16·2
1988-89	15·8
1989-90	17·7
1990-91	20·5
1991-92	23·1
1992-93	23·6

The allocation for 1993-94 is estimated at £22·6 million.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make it his policy to ensure that all contracts for renewable energy under the non-fossil fuel obligation are for a minimum of 10 years beginning from the date of commissioning the projects.

Mr. Eggar: My intention is that the third renewables order will run for 15 to 20 years as from November 1994. This will allow the public electricity suppliers to offer generators contracts for a similar period.

Energy from Waste

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what percentage of non-nuclear contracts granted under the non-fossil fuel obligation have been given to companies involved in the generation of energy through waste incineration in each year since 1987.

Mr. Eggar: Under the 1990 Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation Renewables Order, seven out of 75 renewables contracts went to waste incineration projects. Under the 1991 order 14 out of 122 contracts went to waste incineration projects.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the companies which have been given moneys under the non-fossil fuel obligation for the generation of energy through waste incineration in each year since 1990 indicating *(a)* the name of the company, *(b)* the location of the incinerators, *(c)* the amount of money awarded for each project and *(d)* the amount of electricity in megawatts generated by each project.

Mr. Eggar: (a) and (b): The names, locations and capacities of waste incineration projects which received contracts under the 1990 and 1991 non-fossil fuel obligation renewables orders are as follows:

Generator name	*Location*	*Capacity (MW DNC)*
1990 projects		
Isle of Wight county council	Newport	2
Energy Supplies Ltd.	Newcastle upon Tyne	3
North London Waste Authority	Edmonton/London	27
Coventry City council	Coventry	8
Elm Energy UK	Wolverhampton	20
Fibropower Ltd.	Diss, Suffolk	13
Fibropower Ltd.	Scunthorpe, Humberside	13
1991 projects		
Babcock Power Investments Ltd.	Portsmouth	33
British Coal	Nottingham	7
Cory Environmental Ltd.	Belvedere, Kent	103
Derbyshire county council	Raynesway	7
Energy Supplies Ltd.	Pebsham, East Sussex	4
National Power	Northfleet, Kent	44
SELCHP Ltd.	London	25
Southampton Geothermal Heating	Southampton	5
Wessex Waste Management	Avonmouth, Bristol	23
Yorkshire Renewable Energy Ltd.	Knotstrop, Leeds	21
Adams Integrated Waste Ltd.	Wolverhampton	8
Agrigen Ltd.	Northampton	8
Northumbrian Services Ltd.	Gateshead, Tyne and Wear	1
Slough Estates	Slough	13

(c): The contract prices awarded to projects under the 1990 order varied, and are commercially confidential. Under the 1991 order, waste incineration projects in the "Municipal and General Industrial Waste" band receive a premium of 6·55 p/kWh; while those in the "Other" band receive a premium of 5·9 p/kWh.

(d): The amount of electricity generated by all projects is commercially confidential.

Biogas and Hydroelectric Schemes

Mr. Dafis: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what efforts are currently undertaken by his Department to encourage the development of biogas schemes and smaller hydroelectric schemes.

Mr. Eggar: My Department's renewable energy programme aims to stimulate the development of renewable sources of energy which have prospects of being economically competitive and environmentally acceptable. The non-fossil fuel obligation is stimulating an initial market. Biogas and small scale hydro are being supported under both the research programme and the non-fossil fuel obligation.

Regional Electricity Companies

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) when the details of the contracts for the non-fossil fuel obligations of the regional electricity companies will be announced;

(2) what will be the intended length of contracts under the new contracts for the non-fossil fuel obligations of the regional electricity companies.

Mr. Eggar: I refer the hon. Member to the document which I placed in the Libraries of both Houses giving details of the proposed arrangements of the third renewables order under the non-fossil fuel obligation, to which I referred in my reply of 21 July to the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire, North-East (Mr. Moss) *Official Report*, column *339*. My intention is that the third order will run for 15 to 20 years as from November 1994, which will allow the public electricity suppliers to offer generators contracts for a similar period.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to the reply to the hon. Member for Pembroke (Mr. Ainger), *Official Report*, 20 July, column *126*, what were the dates over which the vitrified high-level waste was delivered to Japan, the mode of transport used, the quantity involved and the location to which it was sent in Japan.

Mr. Eggar: The operational details are a matter for British Nuclear Fuels plc and its customer in Japan.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assessment has been made of Russian technical capacity to process nuclear waste.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 8 July 1993]:* British Nuclear Fuels plc is in discussion with the Russian Ministry of Atomic Power on the management of that country's nuclear waste. I understand that the parties have identified a number of areas in which collaboration between them can usefully take place and that they have agreed to meet on a regular basis.

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what progress has been made in conducting a study with BNFL on financial consequences of abandoning THORP, including the alternative use of already committed capital investment for the interim storage of contracted foreign spent fuel, as recommended in the First report of the Environment Committee of Session 1985-86, HC 191, on radioactive waste; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: The Government did not accept the recommendation in question.

Mr. Tipping: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what assurances overseas customers using the thermal oxide reprocessing plant have given that they will accept returns of high-level waste in accordance with the substitution principle; if Government approval of the principle will be conditional on such assurances; and what assessment he has made of the extent of facilities in recipient countries to provide adequate storage for such waste.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* The Government's consideration of the proposal by British Nuclear Fuels plc to return nuclear waste by substitution has not yet been completed. Should substitution be approved, it would be for the company to negotiate appropriate arrangements with its customers within guidelines set by the Government. Customers who did not wish to accept substitution on a basis acceptable to the United Kingdom would be required to take delivery of all three waste streams—high, intermediate and low-level waste.

Mr. Tipping: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what information he has about the comparative costs of transporting intermediate-level waste arising from the reprocessing of foreign spent nuclear fuel at the thermal oxide reprocessing plant back to customer countries against storing the intermediate-level waste in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* This is a commercial matter for British Nuclear Fuels plc and its overseas customers.

Atomic Energy Authority

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what progress has been made in meeting his target to ensure the first phase of work on options for the future of the AEA is completed by late autumn.

Mr. Eggar: The consultancy study I announced on 1 April, *Official Report*, column *407*, is progressing to schedule. An announcement will be made in due course, once I have had an opportunity to consider the consultants' report and the AEA's own views.

Nuclear Safety (CIS)

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the progress made in establishing a training seminar for nuclear safeguards experts from the Commonwealth of Independent States republics.

Mr. Eggar: In collaboration with BNFL and AEA my Department has to date arranged and funded three safeguards seminars for experts from the CIS Republics. Two of these were attended by personnel from the Russian Federation and concentrated on safeguards approaches for reprocessing plants, the third dealt with safeguards for fuel fabrication plants and fast reactors and included participants from the Republic of Kazakhstan in addition to the Russian Federation. A further two seminars are planned for the autumn.

Nuclear Industry

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *13*, on what occasions in regard to what nuclear materials the European Commission has granted a derogation under article 22 of EC Regulation 3227/76 for nuclear exports from the United Kingdom.

Mr. Eggar: Derogation from reporting has been granted to the Science museum, South Kensington, London for uranium and thorium specimens.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what estimates he has of the surpluses expected to be generated by Nuclear Electric, Scottish Nuclear and British Nuclear Fuel's operations from 1993 to 1998; and what restrictions he intends to place on their use.

Mr. Eggar: The profitability of Nuclear Electric, Scottish Nuclear and BNFL over the period 1993-98 will depend on a number of factors, many of which are inevitably uncertain. In their role as shareholder, the Government undertake appropriate monitoring of the companies' expenditure plans.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what the increase in liabilities would be for British Nuclear Fuels, Scottish Nuclear and Nuclear Electric if discounting is not applied to nuclear provisions.

Mr. Eggar: These are matters for the companies concerned.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what research has been undertaken to verify that the two per cent. discount rate applied to nuclear liabilities by United Kingdom nuclear companies correctly balances the risks and benefits between current and future generations.

Mr. Eggar: This is a matter for the nuclear companies.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on progress in making his target in implementation of extended reporting of nuclear materials and equipment by August 1993.

Mr. Eggar: The submission of confidential returns has begun.

Nuclear Emergencies

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what progress has been made in his target to develop by August a strategy for use of the radioactive incident monitoring network in a United Kingdom emergency through integration into the existing nuclear emergency briefing room procedures.

Mr. Eggar: Radioactive incident monitoring network equipment has been installed within the nuclear emergency briefing room and Department of Trade and Industry staff have participated in testing and demonstration of the system. Agreement has been reached in general terms on how it will be integrated into nuclear emergency briefing room procedures when the radioactive incident monitoring network phase 2 comes on stream towards the end of this year.

Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor Fuel

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* British Nuclear Fuels Limited, *(b)* Costain Engineering or *(c)* Nuclear Electric regarding plans on construction of a dry store for spent advanced gas-cooled reactor fuel.

Mr. Eggar: My Department discusses a range of topics with these companies.

Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what response he has made to the letter sent to the Minister for Energy on 5 July by the chairman of the Consumers Union of Japan relating to THORP.

Mr. Eggar: The letter arrived on 19 July. I shall be replying in due course.

Mr. Colvin: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he expects THORP to be commissioned; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: Before commissioning its thermal oxide reprocessing plant, British Nuclear Fuels plc will need such consents and authorisations as may be required by law. As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment announced on 28 June, *Official Report*, column *392*, there is to be a further round of consultation. This is expected to start shortly and to last for two months. Final decisions will be taken following this further period of consultation.

Uranium

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the price per tonne of uranium in 1977, adjusted to 1993 prices; what was the projected price for 1993 given in the Windscale inquiry report; what is the current cost per tonne of uranium; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: The Euratom Supply Agency's report for 1992 shows that the average price of natural uranium deliveries made during the year under multiannual contracts to the electricity utilities of the European Community or their procurement organisations was 49·50 ecu per kilogramme of uranium. The agency's 1977 report did not provide a comparable figure for that year because of uncertain conditions in the market. Illustrative prices for uranium were mentioned in chapter 9 of the Windscale inquiry report.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how much uranium separated by reprocessing at Sellafield over the last 40 years has been used in reactors *(a)* by weight and *(b)* as percentage of total uranium produced.

Mr. Eggar: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Clydesdale (Mr. Hood) on 20 July 1993, *Official Report*, columns *127-28*.

Environmentally Friendly Fuel Technology

Mr. Robathan: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what action has been taken following the representations the former Department of Energy received from the Director General of Electricity Supply about the inclusion of environmentally friendly technologies, including such as combined heat and power, in the non-fossil fuel obligation; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: I understand that the then Secretary of State for Energy took full account of his consultations with the Director General of Electricity Supply when making the 1990 and 1991 renewables orders under the non-fossil fuel obligation. Both orders are supporting projects with the potential for combined heat and power. On 21 July I announced a third renewables order under the non-fossil fuel obligation. I would expect projects with the potential for combined heat and power to bid into this order also.

Oil Exploration

Mr. Harvey: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how the environmental interests of the coast are safeguarded during the oil exploration licensing procedure.

Mr. Eggar: The Department of Trade and Industry consults other Government Departments, the joint Nature Conservation Committee and local advisory groups before offering any blocks for licensing. The JNCC in turn consults English Nature, the Countryside Council for Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Blocks that are offered for licensing in sensitive areas such as those close to the coast are subject to special conditions to protect wildlife and the environment. These conditions are agreed with relevant Government Departments and the JNCC.

The conditions include consultation with JNCC and other environmental organisations before the licensee undertakes operations; seasonal restrictions to protect wildlife; a ban on drilling within three miles of the coast; the use of zero-discharge rigs and water-based drilling muds; and to agree with the advisory bodies and local authorities plans to be put into effect in case of an oil spill.

Depleted Uranium

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade to which foreign defence industries the British nuclear industry supplies depleted uranium.

Mr. Eggar: All shipments of depleted uranium are made in accordance with the provisions of the Export of Goods (Control) Order 1992. It has been the policy of successive Administrations not to make public the details of specific export licence applications. In assessing all such applications the Government take into account the United Kingdom's obligations under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Harvey: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what publicly financed grants are available to scientists and entrepreneurs for research into and development of renewable energy technology.

Mr. Eggar: My Department operates a research and development programme on renewable energy. Financial assistance may be available to appropriate projects. Interested parties should contact:

Enquiry Bureau
Energy Technology Support
Harwell Laboratory
Oxfordshire
OX11 ORA

Pharmaceuticals

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the volume and value of exports of anthrax vaccine in each year since 1985

Mr. Needham: The information requested is not available from official sources because the United Kingdom trade classification does not separately identify anthrax vaccines. The manufacturers of anthrax vaccines in the United Kingdom report no exports during the last five years. Information prior to that could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

KONVER Programme

Dr. David Clark: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Barrow and Furness (Mr. Hutton), of 14 June, *Official Report*, columns *409-10*, which bodies have been consulted for their views on the draft United Kingdom programme for the KONVER scheme; and what is the planned size of the draft United Kingdom programme.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answwer 23 July 1993]:* The United Kingdom KONVER programme will request 20·12 million ecu, which is the full amount allocated to the United Kingdom for 1993.

Consultation on the draft programme will proceed during August, and will include the training and enterprise councils, the local enterprise companies, the local authority associations, and the Rural Development Commission.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape;

(2) what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Eggar: The Department's information materials are freely available. We are not aware of widespread demand for them to be separately prepared for blind and partially sighted people, but the need for such provision is kept under review.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer or Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Eggar: In my Department no services or functions have been contracted out where the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations were relevant. Collection of information on all contracts where TUPE was not applicable would incur disproportionate costs.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Eggar: The Department and its agencies employ the following staff in the automatic data processing functional specialism:

	Number
Senior Executive Officer	61
Higher Executive Officer	136
Executive Officer	156

Computer Consultants

Mr. McAllion: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Eggar: My Department does not classify consultancies in terms of their activity and collection of this information would incur disproportionate costs.

Zinc

Mr. Nicholas Winterton: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) what recent representations he has received concerning distortions in the world trade in zinc ash and residue, zinc dross, unwrought zinc, and zinc waste and scrap; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what information he has concerning the tariffs, duties, taxes and other barriers to imports faced by those attempting to import zinc ash and residue, zirc dross, unwrought zinc, and zinc waste and scrap to and from India; and what representations he has made to the Indian

Government, to the European Community, or through the general agreement on tariffs and trade negotiating process about those barriers;

(3) what steps he is taking to bring about free and fair trade in zinc ash and residue, zinc dross, unwrought zinc, and zinc waste and scrap;

(4) what information he has concerning the net balance of trade in terms of volume and value between the United Kingdom and India in zinc ash and residue, zinc dross, unwrought zinc, and zinc waste and scrap.

Mr. Sainsbury: I will write to my hon. Friend as soon as possible.

Defence Industry (Reduction)

Mrs. Ann Winterton: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) what steps he is taking to ensure that assistance from the European Community can be targeted to those communities which have suffered directly the greatest impact of reduced demand in the level of defence procurement regardless of whether or not they have assisted area status or are suffering overall regional or industrial decline;

(2) if he will make a statement providing details of the European Community KONVER programme for assistance to areas affected by reduced demand in the defence industries; whether assistance through this programme is available only to projects in locations with assisted area status or is more widely available; and what steps he is taking to ensure that the north west of England benefits from this programme.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answers 13 July 1993]:* Those areas which are within an objective 2 area will be eligible for assistance for activities supported by the European regional development fund within the KONVER scheme.

Moreover the conclusions reached at the Foreign Affairs Council on 2 and 3 July on the regulations on the future of European structural funds, confirmed by the Council on 19 and 20 July, enable member states to make available to areas not designated for objective 1, 2 or 5b a limited part of the European regional development fund contribution to KONVER. The Government intend to make use of this new flexibility in the United Kingdom's 1993 KONVER programme.

All areas affected by the reduction in defence expenditure will be eligible for support under the European social fund part of the scheme.

Eligibility for the structural funds is not affected by assisted area status.

Plutonium

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how the value and cost of plutonium owned by United Kingdom nuclear companies is treated for accounting purposes.

Mr. Eggar: This is a commercial matter for the companies concerned.

Consultancy Contracts

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what use he intends to make of consultants in the forthcoming nuclear review; and what safeguards he intends to institute in respect of auditors of companies in the nuclear industry who tender for consultancy contracts associated with the review to ensure no conflict of interest occurs.

Mr. Eggar: No decisions have yet been taken on the scope, timing and format of the nuclear review, or on whether consultants will be employed. A further announcement will be made in due course.

WALES

Unemployment

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what steps he is taking to assist areas with rising unemployment, in particular areas of high concentrations of defence-related industry; what special programmes are available for such areas; and what plans he has to increase such assistance.

Mr. Redwood: The assisted area review took into account future rundowns, including those arising from reductions in defence expenditure. As a result the Haverfordwest and Fishguard travel-to-work areas have been upgraded to development area status to assist further in the work taken forward through the west Wales task force.

Youth Organisations

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the national voluntary youth organisations within Wales currently in receipt of funding from his Department, indicating when each organisation was informed of their grant levels for the current year.

Sir Wyn Roberts: There are 15 youth organisations currently in receipt of grant, namely the Boys Brigade, Baptist Youth Ministry, Church in Wales, Guides Cymru, Gwerin y Coed (Woodcraft Folk), the Order of St. John, Phab (Wales), United Nations Association International Youth Services, United Reform Church, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Wales Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs, Welsh Association of Youth Clubs, Welsh Federation of Boys' and Girls' Groups, Welsh Scout Council, and the Young Men's Christian Association of Wales.

All organisations were informed of their grant levels for 1993-94 on 8 April, except the Welsh Association of Youth Clubs, which was informed on 26 May as its application was handled separately.

Wales Youth Agency

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) if he will list the training materials produced to date by the Wales Youth Agency aimed at *(a)* young people and *(b)* those employed in the youth service since the establishment of the agency;

(2) if he will list the publicity leaflets aimed at young people produced by the Wales Youth Agency since its establishment;

(3) how many consultation exercises have been undertaken to date by the Wales Youth Agency with organisations of young people; and if he will list *(a)* the subject of each consultation and *(b)* the organisations which were consulted.

Sir Wyn Roberts: This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to investigate staffing decisions undertaken by the Wales Youth Agency in relation to former employees of the Welsh Youth Forum.

Sir Wyn Roberts: No. The Department has been kept informed of the agency's staffing decisions relating to former employees of the Wales Youth Forum.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) what representations have been received by his Department from the Wales Youth Agency since its establishment concerning *(a)* the participation of young people in decision making and *(b)* the future of the youth service agency;

(2) if he will list the written representation received by his Department from the Wales Youth Agency since its establishment on policy issues affecting young people.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The Wales Youth Agency has made representations on the future of the Welsh youth card, information needs of young people, young people's membership of the management board: youth service funding, innovatory grants scheme in Wales, and the validation of training for youth workers in Wales.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the meetings held to date between members of his Department and members of the Wales Youth Agency, indicating the date and purpose of each meeting.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Since its establishment in April 1992, the Department has met the chairman, vice-chairman and other members of the Wales Youth Agency's management board on three occasions.

Date	*Purpose*
8 April 1992	Introductory meeting with chairman and vice-chairman
2 June 1992	Agency's role and activities
25 May 1993	Funding of the youth service

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the members on the management group of the Wales Youth Agency, indicating their names and representative organisations; and which members are aged 25 years or under.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The management board's membership is:

Name	*Representative body*
Mr. Gerald Davies *(Chairman)*	Personal capacity
Dr. Howard Williamson	Personal capacity
Ms Sara Edwards	Personal capacity
Ms Michelle Herbert[1]	Personal capacity
Mrs. Beverly Martin	Personal capacity
Mr. Brian Thirsk	Wales Association of Full-time Youth and Community Workers
Mr. Bert Jones	North-East Wales Institute of Higher Education
Mrs. Amber Hughes[1]	Wales Youth Forum
Mr. Peter Williams	Further Education and Youth Service Association of Wales
Mr. Dewi Jones	Welsh Joint Education Committee
Mr. David Allen	Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services

[1] Denotes members aged 25 or less.

Youth Service

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans he has to introduce a statutory youth service in Wales and to develop a formula for funding local youth service provision.

Sir Wyn Roberts: None. Local education authorities already have a statutory duty to secure provision for their areas of adequate facilities for further education, and for recreation, social and physical training for those of school age. These provisions cover the youth service.

The resources made available to Welsh local authorities through the annual local authority revenue settlement are not attributed to particular services. Youth service funding at the local level is a matter for individual authorities to determine in the light of local needs and priorities.

European Environmental Agency

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make representations to the European Community advocating Wales as a location for the new European Environmental Agency.

Mr. Redwood: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply given to him on this issue on 24 February at column *634*.

Aggregates

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish figures showing the estimated level of primary aggregates production in Wales by county *(a)* for the 1992-96 period and *(b)* between 2006-11; and what the 2006-11 production levels will be and the percentage of the 1992-96 levels in each instance.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The Government do not provide guidance on primary aggregates production on a county basis. Details of the regional position based on the proposals in the draft revision of minerals planning guidance note 6, published in January, are available in the Library of the House.

Housing

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the Welsh housing authorities making non-statutory rate fund contributions to their housing revenue account in 1992-93, giving the amounts in each case.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Council housing authorities can make contributions to the housing revenue account only in accordance with schedule 4 to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as amended by the Leasehold Reform Housing and Urban Development Act 1993.

Homelessness

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many bed-and-breakfast establishments are currently used by each local authority in Wales to house homeless people; and how many establishments have no *(a)* kitchen and *(b)* bathroom facilities.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information is not available centrally.

Youth Training

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) if he will list for each training and enterprise council in Wales their youth training performance in 1992-93 showing *(a)* the cost per output point and *(b)* the number of national vocational qualifications per 100 leavers, together with the latest information he has for 1993-94; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if he will list for each training and enterprise council in Wales their employment training performance in 1992-93 showing *(a)* the cost per output point, *(b)* the number of national vocational qualifications per 100 leavers and *(c)* the number of positive outcomes per 100 leavers, together with the latest information he has for 1993-94; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Information on the performance of TECs in Wales in these areas is used for management purposes by my officials in their discussions with TECs. My approach to performance measurement is being refined and I will consider publishing comparative information in due course.

Woodlands

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what percentage of the total land mass of Wales is made of publicly-owned woodland and forests.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The publicly-owned forests and woodlands managed by the Forestry Commission cover about 6 per cent. of the total land area of Wales. Information on the area of woodland owned by other public bodies is not readily available but it is not thought that it would be significant as a percentage of the total land area.

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures are being taken to ensure the Welsh public will continue to have access to publicly-owned woodland; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The Forestry Commission encourages people to enjoy the publicly-owned forests in its care through a "freedom to roam" policy. It also provides a range of visitor facilities, and caters for many outdoor activities and sports. The Commission will be continuing to implement these policies in its management of forests in the future.

Arrangements for securing continued public access to Forestry Commission woodlands sold under the disposals programme, by means of prior agreements entered into between the commission and local authorities, were introduced in October 1991. These arrangements will be reviewed this year in consultation with the countryside agencies and the local authority associations.

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many acres of woodland in Wales are open for public access; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The Forestry Commission manages 127,000 hectares (about 315,000 acres) of woodland in Wales and encourages public access through a "freedom to roam" policy. Public access is also often permitted in woodlands under the management of local authorities and bodies such as the Woodland Trust, but figures for these and the areas of privately owned woodlands open to the public are not readily available.

Training and Enterprise Councils

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures are being taken in Wales to help those people graduating from TECs to find employment; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: All TEC training programmes are focused on obtaining employment through improved skills and qualifications. Trainees are provided with job search advice and support and TEC training providers maintain close contact with local employers. In addition the Employment Service provides a range of advisory and guidance services through its network of local offices.

The latest information available for 1992-93 indicates that following their period of training with TECs, 3,466 adult trainees and 5,309 youth trainees in Wales secured employment or progressed into further education or training.

Child Sex Abuse

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what level of funding has been granted by his Department to local authorities in Wales towards the development of specialist therapeutic and support services for sexually abused childen and their families in each of the last three years.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Local authority social services expenditure is funded through the annual local authority revenue and capital settlements. It is for individual authorities to decide how to apportion those resources between and within services in accordance with their statutory obligations and their own priorities.

Secondary Schools

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many pupils attended each of the secondary schools in Wales in the school year 1992-93.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The number of pupils on the roll of each secondary school in Wales at January 1993 is as follows:

Clwyd

School Name	*Number on roll*
Hawarden High School	1,052
Rhyl High School	1,084
Mold Alun School	1,460
Elfed High School	720
Holywell High School	1,010
St. Davids High School	588
Prestatyn High School	1,387
The Maelor School	505

School Name	Number on roll
Castell Alun High School	1,096
Ysgol Maes Garmon	671
Summers High School	460
Ysgol Glan Clwyd	777
Flint High School	604
Connah's Quay High School	627
Ysgol Bryn Elian	707
Ysgol Emrys Ap Iwan	1,088
Eirias High School	1,049
Denbigh High School	806
Ysgol Dinas Bran	780
Ysgol-y-Grango	725
Brynhyfryd School	903
Ysgol Morgan Llwyd	490
Ysgol Bryn Alyn	724
Darland School	690
St. David's School	1,102
Ysgol Bryn Offa	1,033
Ysgol Uwchradd Ardudwy	492
Ysgol Rhiwabon	608
The Groves High School	774
St. Richard Gwyn High School	1,098
Blessed Edward Jones	608
St. Joseph's R.C. High School	456

Dyfed

School name	Number on roll
Ysgol Pantycelyn	375
Ysgol Gyfun Tregib	795
Amman Valley Comprehensive School	1,287
Fishguard County Secondary School	742
Ysgol Dewi Sant	343
Greenhill Comprehensive School	1,346
Pembroke Comprehensive School	1,426
Lampeter County Secondary School	583
Aberaeron Comprehensive School	878
Cardigan County Secondary School	744
Ysgol Uwchradd Tregaron	285
Penglais Comprehensive School	1,010
Ysgol Gyfun Penweddig	593
Coedcae Comprehensive School	853
Graig Comprehensive School	685
Ysgol Gyfun y Strade	661
Glan-y-Mor Comprehensive School	672
Bryngwyn Comprehensive School	1,031
Sir Thomas Picton Comprehensive School	1,103
Ysgol Gyfun Bro Myrddin	634
Queen Elizabeth Cambria	817
Queen Elizabeth Maridun	772
Ysgol Gyfun Dyffryn Teifi	593
Ysgol Gyfun Emlyn	584
Ysgol Gyfun Maes Yr Yrfa	660
Gwendraeth Valley Comprehensive School	627
Milford Haven Comprehensive School	1,235
Ysgol Gyfun Ddwyieithog y Preseli	547
Tasker Milward V.C. Comprehensive School	1,175
Ysgol Gyfun Dyffryn Taf	852
St. John Lloyd R.C. Comprehensive School	381

Gwent

School name	Number on roll
St. Julians Comprehensive School	1,231
Duffryn Comprehensive School	1,057
Hartridge Comprehensive School	943
Bettws Comprehensive School	1,112
Lliswerry Comprehensive School	1,201
Bassaleg Comprehensive School	1,320
Newbridge Comprehensive School	664
Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School	754
Glyncoed Junior Comprehensive School	408
Blackwood Comprehensive School	805
Llantarnam Comprehensive School	1,104
Croesyceiliog Comprehensive School	1,359
Oakdale Comprehensive School	814
Glanyrafon Junior Comprehensive School	386
Caerleon Comprehensive School	1,364
Monmouth Comprehensive School	1,341
Tredegar Comprehensive School	938
Fairwater Comprehensive School	1,196
King Henry VIII Comprehensive School	1,242
Chepstow Comprehensive School	1,063
Caldicot Comprehensive School	1,291
Ebbw Vale Senior Comprehensive School	690
Risca Comprehensive School	657
Abersychan Comprehensive School	780
Trevethin Comprehensive School	519
West Monmouth Comprehensive School	944
Nantyglo Comprehensive School	675
Abertillery Comprehensive School	815
Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyn	365
St. Joseph's Comprehensive School	1,017
St. Alban's R.C. Comprehensive School	572
Cwmcarn Grant Maintained School	333
Brynmawr School	480

Gwynedd

School name	Number on roll
Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen	392
Ysgol Botwnnog	425
Ysgol Brynrefail	551
Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle	422
Ysgol Eifionydd	583
Ysgol John Bright	1,021
Ysgol Aberconwy	678
Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones	901
Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi	1,095
Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni	818
Ysgol David Hughes	1,259
Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern	686
Ysgol y Gader	337
Ysgol y Moelwyn	444
Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn	359
Ysgol y Berwyn	448
Ysgol Ardudwy	553
Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy	740
Ysgol Friars	896
Ysgol Tryfan	402
Ysgol y Creuddyn	638
Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen	1,098
Ysgol Glan y Mor	699

Mid Glamorgan

School name	Number on roll
Afon Taf High School	1,203
Pen-y-dre High School	1,041
Cyfarthfa High School	1,008
Vaynor and Penderyn School	362
Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School	1,336
Coedylan Comprehensive School	1,080
Hawthorn High School	940
Mountain Ash Comprehensive School	1,122
Ysgol Gyfun Rhydfelen	983
Blaengwawr Comprehensive School	655
Tonyrefail Comprehensive School	1,091
Cynffig Comprehensive School	822
St. Cenydd Comprehensive School	870
St. Ilan Comprehensive School	820
Bryntirion Comprehensive School	979
St. Martin Comprehensive School	720
Maesteg Comprehensive School	1,287

School name	Number on roll
Heolddu Comprehensive School	801
Ynysawdre Comprehensive School	906
Lewis Boys' Comprehensive School	857
Pencoed Comprehensive School	1,114
Lewis Girls' Comprehensive School	973
Brynteg Comprehensive School	1,727
Porthcawl Comprehensive School	1,048
Treorchy Comprehensive School	1,235
Ferndale Comprehensive School	931
Ogmore Comprehensive School	645
Porth Comprehensive School	1,166
Ysgol Gyfun Llanhari	1,186
Rhymney Comprehensive School	693
Bedwas Comprehensive School	730
Tonypandy Comprehensive School	1,021
Y Pant Comprehensive School	691
Ysgol Gyfun y Cymer	487
Aberdare Boys' Comprehensive School	742
Aberdare Girls' Comprehensive School	633
Bedwellty Comprehensive School	515
Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni	828
Bishop Hedley High School	618
Archbishop Mcgrath School	419
Cardinal Newman R.C. Comprehensive School	697
St. John Baptist C.I.W. School	761

Powys

School name	Number on roll
Caereinion High School	437
Llanfyllin High School	543
Llanidloes High School	485
Ysgol Bro Ddyfi	381
Newtown High School	1,071
Welshpool High School	713
John Beddoes County Secondary School	507
Llandrindod High School	754
Builth Wells High School	484
Maesydderwen Comprehensive School	630
Brecon High School	816
Gwernyfed High School	501
Crickhowell High School	626

South Glamorgan

School name	Number on roll
Rumney High School	1,050
Glyn Derw High School	329
Cardiff High School	1,168
Glan Ely High School	807
Willows High School	713
Fitzalan High School	1,297
Llanedeyrn High School	866
Cantonian High School	1,012
Whitchurch High School	1,860
Llanishen High School	1,440
Llanrumney High School	764
Cathays High School	884
Llanilltud Fawr Comprehensive School	985
Barry Boys' Comprehensive School	1,335
Bryn Hafren Comprehensive School	1,406
Stanwell Comprehensive School	1,002
St. Cyres Comprehensive School	1,372
Cowbridge Comprehensive School	1,134
Radyr Comprehensive School	1,208
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf	1,099
St. Illtyds R.C. High School	682
Mary Immaculate R.C. High School	597
The Bishop of Llandaff High School	1,125
St. Teilo's C.I.W. High School	1,007
Corpus Christi R.C. High School	989
St. Richard Gwyn R.C. High School	451

West Glamorgan

School Name	Number on roll
Mynyddbach County Secondary School	615
Penlan County Secondary (Boys) School	601
Cefn Hengoed Comprehensive School	945
Olchfa Comprehensive School	1,766
Morriston Comprehensive School	1,104
Dynevor Comprehensive School	456
Pentrehafod Comprehensive School	1,069
Bishop Gore Comprehensive School	1,354
Cymer Afan Comprehensive School	426
Glan Afan Comprehensive School	590
Sandfields Comprehensive School	734
Dyffryn Comprehensive School	788
Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera	766
Penyrheol Comprehensive School	931
Gowerton Comprehensive School	1,145
Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School	890
Cwmtawe Comprehensive School	970
Llangatwg Comprehensive School	960
Dwr y Felin Comprehensive School	1,271
Cwrt Sart Comprehensive School	614
Bishopston Comprehensive School	968
Dillwyn Llewelyn Comprehensive School	558
Pontarddulais Comprehensive School	675
Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr	535
Birchgrove Comprehensive School	842
St. Joseph's R.C. Comprehensive School	757
Bishop Vaughan Catholic Comprehensive School	933

Pupil Exclusions

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish figures showing the number of pupil exclusions in *(a)* the primary sector and *(b)* the secondary school sector within each local education authority in Wales in each year since 1987; and what has been the percentage of excluded pupils within the general school population in each area in each year.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Redwood: The computer consultancies employed by my Department and its agencies since November 1991 are listed as follows. The total cost to the Department was £453,508.

Contractor	Task
The Government Centre for Information Systems (CCTA)	Post implementation review of the Department's computerised financial systems.
The Government Centre for Information Systems (CCTA)	Post implementation review of the Department's in-house bureau mainframe computer system.
The Government Centre for Information Systems (CCTA)	Post implementation review of the Department's Welsh highways information system.
The Government Centre for Information Systems (CCTA)	Post implementation review of the Department's site monitoring system (new roads).
The Government Centre for Information Systems (CCTA)	Post implementation review of the Department's personnel management system.
DBI Associates	Production of an information systems strategy for the Welsh Office Education Department.
NCC Consultancy	Review of the document logging and diary facilities in the ministerial private office.
KPMG Management Consulting	Study of the future of the in-house bureau mainframe system.
Computer Management Consultants	Study of the Department's future office automation requirements.
Axsis	Welsh Office communications study: Part 1.
Axsis	Welsh Office communications study: Part 2.
Admiral Management Services	Review of security of the Department's computerised finance systems.
IPL	Post implementation review of the transport and highways payment monitoring system.
BIS Applied Systems Ltd.	Evaluation of the need for a computerised record of manufacturing plants in Wales.
Ernst and Young	To advise on end of financial year procedures in relation to the Department's financial systems.
Safetynet PLC	To advise on the upgrade of the computer suite housing the Department's financial systems.
Praxis PLC	Feasibility study regarding the development of a central information database for HM School Inspectors in Wales.
Praxis PLC	Preparation of a project initiation document and operational requirement for an information database for HM School Inspectors in Wales.
Price Waterhouse	Scoping study for the market test of Welsh Office information technology services.
Gower Business Systems	Study of the possible uses of desk top publishing.
Mouncey and Partners	To advise on the implementation of computer systems in valuation tribunal offices.
MVA Systematica	To advise on the migration of the Department's road accident system from the in-house bureau mainframe computer.
Esams Ltd.	Scoping study for the valuation tribunal integrated appeals system.

School Books

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the expenditure per pupil on school books in each of the local education authorities in Wales in *(a)* the primary sector and *(b)* the secondary sector in each year since 1986 at constant prices.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The following tables give expenditure per pupil at constant prices on text and library books, and educational equipment, for the years requested.

Net funding per pupil on books and equipment in primary schools at constant prices[1]

	1986-87	*1987-88*	*1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*
Clwyd	29·5	26·1	23·1	22·6	37·4	32·1
Dyfed	27·2	31·6	29·7	33·1	43·5	42·9
Gwent	29·5	31·7	33·6	35·9	40·4	66·9
Gwynedd	30·7	31·1	30·2	52·0	64·1	60·3
Mid-Glamorgan	29·6	30·0	31·7	40·7	32·1	74·7
Powys	36·5	39·6	33·4	25·0	24·2	30·4
South Glamorgan	29·6	31·1	30·9	32·7	35·3	51·1
West Glamorgan	41·8	37·8	36·8	36·4	38·0	47·1

[1] From 1987-88 includes nursery schools. Prices at March 1993.

Net funding per pupil on books and equipment in secondary schools at constant prices[1]

	1986-87	*1987-88*	*1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*
Clwyd	70·2	58·6	54·9	39·6	104·2	112·8
Dyfed	64·3	91·3	74·6	76·3	88·9	74·0
Gwent	79·6	79·6	92·9	89·2	86·9	97·6
Gwynedd	91·6	85·6	74·9	114·3	104·0	112·6
Mid-Glamorgan	84·8	76·5	94·9	117·9	131·7	161·5
Powys	79·5	77·3	76·0	56·6	59·5	52·6
South Glamorgan	81·4	69·8	73·8	75·0	104·0	95·2
West Glamorgan	87·8	81·0	79·2	64·7	85·5	90·1

[1] Prices at March 1993.

Psychiatric Admissions

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many psychiatric admissions of children of 16 years or under have occurred within each health authority area in Wales in each of the last three years; and how many were diagnosed under conduct disorder in each instance.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information given in the following table relates to children aged 16 or under admitted to mental illness hospitals and units in each health authority area.

	1988		*1989*		*1990*	
	All admissions	*Admissions for disorders*[1]	*All admissions*	*Admissions for disorders*[1]	*All admissions*	*Admissions for disorders*[1]
Clwyd	49	44	42	37	41	38
East Dyfed	6	4	10	5	5	3
Gwent	9	5	8	5	14	13
Gwynedd	2	2	1	1	2	1
Mid Glamorgan	11	7	8	2	10	2
Powys	6	3	1	1	2	1
South Glamorgan	44	32	49	38	54	48
West Glamorgan	6	3	11	6	8	5
Total	133	100	130	95	136	111

[1]Includes neurotic, personality and other non-psychotic mental disorders.
Note: There are no Mental Illness Hospitals or units in Pembrokeshire.

GP Fund Holders

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish for each fund-holding general medical practitioner's practice in Wales the per capita allocations for the purchase of hospital services in 1993-94.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: It would be inappropriate to publish per capita allocations for each fund-holding practice in Wales. Allocations reflect the individual nature and extent of these services with which patients in each practice have been provided over previous years. The per capita allocations to fund holders for the purchase of hospital services in 1993-94 on average amount to £71 per patient, and range from £44 to £128.

Low Pay

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the average wage of the lowest paid decile of the population in Wales in 1991 *(a)* at 1991 prices and *(b)* at 1979 prices.

Mr. Redwood: It is not statistical custom to calculate average earnings within the lowest or highest deciles. The New Earnings Survey estimates that, in 1991, 10 per cent. of full-time adult employees in Wales earned below £128·70 per week. At constant 1979 prices, the figure was £52·50 per week.

Valleys Initiative

Mr. Hain: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will give a breakdown of expenditure at constant prices for each year from 1988-89 to 1992-93 for each sub-programme of the valleys initiative programme.

Mr. Redwood: The information requested is set out in the table.

Programme for the valleys expenditure

£ million

	1988-89 outturn	*1989-90 outturn*	*1990-91 outturn*	*1991-92 outturn*	*1992-93 estimated outturn*
Urban Programme	11·950	16·000	19·400	23·600	21·000
Urban Development/UIG[1]	2·600	7·200	6·000	4·500	5·000
RIG[1]	28·875	16·100	14·500	16·140	15·350
WDA					
Factories	20·730	20·950	23·100	18·500	15·500
Land Reclamation	11·900	15·500	14·700	15·000	18·500
Environmental	0·780	0·600	0·600	1·500	1·500
Urban Renewal Unit	0·700	1·570	3·260	5·381	10·000
Investment	1·325	1·750	2·730	0·535	0·250
Business Development	0·720	0·720	1·000	0·940	0·130
Corporate Planning/Research	0·100	0·100	0·050	0·040	0·050
Roads	11·100	7·200	15·270	36·807	40·840
Employment Department	48·600	49·670	48·200	48·000	48·000

[1]These programmes are demand-led.

Welshpool Bypass

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many accidents have occurred on the Welshpool bypass since its opening on 16 July; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: I am advised that up to 21 July, four accidents have been recorded by Dyfed/Powys police on the bypass or at its junctions. From an initial examination, it does not appear that the design of the new road has contributed to the incidents. The situation will be kept under close review.

Mr. Alex Carlile: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will instruct his highways department to re-design the Sarnybryncaled junctions on the Welshpool bypass; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Wyn Roberts: This junction has been designed in accordance with national standards. As is usual in the period after the opening of a new stretch of trunk road, use of the bypass will be closely monitored and any necessary improvements identified at Sarnybryncaled or elsewhere will be introduced.

Hazardous Waste

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish figures showing the total tonnage of hazardous waste transported through each port in Wales in 1990-91 and 1991-92; and if he will publish a breakdown of the types of waste transported.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information requested was published in issues of the Environmental Digest for Wales, available in the Library of the House. 1990-91 figures appeared in table 1.49 of volume 6 and 1991-92 figures in table 1.53 of volume 7, subject to the following revisions:

	Waste imported (tonnes)
Holyhead, 1991-92	
Chlorinated solvents	21·7
Miscellaneous redundant waste	16·2
Total	385·5
Newport, 1991-92	
Hexachlorobenzene	199·8

Source: Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution

Temporary Accommodation

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many households in temporary accommodation in Wales were living in *(a)* bed-and-breakfast accommodation, *(b)* hostels, including women's refuges, and *(c)* short-life housing in each year since 1987.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Information for the years 1987 to 1991 has been published in Table 7.9 of Welsh Housing Statistics No. 12 1992, a copy of which is in the Library of the House. On 31 December 1992 there were 248 households temporarily accommodated in bed and breakfast, 394 in hostels and women's refuges and 89 in short-life dwellings.

Beaches (Pollution)

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what monitoring is conducted by his Department on local authority compliance with its advice concerning the public display of the results of National Rivers Authority testing of water quality of Welsh European Community designated beaches.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: As in previous years, Welsh Office officials wrote to all coastal local authorities at the beginning of the bathing season encouraging them to participate in the bathing water quality poster scheme. It is for each local authority to decide whether it wishes to participate in the scheme.

Children in Care

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many complaints have been received by the Commission for Local Administration in Wales from and on behalf of children and young people in care in each year since 1987.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The hon. Gentleman will need to seek this information by writing to the commissioner for local administration in Wales.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information he has on the average amount of leaving care grant given by each local authority to children and young people formerly in care in Wales in each year since 1989.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: This information is not available centrally.

Heavy Metal Pollution

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish figures showing *(a)* the tonnage totals permitted to be deposited in each river estuary in Wales and *(b)* the actual tonnage deposited for (i) zinc, (ii) cadmium, (iii) lead, (iv) copper, (v) mercury and (vi) chromium in (1) 1991 (2) 1992.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The following levels of dredged material were licensed for disposal at sites in Welsh estuaries in 1991. 1992 figures are not yet available.

	Thousand Tonnes
Cardiff Grounds	3,178
Newport	3,500
Uskmouth	120

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

There are no specific amounts licensed for individual contaminants but prior to licensing the concentrations of each contaminant in the dredged material are measured to ensure that those amounts are acceptable for disposal at sea.

The amounts of the contaminants deposited at each of these sites in 1991 was published in table 2.24 of the Environmental Digest for Wales, No. 7, available in the Library of the House. Figures for 1992 are not yet available.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the tonnage of *(a)* cadmium, *(b)* zinc, *(c)* lead, *(d)* copper, *(e)* mercury and *(f)* chromium disposed of off the coasts of Wales in (i) 1991 and (ii) 1992.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information requested for 1991 was published in table 2.23 of the Environmental Digest for Wales, No. 7, available in the Library of the House. Figures for 1992 are not yet available.

Children Act 1989

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what monitoring has been undertaken by his Department on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17-year-old people designated as in need by local authorities in Wales as a result of the Children Act 1989.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Local authorities were asked through the Welsh Office circular 26/91 to report on inter-agency collaboration under the Children Act 1989 on a wide range of issues, including provision of accommodation for children in need. Most authorities have now reported and the remainder of the responses are expected shortly.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many complaints have been received to date by each social services department from children under section 26 of the Children Act 1989.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Paragraph 3.53 of the Children Act Report 1992 recorded the latest available information. Eleven complaints in total had been received from or on behalf of children by local authorities in Wales in the first nine months following the implementation of the Children Act on 14 October 1991. Details are:

	Number
Clwyd	Nil
Dyfed	1
Gwent	2
Gwynedd	4
Mid Glamorgan	2
Powys	Nil
South Glamorgan	1
West Glamorgan	1

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales which local authorities in Wales have not developed policy statements or related practice guidelines and procedures regarding children leaving care.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: I am not aware of a local authority in Wales which has not developed any policy statements or related practice guidelines and procedures on children leaving care.

Urban Waste Water Directive

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what progress has been made by his Department in drawing up plans for the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive in Wales.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive requires member states to establish an implementation programme by the end of this year. Relevant Government Departments, including the Welsh Office, are working with the National Rivers Authority and the water industry in drawing up this programme.

Independent Schools

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the independent schools in Wales which currently have fewer than 50 pupils; and which of those schools have registered as children's homes under the Children Act 1989.

Sir Wyn Roberts: Under the Children Act 1989, independent schools which provide accommodation for 50 or fewer children are required to be registered as children's homes unless they are approved to take children with statements of special educational needs under Section 11(3)(a) of the Education Act 1981. A list of such schools in Wales is set out as follows:

Independent schools providing accommodation for 50 or fewer pupils and which are not approved under section 11(3)(a) of the Education Act 1981

The Cathedral School, Cardiff
Howells School, Cardiff
Emmanuel School, Swansea
Netherwood School, Saundersfoot, Dyfed
St. Clare's Convent School, Porthcawl
St. John's School, Porthcawl
St. David's Ursuline Convent School, Brecon
(to re-open as St. Davids School from 1 September 1993)

Their registration as children's homes is a matter for local authority social services departments.

Oil Pollution

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the reported incidents of oil pollution around the coast of Wales in *(a)* 1991 and *(b)* 1992; and which incidents resulted in a spillage extending for one mile or more.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Summary information on incidents around the Welsh coast in 1991 was published in table 2.30 of the Environmental Digest for Wales, No. 7, available in the Library of the House. Figures for 1992 are not yet available.

School Pupils

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish a list showing the number of permanent pupils excluded from *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools according to each local education authority in Wales in each of the last three years; and how many pupils issued with statements have been included in each area.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Cardigan Bay (Nature Reserve)

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to designate Cardigan bay as a marine nature reserve; and if he will establish the posts of marine conservation wardens for the area.

Sir Wyn Roberts: My right hon. Friend is responsible for designating marine nature reserves in Wales following an application from the Countryside Council for Wales. There are no such applications currently before the Department.

Responsibility for the management of such reserves rests with the Countryside Council for Wales.

EMPLOYMENT

Training

Ms. Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment (1) for each region and for Great Britain as a whole, how many employment training or training for work trainees have employment status; what was the position a year earlier; and how this number has been estimated;

(2) for each region and for Great Britain as a whole, separately for male and female, how many people have entered employment action and how many were participating in employment action in each month since January; and what detailed information he has about the destination of those participants who have left employment action; and if he will make a statement;

(3) if he will publish tables showing the latest available results from the employment training leavers' survey for each training and enterprise council area in England and Wales and each local enterprise company area in Scotland broken down to show the number and proportion of employment training leavers who were *(a)* in a full-time job with their work experience employer, *(b)* in a full-time job with another employer, *(c)* employed in their own business, *(d)* in a part-time job, *(e)* in voluntary work, *(f)* on another Government training programme, *(g)* on a full-time education or training course, *(h)* unemployed and claiming benefit, *(i)* unemployed and not claiming benefit, *(j)* in a job club and *(k)* doing something else;

(4) if he will publish tables showing the latest available results from the youth training leavers survey for each training and enterprise council area in England and Wales and each local enterprise company in Scotland broken down to show the number and proportion of youth training leavers who were *(a)* in full-time work with the same employer, *(b)* in full-time work with a different employer, *(c)* in part-time work, *(d)* on a full-time course at a college or training centre, *(e)* on another youth training scheme, *(f)* doing something else, *(g)* who were unemployed, *(h)* who had obtained a vocational qualification, *(i)* the number of questionnaires issued, *(j)* the usable percentage response rate and *(k)* the percentage of respondents who were early leavers;

(5) if he will show for each region and for Great Britain as a whole, for all trainees and separately for male and female, for the latest available period, the wages earned by employment training trainees who three months after leaving were *(a)* in a full-time job, *(b)* in a part-time job and *(c)* self-employed;

(6) if he will list for each region and for Great Britain as a whole the latest available information he has on the characteristics of those who have entered employment training showing *(a)* the number of entrants covered, *(b)* whether male or female, *(c)* duration of unemployment, *(d)* ethnic origin and *(e)* if they have a disability;

(7) how many people were participating in *(a)* employment training, *(b)* employment action, *(c)* the enterprise allowance scheme/business start-up allowance and *(d)* youth training in each month since December 1992 for each region and for Great Britain as a whole; and if he will make a statement;

(8) how many youth training credits have been issued in the pilot areas to young people; how many young people have taken them up; what other information he has on the take up of credits in those areas; and if he will make a statement;

(9) what are the latest results for each region, and for Great Britain as a whole, of the YTS/YT leavers' survey, showing for all trainees, for male and female trainees and for each separate ethnic group and for those with a disability *(a)* those in full-time work with the same employer, *(b)* those in full-time work with a different employer, *(c)* those in part-time work, *(d)* those on a full-time course at a college or training centre, *(e)* those on another youth training scheme, *(f)* those doing something else, *(g)* those who were unemployed, *(h)* those who had obtained a vocational qualification, *(i)* the number of questionnaires issued, *(j)* the usable percentage response rate and *(k)* the percentage of respondents who were early leavers;

(10) if he will show for each region and for Great Britain as a whole, for the latest available period, for all leavers and separately for male and female, for each ethnic group, and for those with a disability or health problem, the number and proportion of employment training trainees who three months after leaving were *(a)* in a full-time job with their work experience employer, *(b)* in a full-time job with another employer, *(c)* employed in their own business, *(d)* in a part-time job, *(e)* in voluntary work, *(f)* on another Government training programme, *(g)* on a full-time education or training course, *(h)* unemployed and claiming benefit, *(i)* unemployed and not claiming benefit, *(j)* in a job club and *(k)* doing something else;

(11) if he will show for each region and for Great Britain as a whole, for the latest available period, for all leavers and separately for male and female, for each ethnic group, and for those with a disability or health problem, the number and proportion of employment training leavers who *(a)* had been entered for a vocational qualification, *(b)* had obtained a vocational qualification, *(c)* had failed to obtain a vocational qualification and *(d)* were awaiting results; and how many of the employment training leavers in the relevant period had completed the training agreed in their initial action plan;

(12) how many people were receiving the business start-up allowance formerly the enterprise allowance in each London training and enterprise council in each quarter since December 1992; and what was the amount of expenditure on the business start-up allowance in the areas covered by each London TEC in 1991-92 and the budgets agreed for business start-up allowance with each London TEC in 1993-94; and if he will make a statement;

(13) what has been the average length of participation that trainees have spent on employment training in 1991-92 and 1992-93 for each region and for Great Britain as a whole;

(14) if he will publish tables showing the latest available results from the employment training leavers' survey for each training and enterprise council area in England and Wales and each local enterprise company area in Scotland broken down to show the number and proportion of employment training leavers who had *(a)* been entered for a vocational qualification, *(b)* obtained a vocational qualification, *(c)* had failed to obtain a vocational qualification and *(d)* were awaiting their results; and how

many of the employment training leavers in the relevant period had completed the training agreed in their initial action plan.

Miss Widdecombe: As the information is contained in a considerable number of tables, I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy in the Library.

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment (1) if he will list for each training and enterprise council in England their youth training performance in 1992-93 showing *(a)* the cost per output point and *(b)* the number of national vocational qualifications per 100 leavers, together with the latest information he has for 1993-94; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if he will list for each training and enterprise council in England their employment training performance in 1992-93 showing *(a)* the cost per output point, *(b)* the number of national vocational qualifications per 100 leavers and *(c)* the number of positive outcomes per 100 leavers, together with the latest information he has for 1993-94; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: We intend to publish inter-TEC comparisons for 1992-93 as soon as the final figures have been agreed. A copy will be placed in the Library. We intend to publish full year comparisons for 1993-94 next summer. We do not plan to publish in-year tables because uneven flows of information during the year can distort comparisons of performance.

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what sums of money have been contributed from the European social fund towards *(a)* youth training and *(b)* employment training in 1992; what percentage contribution to the total costs of youth training and employment training this represents; what other Department of Employment training and employment programmes have been financially supported by the ESF; how much financial support has been given in 1992; what proportion of the total cost this contribution represented; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: The information requested about programmes which have received European social fund support in 1992 is provided in the table. This data relate to ESF support for programmes in England and Wales:

	ESF support[1] *(£ million)*	*ESF support as a percentage of expenditure*
Employment training	140·25	16·88
Youth training	14·54	2·53
Enterprise allowance scheme	12·31	16·59

[1] Applications totals.

TEC Challenge

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what criteria he used in selecting the winners of TEC challenge; and if he will place copies of the successful bids in the Library.

Miss Widdecombe: The advisory panel chaired by the permanent secretary of the Employment Department appraised the bids on eight criteria, based upon those set out in the training and enterprise council challenge prospectus published in April, a copy of which is in the Library. I made my decisions after receiving advice from the advisory panel. The TEC challenge bids are commercial-in-confidence; however, I have placed a list showing brief descriptions of the winning bids in the Library.

Job Clubs

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many people in each region and Great Britain as a whole since April 1992 have joined job clubs, how many have left, how many leavers got jobs and how many entered another positive outcome; and if he will break down the information by the ethnic origin and sex of participants.

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many job clubs were operational for each region and for Great Britain as a whole at the latest available date; and how many of them in each region catered for groups with special needs.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the employment service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Ms Clare Short, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about performance information about the Jobclub programme. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

Table "A" attached shows for each region and for Great Britain the numbers who have joined Jobclubs between 30 March 1992 and 25 June 1993 together with information during the same period of those members leaving. Leavers who are shown as going into other positive outcomes have gone on to either training, full-time education or self-employment.

As I indicated in my letter to you of 28 October 1992, information on the ethnic background and male/female characteristics of Jobclub leavers is now collected on annual sample survey basis. The information was collected for the month of March 1993, and the results of the count are in tables "B". Tables "B" show the performance between 1 March 1993 and 26 March 1993 for male and female Jobclub members and by ethnic origin on a regional basis and for Great Britain as a whole.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also placea a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Table A
Jobclub entrants and leavers information
30 March 1992 to 25 June 1993

Region	Jobclub entrants	Jobclub leavers	Leavers into jobs	Leavers into jobs per cent.	Leavers into other positive outcomes	Leavers into positive outcomes per cent.
Northern	17,699	17,766	7,087	40	1,841	50
Yorks and Humberside	23,755	23,233	11,024	47	3,348	62
East Midlands	25,174	24,459	11,990	49	3,597	64
London and South East	83,281	80,755	33,521	42	11,585	56
South West	20,121	19,717	9,573	49	2,821	63
Wales	15,972	15,320	8,199	54	2,099	67
West Midlands	26,014	26,258	11,872	45	4,268	61
North West	39,939	39,855	17,808	45	4,690	56
Scotland	26,266	26,104	12,974	50	3,247	62
Nationally	278,221	273,467	124,048	45	37,496	59

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants
March 1993

National	Leavers into Jobs	Leavers into other positive outcomes	Total Leavers
White	7,790	1,813	16,374
Black/Afro Caribbean	345	121	803
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	417	169	1,034
None of the above	80	33	223
Preferred not to say	40	20	123
Total	8,672	2,156	18,557
Male	6,740	1,654	14,755
Female	1,932	502	3,802
Totals	8,672	2,156	18,557

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants
March 1993

Northern	Leavers into Jobs	Leavers into other positive outcomes	Total Leavers
White	478	91	1,155
Black/Afro Caribbean	2	1	4
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	4	4	10
None of the above	0	0	8
Preferred not to say	0	0	4
Total	484	96	1,181
Male	398	81	988
Female	86	15	193
Totals	484	96	1,181

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants
March 1993

Yorkshire and Humberside	Leavers into Jobs	Leavers into other positive outcomes	Total Leavers
White	794	180	1,588
Black/Afro Caribbean	11	2	27
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	37	19	90
None of the above	4	5	14
Preferred not to say	3	0	4
Total	849	206	1,723
Male	659	165	1,383
Female	190	41	340
Totals	849	206	1,723

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants
March 1993

East Midlands and Eastern	Leavers into Jobs	Leavers into other positive outcomes	Total Leavers
White	812	198	1,599
Black/Afro Caribbean	9	5	22
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	33	9	69
None of the above	6	1	10
Preferred not to say	0	0	6
Total	860	213	1,706
Male	681	168	1,381
Female	179	45	325
Totals	860	213	1,706

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants
March 1993

London and South East	Leavers into Jobs	Leavers into other positive outcomes	Total Leavers
White	1,771	499	3,954
Black/Afro Caribbean	270	95	634
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	214	75	569
None of the above	57	20	153
Preferred not to say	31	19	86
Total	2,343	708	5,396
Male	1,723	507	4,066
Female	620	201	1,330
Totals	2,343	708	5,396

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants
March 1993

South West	Leavers into Jobs	Leavers into other positive outcomes	Total Leavers
White	584	142	1,231
Black/Afro Caribbean	8	2	12
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	11	2	15
None of the above	2	3	6
Preferred not to say	0	0	2
Total	605	149	1,266
Male	469	116	1,008
Female	136	33	258
Totals	605	149	1,266

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants March 1993

Wales	*Leavers into Jobs*	*Leavers into other positive outcomes*	*Total Leavers*
White	526	112	1,024
Black/Afro Caribbean	3	2	8
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	1	2	9
None of the above	3	0	6
Preferred not to say	1	0	3
Total	534	116	1,050
Male	438	89	860
Female	96	27	190
Totals	534	116	1,050

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants March 1993

West Midlands	*Leavers into Jobs*	*Leavers into other positive outcomes*	*Total Leavers*
White	712	186	1,348
Black/Afro Caribbean	31	12	67
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	89	48	199
None of the above	4	1	9
Preferred not to say	2	0	5
Total	838	247	1,628
Male	654	190	1,280
Female	184	57	348
Totals	838	247	1,628

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants 1 April 1991 to 27 March 1992

North West	*Leavers into Jobs*	*Leavers into other positive outcomes*	*Total Leavers*
White	1,269	244	2,684
Black/Afro Caribbean	9	2	27
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	26	8	68
None of the above	2	2	11
Preferred not to say	1	1	7
Total	1,307	257	2,797
Male	1,019	208	2,272
Female	288	49	525
Totals	1,307	257	2,797

Jobclub: Ethnic origin and Sex of participants March 1993

Scotland	*Leavers into Jobs*	*Leavers into other positive outcomes*	*Total Leavers*
White	844	161	1,791
Black/Afro Caribbean	2	0	2
Indian/Pakistani Bangladesh/ Sri Lanken	2	2	5
None of the above	2	1	6
Preferred not to say	2	0	6
Total	852	164	1,810
Male	699	130	1,517
Female	152	34	293
Totals	852	164	1,810

Job Interview Guarantee Scheme

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many unemployed people have taken part in the job interview guarantee scheme in each region in 1992-93 and in the first quarter of 1993-94; and how many participants have secured full-time or part-time employment with their sponsoring employer.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Ms Clare Short, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the Job Interview Guarantee (JIG). This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

You asked how many unemployed people have taken part in the Job Interview Guarantee (JIG) Scheme in each region in 1992-93 and in the first quarter of 1993-94 and how many participants have secured full or part-time employment with the sponsoring employer. The information is set out by region in the attached table.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Job interview guarantee scheme
Numbers of clients assisted and placed in jobs

	Number of clients assisted 1992-93	*Number of clients placed 1992-93*	*Number of clients assisted April-June 1993*	*Number of clients placed April-June 1993*
Northern Region	9,342	3,110	4,940	1,490
Yorks and Humberside Region	13,851	4,920	14,107	3,806
East Midlands and Eastern Region	12,978	5,123	4,954	2,090
London and South East Region	64,673	23,811	26,184	10,421
South West Region	26,994	8,162	7,434	3,367
Office for Wales	14,249	5,365	5,884	2,613
West Midlands Region	19,177	7,718	5,156	2,688
North West Region	18,715	8,112	11,254	4,874
Office for Scotland	16,081	10,380	6,058	4,672
National	196,060	76,701	85,971	36,021

Child Care

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what action has been taken by his Department to implement the 1992 European Community recommendation on child care.

Miss Widdecombe: The Government welcome the recommendation, which is in tune with our policy of encouraging measures which allow parents to balance their work and family responsibilities. Since the recommendation was adopted in March 1992, we have introduced a major £45 million initiative to provide 50,000 extra out-of-school child care places for the over-fives. Shortly before the recommendation was adopted, we published the booklet, "The Best of Both Worlds" which illustrates with case studies a variety of flexible employment practices which can benefit working parents and employers alike. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, in his previous post as the Secretary of State for Wales, launched the Chwarae Teg or "Fair Play" initiative which brings together a partnership of the public, private and voluntary sectors to promote new child care provision and flexible working as part of a strategy to increase opportunities for women in the work force. We will continue to look for opportunities to promote a more family-friendly working environment.

Actively-seeking-work Test

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many claimants in each quarter since April 1992 for each region and for Great Britain as a whole have *(a)* been issued with warning letters for not actively seeking work, *(b)* had their claim referred to an adjudication officer for not actively seeking work, *(c)* had their claims allowed or disallowed for not actively seeking work, *(d)* had their claim referred to an adjudication officer for refusing suitable employment and *(e)* how many of those in *(d)* have had their benefit disqualified or not disqualified.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Ms Clare Short, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the number of claimants who have been issued with warning letters for not actively seeking work; had their claim referred to an adjudication officer for not actively seeking work; had their claims allowed or disallowed for not actively seeking work; had their claim referred to an adjudication officer for refusing suitable employment; and how many of those have had their benefit disqualified or not disqualified in each quarter since April 1992 for each region and for Great Britain as a whole. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

The publication "Analysis of Adjudication Officers' Decisions", includes the statistics you asked for on actively seeking work and refusal of employment, for each quarter since April 1992 to March 1993, for each standard region and for Great Britain as a whole, and copies are held in the Library of the House.

A change introduced in the Social Security Act 1989 removed the requirement that employment offered had to be suitable for the person concerned; instead the client now has to show that they have good cause for refusing any job which is offered to them.

I enclose a table showing by Region, and Nationally, the number of warning letters issued to clients whose worksearch activity was not considered to be adequate.

I hope this is helpful. As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Warning letters issued
by region and nationally for each quarter since April 1992

	April to June 1992	*July to September 1992*	*October to December 1992*	*January to March 1993*
Northern	300	290	163	185
Yorkshire and Humberside	282	292	166	163
East Midlands and Eastern	203	202	78	98
London and South Eastern	2,126	2,250	1,758	1,515
South Western	406	388	271	349
Wales	233	183	71	72
West Midlands	619	486	235	190
North Western	1,678	2,006	1,510	1,057
Scotland	887	612	337	363
National	6,734	6,709	4,589	3,992

Work Trials

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many work trial agreements have been made with employers in 1992-93 and in the first quarter of 1993-94, for each region and for Great Britain as a whole; how many unemployed people have taken part in work trials in each region; how many participants have secured full-time or part-time employment with their sponsoring employer; what is the best information he has on the wages they receive; how long those jobs have lasted; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Ms Clare Short, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about Work Trials. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

Figures showing the numbers of unemployed people participating in Work Trials, and the numbers placed into work as a result are attached. Details of the number of Work Trial agreements made with employers, the wages of Work Trial participants and the length of these jobs is not collected.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

I hope this is helpful.

Annex A

Work Trial participants and placings for April 1992 to March 1993 are as follows:

Region	*Participants*	*Placings*
Northern	196	125
Yorks and Humberside	102	67
East Midlands	147	87
London and South East	260	136
South West	89	41
Wales	158	83
West Midlands	132	65
North West	236	119
Scotland	384	227
Total	1,704	950

Annex B

Work Trial participants and placings for the quarter April 1993 to June 1993 are as follows:

Region	*Participants*	*Placings*
Northern	74	39
Yorks and Humberside	107	56
East Midlands	207	132
London and South East	480	205
South West	119	62
Wales	165	93
West Midlands	189	116
North West	399	265
Scotland	420	229
Total	2,160	1,197

Restart

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many people in each region and Great Britain as a whole how many people attended a Restart interview in 1992-93 and in the first quarter of 1993-94; and what were the results of those interviews broken down in the same way as the reply given on 18 December 1990, *Official Report*, column *148*.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Ms Clare Short, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Questions to him about how many people, for each region and for Great Britain as a whole, attended a Restart interview in 1992-93 and in the first quarter of 1993-94; and what were the results of those interviews broken down in the same way as the reply given in the Official Report, column 148, on 18 December 1990. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

The Restart interview programme provides a framework within which the Employment Service provides help for long-term unemployed people. It provides a gateway to the range of employment and training opportunities available as well as being a means of ensuring that claimants remain available for and are actively seeking work.

During the 1992-93 operational year 2·8 million interviews were conducted and from these interviews 33,300 started work, 78,200 began training under Employment Training, 106,000 started in Jobclub, 112,100 started a Restart course and 6,900 started the Enterprise Allowance Scheme.

The Employment Service has changed its performance monitoring at a national level for 1993-94 and the information for this year cannot be given in exactly the same format as that previously provided. Information is not yet available for the first quarter of this operational year, the figures quoted are for the first two months. During the first two months of 1993-94 54,500 interviews were conducted and from these interviews 5,800 people started work and 95,600 started an Employment Department programme, such as Jobclub, Restart Course, Jobplan Workshop and Training For Work.

These figures reflect only the direct results of Restart. We do not know how many people subsequently take up a job or a place on an employment or training programme as a result of the guidance given to them at their interview.

An indication of the scale of that effect is provided by the report "The Restart Effect" which was recently published by the independent Policy Studies Institute. It is based on an analysis of the largest survey of unemployed people in the United Kingdom since 1980. This showed conclusively that the programme had a major effect in reducing the time it takes people to leave unemployment, to get a job and to enter Employment Training, particularly for those people who were at a disadvantage within the labour market.

I hope that this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the *Official Report*. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Training and Enterprise Councils

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many training and enterprise council chairmen have left each TEC board since its launch; and how many TEC directors have resigned since the launch of their TEC.

Miss Widdecombe: A total of 34 training and enterprise council chairmen have left TEC boards since their launch.

Two Chairmen have left the following TECs:
SOLOTEC;
South Thames.

One Chairman has left the following TECs:
AZTEC;
Bedfordshire;
Calderdale/Kirklees;
CAMBSTEC (Central & South Cambridgeshire);
Coventry & Warwickshire;
Devon & Cornwall;
Dorset;
Greater Nottingham;
Gwent;
Hampshire;
HAWTEC (Hereford & Worcester);
Humberside;
Leeds;
London East;
Manchester;

METROTEC (Wigan);
North Derbyshire;
Northumberland;
North London;
North Nottinghamshire;
QUALITEC (St. Helens) Ltd.;
Rochdale;
Rotherham;
Sheffield;
Shropshire;
Southern Derbyshire;
South Glamorgan;
Stockport/High Peak;
Surrey;
TARGED North West Wales;
Teesside;
Wearside;
West Wales;
Wight Enterprise;
Wolverhampton.

A total of 328 TEC directors have left TEC boards since the launch of their TEC. This is principally due to changes in their business commitments, and reflects similar levels of turnover in the private sector as a whole.

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the latest available information on the number of male and female directors of training and enterprise councils; how many are from *(a)* ethnic minority backgrounds and *(b)* the private sector; what is the best information he has about which industrial sectors they come from; and how many of the non-private sector directors are from (i) local authorities, (ii) local education authorities, (iii) other educational organisations, (iv) trade unions, (v) voluntary organisations, (iv) ethnic minority organisations, (vii) employers' associations and (viii) others.

Miss Widdecombe: There are currently 942 male and 127 female directors of training and enterprise councils in England. Of these, 757 come from the private sector.

Of the non-private sector directors:

(i) 98 are from local directors;
(ii) 43 from local education authorities;
(iii) 31 from other education organisations;
(iv) 52 from trade unions;
(v) 37 from voluntary organisations;
(vi) 2 from ethnic minority organisations;
(vii) 12 from employers' associations;
(viii) 37 others.

Information on the ethnic origin of TEC board members is provided voluntarily. The most up-to-date figures are from 1992 and cover only 44 TECs. Twenty board members are quoted as being of ethnic minority origin.

The Department does not maintain statistics on the industrial sector origins of private sector TEC directors.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will direct training and enterprise councils to publish annual statements of accounts for public inspection; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: Training and enterprise councils are required to publish an annual report and audited statement of accounts within four months after the relevant financial year.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what arrangements apply to the payment of salaries and other expenses of officers of local authorities who serve on boards of training and enterprise councils; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: Directors serving on boards of training and enterprise councils are refunded expenses reasonably incurred in connection with their duties on behalf of TECs. They are not renummerated.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will arrange for training and enterprise councils to provide information on individual local projects, including costs, on request by a member of the public or a district council; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: Training and enterprise councils are required to publish a summary of their corporate and business plans and annual reports. This is available to the public on request. TECs' corporate plans must also be made available for inspection by the public.

TECs are private companies. It is for them to determine what information they publish about the funding of specific projects.

Parental and Family Leave

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will make it his policy to support European Community directives on parental and family leave for employees.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: No.

Methyl Bromide

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will make representations to the European Community advocating the adoption of measures to protect workers from exposure to methyl bromide.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: A proposal for an EC directive on the protection of workers from chemical agents, such as methyl bromide, has recently been published. A comprehensive set of legislation already exists in the United Kingdom to protect workers from hazardous substances, including methyl bromide. The United Kingdom will press for the principles of this legislation to be incorporated in any corresponding Community measure.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what guidance is issued by his Department regarding protection of workers handling methyl bromide.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: In 1991, the Health and Safety Executive published guidance note CS 12: "Fumigation using methyl bromide (bromomethane)".

Additional guidance is available in the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988—COSHH—and the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986. This includes an approved code of practice which gives practical guidance on the requirements of COSHH in relation to fumigation operations.

St. Helena (Work Permits)

Dr. Marek: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many work permits have been issued to citizens of St. Helena for each of the last 15 years; and what proposals he has for numbers in future years.

Miss Widdecombe: The number of work permits issued to citizens of St. Helena for each of the years for which figures are available is as follows:

	Number
1986	20
1987	30
1988	28
1989	51
1990	53
1991	30
1992	34

There is no specific number of work permits planned to be issued to St. Helenians in future years. However, the maximum number of permits available to St. Helenians under the special dependent territories quota scheme is 35 in 1993 and 30 in 1994, when the scheme ends.

Applications for work permits for St. Helenians outside these arrangements will continue to be considered against the normal work permit scheme criteria.

ES Guide 39

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment when ES guide 39 was issued; what it replaced; whether the letters in appendix V4 and appendix V3 were in the previous guide; and whether the note of guidance in clauses V16 and V17 was in the previous guide.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Mr. John Spellar, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about ES Guide 39. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief executive of the Agency.

ES Guide 39 was issued in January 1993 and replaced the New Client Adviser Guide and the Claimant Adviser Handbook. The guidance contained in Section V paragraphs V16 and V17, and the letters in Appendices V3 and V4, have been taken directly from the Claimant Adviser Handbook. I enclose copies of the guidance previously contained in the Claimant Adviser Handbook and that in ES Guide 39 for your information.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Employment Service I
Claimant Adviser Handbook

Current claim—no medical evidence

116 If the claimant has an established claim to benefit and states during the interview that they:

a have recently been disallowed sickness or invalidity benefit, and

b wish to appeal against the DSS AO's disallowance, and

c their doctor is not issuing sickness certificates, and

d their medical condition has significantly deteriorated since they last visited their doctor; or

e are not capable of undertaking work; and

f have not seen their doctor;

the claimant should be asked to seek their doctor's advice about their capacity to work. The following action should then be taken.

117 If the claimant agrees to see their doctor the claimant adviser should complete and give them a copy of the letter in Appendix I3. A copy of this letter should be sent with a letter to the doctor (Appendix I4) to explain the reason for the claimant's visit. This procedure should prevent confusion between the claimant, the doctor and the claimant adviser about why the claimant is seeking their doctor's advice about their capacity for work. **It must be made clear to the claimant that they are seeking their doctor's advice on their own behalf and not on behalf of the claimant adviser or the Employment Service.**

I
Employment Service **Appendix 14**
Claimant Adviser Handbook **(Para I 17)**

Letter to GP Explaining Advice that has been given to Claimant by Claimant Adviser

Claimant Adviser Service
The Employment Service
Employment Department

Date

I am the claimant adviser at.....benefit office; part of the Employment Service. I give advice to unemployed people to help them find suitable work and provide information about the benefits which they may receive. I also have to ensure that people satisfy the conditions of entitlement for receiving Unemployment Benefit, Income Support and/or credits of NI. One of the main conditions laid down in the Social Security Act 1975 is that the client must be capable of taking up suitable work.

When I interviewed your patient on..... *he/she informed me that they had health problems that prevents them undertaking any employment. In these circumstances I have had to suggest that *he/she should seek your advice about their fitness for employment.

If in your opinion *he/she is incapable of all work then you will no doubt advise your patient in accordance with your own clinical judgement.

Should you advise your patient that *he/she is capable of work then it will be necessary for them to see me again to reconsider their claim to unemployment benefit, income support and/or credits of NI.

Claimant Adviser

*Cross out the one which does not apply.

I
Employment Service **Appendix I3**
Claimant Adviser Handbook **(para I17)**

Letter to Claimant Suggesting Claimant Seeks Doctor's Advice

Claimant Adviser Service
The Employment Service
Employment Department

Date

When I saw you on.....about your claim for unemployment benefit, you told me that you had a health problem which prevented you doing any work. This means that you do not seem to be capable of and available for work, which is one of the main rules for payment of unemployment benefit (Social Security Act 1975).

In these circumstances I had to suggest that you seek your doctor's advice about your fitness to work. Please take this letter with you if you decide to go to see your doctor.

*I would like to see you again on.....

at.....

Claimant Adviser

*Cross out if it does not apply.

ES Guide 39

Annex 1
V
Appendix V4
(para V17)

Letter to GP Explaining Advice Given to Client by Client Adviser

The Employment Service
Employment Department

Date

I am the Client Adviser at.....benefit office; part of the Employment Service. I give advice to unemployed people to help them find suitable work and provide information about the benefits which they may receive. I also have to ensure that people satisfy the conditions of entitlement for receiving Unemployment Benefit, Income Support and/or credits of NI. One of the main conditions laid down in the Social Security Act 1975 is that the client must be capable of taking up suitable work.

When I interviewed your patient on..... *he/she informed me that they had health problems that prevents them undertaking any employment. In these circumstances I have had to suggest that *he/she should seek your advice about their fitness for employment.

If in your opinion *he/she is incapable of all work then you will no doubt advise your patient in accordance with your own clinical judgement.

Should you advise your patient that *he/she is capable of work then it will be necessary for them to see me again to reconsider their claim to unemployment benefit, income support and/or credits of NI.

Client Adviser

*Cross out the one which does not apply.

ES Guide 39

Annex 2
V
Appendix V3
(para V17)

Letter to Client Suggesting they Seek GPs Advice

The Employment Service
Employment Department

Date

When I saw you on.....about your claim for unemployment benefit, you told me that you had a health problem which prevented you doing any work. This means that you do not seem to be capable of and available for work, which is one of the main rules for payment of unemployment benefit (Social Security Act 1975).

In these circumstances I had to suggest that you seek your doctor's advice about your fitness to work. Please take this letter with you if you decide to go to see your doctor.

*I would like to see you again on.....

at.....

Client Adviser

*Cross out if it does not apply.

Annex 3

V ES Guide 39

Current claim—no medical evidence

V16 If the client has an established claim to benefit and states during an interview that they:

a have recently been disallowed Sickness or Invalidity Benefit, and

b wish to appeal against the DSS AO's disallowance, and

c their doctor is not issuing sickness certificates, and

d their medical condition has significantly deteriorated since they last visited their doctor or

e are not capable of undertaking work; and

f have not seen their doctor;

ask them to seek their doctor's advice about their capacity to work.

V17 If the client agrees to see their doctor, complete and give them a copy of the letter in Appendix V3. Write to the GP using the letter in Appendix V4 explaining the reason for the client's visit, enclosing a copy of the letter issued to the client to avoid confusion between the client and the doctor as to why medical advice is being sought about their capacity for work. **Make sure the client knows they are seeking medical advice on their own behalf, not on behalf of you or the ES.**

Right to Strike

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what legislative and other action the Government intend to take to lessen the right to strike for public sector workers.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The Government have no immediate plans for legislation beyond the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act, which received Royal Assent on 1 July. We continue to keep all aspects of industrial relations law under review.

Low Pay

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what was the change in income of the lowest paid 10 per cent. of those in full-time employment in England in real terms from May 1979 to April 1992.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The required information on earnings is published in table 116 of part E of the new earnings survey for 1979 and 1992. The April 1992 and April 1979 retail prices index required to adjust these for inflation can be found in table 6.4 of the *Employment Gazette* for July 1993 and in table 26 of the annual supplement to "Economic Trends 1979". Copies of these are in the Library.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what was the wage level at the latest date for which figures are available for the lowest paid 10 per cent. in full-time employment in *(a)* England as a whole and *(b)* in each region in England.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The information requested is published in table X5.3 of part A of the 1992 new earnings survey, a copy of which is in the Library.

Hazardous Substances

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what changes he plans to make to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations following the Government's deregulation review.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: As part of the Government's deregulation initiative, I have invited the Health and Safety Commission to review the costs and benefits of health and safety legislation. The review will include the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations. The commission has established seven industrial task groups to assist in this work, and plans to report on its review in April 1994. It is therefore far too early to know what the HSC will propose.

London East TEC

Mr. Ron Leighton: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will make a statement on the work of London East TEC in the London borough of Newham.

Miss Widdecombe: London East Training and Enterprise Council—LETEC—in common with all training and enterprise councils, is providing a wide range of services and initiatives in education, enterprise and training which it considers to be appropriate for the needs of its local area. The London borough of Newham benefits from many of LETEC's area wide programmes, as well as

specific local programmes. It also has the advantage of Stratford city challenge resources contributing to the development of its most deprived area.

Careers Service

Ms Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will give estimates for *(a)* expenditure already incurred and *(b)* expenditure envisaged in implementing those provisions of the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993 relating to the careers service.

Miss Widdecombe: In preparing for the new careers service arrangements, a small amount of administrative and other costs have so far been incurred by the Employment Department. It is estimated that in a full year, additional running costs will be about £0·5 million in England. The provision of careers services in Scotland and Wales are the responsibility of my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales. The Government's expenditure plans for 1994-95 and beyond will be settled later this year in the current public expenditure survey. Sufficient funds will be provided to fulfil the statutory duty of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State.

Incomes

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will provide a table showing the number and percentage of the adult population in each region with less than the average annual national income level in each year since 1979.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The available information, the proportions of full-time employees in the new earnings survey sample with average gross weekly earnings below the level of average earnings, is provided in the table:

Full time employees—pay unaffected by absence
Proportion earning below the level of average gross weekly earnings: At April

Per cent	Greater London	South East	East Anglia	South West
1979	49·2	53·4	65·1	64·4
1980	48·3	53·4	63·4	65·5
1981	48·2	53·7	64·0	64·3
1982	47·1	52·9	63·9	65·4
1983	46·9	52·9	65·1	65·0
1984	46·4	52·7	66·3	65·1
1985	46·7	52·8	64·1	67·6
1986	46·0	52·8	65·0	64·6
1987	46·1	52·4	65·9	64·9
1988	45·9	52·0	66·0	65·5
1989	45·2	51·7	64·6	65·4
1990	44·5	51·4	65·2	64·7
1991	44·6	51·5	65·7	65·2
1992	44·6	51·8	65·4	65·9

	West Midlands	East Midlands	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West
1979	58·6	60·1	58·7	59·7
1980	61·9	62·5	62·0	61·5
1981	64·1	63·4	62·6	62·5
1982	64·0	64·4	62·7	62·7
1983	64·8	65·0	62·8	63·8
1984	64·4	65·7	63·7	62·8
1985	64·5	65·9	63·0	62·9
1986	65·0	65·6	63·7	62·8
1987	65·7	66·8	65·0	63·8
1988	66·2	67·5	65·5	64·6
1989	66·3	67·8	66·0	65·1
1990	66·5	66·6	66·5	65·4
1991	67·3	67·2	67·2	64·8
1992	66·8	67·5	66·9	64·8

	North	Scotland	Wales
1979	58·2	60·7	57·6
1980	60·0	63·0	61·6
1981	61·6	62·4	62·4
1982	62·0	62·3	61·7
1983	63·4	62·7	63·8
1984	63·8	62·0	64·3
1985	64·0	62·5	63·4
1986	63·7	64·1	65·1
1987	65·4	64·7	65·1
1988	66·6	66·0	66·9
1989	67·3	66·1	67·3
1990	66·9	65·9	68·3
1991	67·0	65·3	68·9
1992	65·5	65·8	68·0

Holiday Pay and Unpaid Wages

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment, pursuant to his answer of 7 June, *Official Report*, column 99, what has been the cost of *(a)* holiday pay and *(b)* unpaid wages owed to employees whose employer becomes insolvent or is otherwise unable to pay in each year since 1987-88.

Miss Widdecombe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State may make payment from the national insurance fund for holiday pay and unpaid wages to employees whose employer becomes insolvent. The cost of such payments for each year since 1987-88 is as follows:

	Holiday pay £ million	Unpaid wages £ million
1987-88	12·8	11·2
1988-89	10·2	10·1
1989-90	11·2	11·9
1990-91	23·3	24·3
1991-92	41·7	47·3

Jobcentres

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will provide a table showing the number of vacancies in jobcentres that were *(a)* temporary and *(b)* permanent in each quarter from April 1987 in each region.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Mr. Alan Milburn, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him asking about the number of vacancies notified to Jobcentres since April 1987. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

Providing historical vacancy information from 1987 will take some time to collate. I will write to you shortly with the complete information you requested.

In the meantime, I enclose a table showing the information you requested for the past three quarters.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Details of permanent and temporary vacancies notified in the last three quarters

Region	*5 October 1992 to 8 January 1993*		*11 January 1993 to 2 April 1993*		*5 April 1993 to 2 July 1993*	
	Permanent vacancies notified	*Temporary vacancies notified*	*Permanent vacancies notified*	*Temporary vacancies notified*	*Permanent vacancies notified*	*Temporary vacancies notified*
West Midlands	28,113	6,421	30,816	4,781	34,234	7,003
East Midlands	33,762	10,402	35,206	7,720	40,484	12,212
London	43,171	12,900	43,422	10,541	48,655	11,782
South East	53,624	13,971	57,171	10,789	66,118	13,641
Scotland	44,669	14,212	48,053	11,961	53,278	14,781
Wales	20,419	10,077	22,000	7,497	26,532	10,129
North West	51,670	18,115	53,792	13,674	64,203	19,902
South West	26,009	6,915	31,449	6,397	36,680	10,304
Yorkshire and Humberside	27,666	5,555	29,782	4,785	34,516	6,878
Northern	15,620	4,760	16,433	3,631	17,956	4,444
Total	344,723	103,328	368,124	81,776	422,656	111,076

Fraud

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what are his Department's current estimates for unemployment benefit fraud, and how the figures are arrived at.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Mr. John Battle, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the current estimates for unemployment benefit fraud; and how the figures are arrived at. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

We do not know how many people claiming unemployment benefits are doing so fraudulently and we do not make approximations. However, you may be interested to know that in the last financial year my fraud inspectors saved the taxpayer £44·71 million net as a result of over 61,000 people withdrawing their claims to benefit following investigation.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Paliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many officers have been employed investigating unemployment benefit fraud *(a)* in local offices and *(b)* in regional teams for each year since 1979.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Mr. John Battle, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about how many officers have been employed investigating unemployment benefit fraud, in local offices and regional teams, for each year since 1979. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

The ES fraud investigation organisation was restructured in 1984 and, unfortunately, comparative figures for earlier years are not available.

The number of ES Inspectors employed are as follows:

Year	*Number*
1984-85	450
1985-86	650
1986-87	720
1987-88	785
1988-89	820
1989-90	820
1990-91	820
1991-92	780
1992-93	780

ES inspectors are of Executive Officer grade and are supported by clerical and managerial staff.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Child Care

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what intentions his Department has to introduce measures on child care and employment rights to reflect the change in the number of women in the work force.

Miss Widdecombe: The Government have made clear their intention to enable women to fulfil their full potential in the world of work. In April 1993 we introduced the out-of-school child care grant, an initiative delivered by training and enterprise councils, and local enterprise companies in Scotland. A total of £45 million has been allocated and we hope to create 50,000 new child care places for the over-fives. The Trade Union Reform and

Employment Rights Act 1993 gives working women significant new maternity rights including a new right to 14 weeks maternity leave and comprehensive protection against dismissal on grounds of pregnancy, regardless of length of service or hours of work. The Act also includes a right to complain to an industrial tribunal against discriminatory terms in collective agreements, and a power for industrial tribunals to impose restrictions on reporting the identities of the parties in cases involving allegations of sexual harassment.

Complaints (Young People)

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many complaints have been received in each year since 1987 by the Equal Opportunities Commission from and on behalf of children and young people aged 18 years or under; and what proportion related to schooling matters in each year.

Miss Widdecombe: The Equal Opportunities Commission does not collect this information in the form requested. However, the EOC's annual reports contain information on overall numbers of inquiries relating to education and training.

Travel-to-work Expenses

Mr. Kevin Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what steps he has taken to repeal the salary ceiling for eligibility to travel-to-work expense claims.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 21 July 1993]:* The travel to interview scheme is currently under review and the eligibility conditions are being looked at to see whether the resources available can be better targeted. The possibility of removing the salary limit is included in the review. Any changes to the rules are subject to Treasury approval. Subject to that approval, our intention is to implement any changes as quickly as possible.

Disabled People

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what assessment he has made of the effect of the level of assistance available under the special employment schemes on the level of employment of blind people.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* Such an assessment is contained in the consultative document "Evaluation of Special Schemes for people with disabilities: Summary Paper", November 1990. A copy of this is available in the Library.

The range of help currently available to the blind and partially sighted will continue, and be enhanced, under access to work from April 1994.

ENVIRONMENT

Bed-and-Breakfast Accommodation

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make it his policy to establish minimum room size standards for bed-and-breakfast accommodation used to house homeless people.

Sir George Young: The homelessness code of guidance for local authorities—Third edition—advises that bed-and-breakfast accommodation should be used only as a last resort, and that care should be taken in ensuring that all forms of temporary accommodation meet acceptable standards. The number of homeless households placed in bed-and-breakfast accommodation has reduced significantly over the last 12 months, and now accounts for only a small proportion of those placed in temporary accommodation.

Council Tax

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what analysis he has made of the impact of the introduction of the council tax on pensioners in London; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 21 July 1993, *Official Report*, column *264*.

Waste Recycling

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what discussions he has had with his European counterparts on the subject of waste recycling.

Mr. Yeo: My colleagues and I have regular discussions with our European counterparts. The subject of recycling has arisen frequently in recent discussions, with a particular focus on the proposed EC packaging directive, and the effects of the German packaging ordinance on recycling in other member states.

These issues were debated at the most recent Environment Council meeting on 29 June. All other member states shared the United Kingdom's concern about the impact of the German ordinance.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what steps the Government have taken towards improving the proportion of household waste recycled.

Mr. Yeo: The Government are taking a number of measures to encourage recycling. These are set out in "This Common Inheritance, The Second Year Report" (Cm 2068). In particular:

we have allocated £15 million in supplementary credit approvals to local authorities to encourage provision of facilities for recycling in 1993-94;

we have announced our intention to increase recycling credits from 1 April 1994, so that they reflect the full economic costs of disposal;

we are holding discussions with a range of industries, with a view to establishing how they might contribute to the achievement of the 25 per cent. target.

Minerals Planning Guidance

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make it his policy to amend minerals planning guidance note No. 6 to include *(a)* references for the need for the adoption of demand management policies in regional planning guidance, structure and local plans and *(b)* references to the need to encourage consideration of aggregates use in the environmental apraisal of plan options.

Mr. Baldry: These matters are being considered in the light of the responses to the draft guidelines issued for public consultation in January. The revised guidelines will be published later this year.

County Hall, London

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the latest position with regard to the sale of county hall.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will a statement on the future of county hall, London.

Mr. Baldry: I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister for Local Government and Planning to the hon. Member for Harrow, East (Mr. Dykes), on 20 July 1993, *Official Report*, column *105*.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what has been the estimated total cost of county hall, London, since *(a)* the abolition of the Greater London council and *(b)* the abolition of the Inner London education authority, in terms of (i) maintenance and repairs, (ii) security, (iii) heat, light and other costs and (iv) loss of rental income from unlet vacant offices.

Mr. Gummer: The total cost of maintaining the county hall complex since the abolition of the GLC and ILEA during the period whilst it was still substantially occupied is not known. Since it was fully vacated in 1990, the annual cost of maintenance and repairs has been in the region of £980,000, of security £510,000 and of heat, light and similar costs £152,000. It would not be appropriate to seek to estimate the loss of rental income since the London residuary body has never sought to let vacant parts of the complex as this would inhibit its disposal for refurbishment or development.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when the unconditional sale of the riverside building county hall, London, was completed; to whom; and what was the total consideration.

Mr. Gummer: An unconditional contract exists for the sale of the riverside building of county hall to the Shirayama Corporation of Japan and is due to be completed in October. The amount of the consideration is a matter of commercial confidentiality.

Aggregates

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what steps are currently being undertaken by his Department to secure a reduction in the demand for aggregates in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Baldry: Draft guidelines and a policy issues paper on aggregate extraction were issued in January. The responses received are now being reviewed. The future level of demand for aggregates is central to that review.

Minerals Act 1981

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the progress of his review of the Minerals Act 1981.

Mr. Baldry: We consulted last year on options for change. I hope to be able to issue a further consultation paper on detailed proposals later this year.

Radiation Exposure

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the relative effectiveness in minimising exposure to radiation according to the as low as reasonably achievable principle of *(a)* dry storage of spent advanced gas-cooled reactor fuel followed by direct disposal of *(b)* reprocessing spent fuel followed by deep disposal of high-level and intermediate-level waste.

Mr. Yeo: One of the objectives of the Government's policy for radioactive waste management is that the exposure to ionising radiation shall be reduced to levels which are as low as reasonably achievable (ALARA), social and economic factors being taken into account. It is for the owners of the spent fuel or their agents to put forward their proposals for dealing with it, and to demonstrate to Government regulatory agencies that the ALARA principle is being met.

Architects

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will bring forward proposals to ensure that unqualified persons in other EC countries who cannot use the title architect in those countries are precluded from using the title within the United Kingdom.

Mr. Baldry: No, but people from EC member states who do not have qualifications satisfying the architects directive will not be recognised by the United Kingdom competent authority as professionally qualified.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Baldry: Whether or not the 1981 regulations apply in any particular case will depend on the nature of the work awarded and the contractors' own proposals for carrying it out.

Since publication of the White Paper "Competing for Quality, Buying Better Public Services" the Secretary of State's market-testing programme has included the activities listed below which have been contracted out under contractual arrangements which did not need to incorporate the 1981 regulations:

—procurement of professional property services, provided previously by the Property Services Agency;
—increased use of contract inspectors by the Planning Inspectorate agency;
—information technology project management within the Planning Inspectorate agency; and
—research and research services—first tranche.

Information relating to services or functions which are not on the Department's market-testing programme but which have been contracted out since November 1991 cannot be obtained except at disproportionate cost.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in Ordnance Survey since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Baldry: Since November 1991 Ordnance Survey has not contracted out any function involving the transfer of its staff.

Private Rented Housing

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what measures he is taking to revive the private rented sector; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: We are keen to revive the private rented sector. The deregulation measures in the Housing Act 1988, which introduced assured and assured shorthold tenancies at market rents for most new lettings, was designed to encourage landlords to bring their property onto the market.

We have also launched a number of specific initiatives including the "Rent-a-Room" scheme, under which householders no longer have to pay tax on rent from a lodger in their home if the gross annual amount of the rent is no more than £3,250; the flats over shops scheme, under which £25 million is being made available through local authorities over three years to bring flats over shops back into residential use; and the housing associations as managing agents scheme, which allows housing associations to act as an intermediary between potential private landlords and tenants in order to encourage more empty property to be let.

I am exploring other measures to build on what has been achieved so far.

Council Housing

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many council houses are empty *(a)* in total and *(b)* in the north-west region; and how many of them (i) are fit for occupancy, (ii) need minor repairs and (iii) need more extensive renovation.

Sir George Young: Local authorities report the numbers of their own dwellings that are empty in their housing investment programme (HIP1) returns.

The latest available figures for England and the north-west, which are at 1 April 1992, appear in columns A198, total vacant; A191, available for letting; A192, awaiting minor repairs; and A193 and A194, awaiting major works, of the "1992 HIP1—Regional Grossing", a copy of which is in the Library.

Local Government Commission

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he will issue revised guidelines for the Local Government Commission.

Mr. Baldry: We have no immediate plans to do so, but we are keeping the guidance under review.

Mr. Olner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the extent to which the Local Government Commission has correctly interpreted the guidance given to it with regard to *(a)* cost effectiveness, *(b)* community identity and *(c)* the case for unitary authorities.

Mr. Baldry: These are matters which we shall be looking at as we receive the Local Government Commission's final recommendations for each review area.

Mr. Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the interpretation by the Local Government Commission of the guidance given to it by his Department with regard to size and joint arrangements affecting any new arrangements for local government.

Mr. Baldry: These are matters which we shall be looking at as we receive the Local Government Commission's final recommendations for each review area.

Mr. Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what discussions he has had with the local authority associations on revision of the Local Government Commission's policy guidance.

Mr. Baldry: The Association of County Councils and the Association of District Councils have given us their views and we are considering them.

Mr. Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the recommendations of the Local Government Commission so far published.

Mr. Baldry: The Local Government Commission has made final recommendations on the Isle of Wight only, and we are currently considering the Government's response.

Mr. Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assent he has made of the way in which the Local Government Commission has implemented the policy guidance issued by his Department.

Mr. Baldry: This is a matter which we shall be looking at as we receive the Local Government Commission's final recommendations for each review area.

Mr. Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what weight he expects the Local Government Commission to give to responses received from local people during stage 3 of the review in each first phase area.

Mr. Baldry: Section 15 of the Local Government Act 1992 places a duty on the Local Government Commission to take into consideration all relevant representations made to it.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in Ordnance Survey in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Baldry: Ordnance Survey employs 141 staff—one unified grade 6, five unified grade 7, 16 SEO, 46 HEO, 62 EO, nine AO and two AA— in its information and computer services functions.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Gummer: My department—excluding Ordnance Survey—currently employs 186 staff—detailed by grade below—in the automatic data processing functional specialism:

	Number
SEO	35
HEO	71
EO	47
AO	14
AA	19

UV-B Monitoring

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) whether current monitoring has established a relationship between stratospheric ozone depletion and UV-B measurements at ground level; and what research is being undertaken to validate scientific models linking ozone depletion and ground level UV-B;

(2) what facilities exist in the United Kingdom for monitoring of UV-B radiation at ground level; to what extent results are affected by low-level ozone pollution in the areas surrounding the monitoring sites; and how successfully these results can be used to predict UV-B levels in other less polluted areas;

(3) what plans he has *(a)* in the short term and *(b)* in future years should UV-B levels rise further as a result of ozone depletion, to make UV-B monitoring data available to the public on a daily basis;

(4) what plans he has to upgrade or extend the network of UV-B monitoring stations in the United Kingdom; and if he will outline the work to be done and the timetable.

Mr. Yeo: The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB), on behalf of the Department of Health, has operated since 1988 three monitoring sites for surface ultra-violet radiation at Chilton, Oxfordshire, Leeds, and Glasgow. The board plans to add three further sites by the end of the year at Camborne, Cornwall, Kinloss, and Lerwick. My Department supports research at Reading university which is playing a leading role in international programmes for determining standards for improved UV-B monitoring networks. I have asked the Department's stratospheric ozone review group (SORG) to assess possibilities for an improved network in its next report this autumn.

Air pollution, including low-level ozone, will have some influence on UV-B radiation reaching the ground, although much less than natural conditions such as cloudiness. The exisiting NRPB sites cover a range of situations from rural to outer urban and are believed to give a good indication of the maximum UV-B levels experienced throughout the United Kingdom. The additional sites planned for the end of this year will provide a further check on this.

Results from the NRPB network are published annually. I understand a scheme to release weekly bulletins is imminent. The Department's stratospheric ozone review group will review ground level UV-B irradiation in its report this autumn. So far, no increase in UV-B has been detected in the United Kingdom against the background of natural variability. The frequency of reporting will be reviewed should this position change.

Monitoring UV-B cannot of itself establish the link between ozone layer depletion and UV-B at ground level, but is essential to validating mathematical models. Current models agree well with monitoring data under the "worst-case" clear sky conditions. They are limited by the availability of precise data on pollution levels, aerosols and clouds, which act to further reduce ground level UV-B.

Homelessness

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement of policy on the homeless outside London, including the young homeless and the discharged mentally ill.

Sir George Young: The aim of reducing homelessness underlies all the Government's housing policies. We have taken steps to increase the supply of low cost housing where it is needed. The public resources available to housing associations, the main providers of new social housing, increased from £935 million in 1989-90 to £1·8 billion in 1993-94, making some 54,500 new homes available this year. The housing market package announced in the autumn statement last year has been a considerable success, providing an extra 18,000 housing association homes in 1992-93, as well as releasing local authority and housing association houses for reletting by enabling their present tenants to become home owners. In addition, the temporary relaxation of the rules governing local authority receipts, for the period November 1992 to December 1993, gives local authorities greatly increased spending power.

Under section 8 of the Housing Act 1985, local authorities have a duty to assess the housing needs of their area and, in their role as enablers, can use their housing and planning powers to stimulate activity by housing associations and the private sector to meet those needs. In the latest guidance to local authorities on the housing investment programme (HIP) round, greater emphasis is also being placed on the development of a strategic housing role by authorities, to encompass all the housing needs and resources of the area. It is for individual local authorities to decide whether schemes to help young homeless people are appropriate to the needs of their area and, in the light of their resources and commitments, the priority to attach to such schemes.

My Department also gives grants under section 73 of the Housing Act 1985 to voluntary sector organisations which help single homeless people. This financial year we have made available £6·45 million to 170 projects—130 outside London—that provide direct, practical help to single homeless people. Seventy nine of these projects help young people secure accommodation, and provide advice, training and continuing support.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State of Health is, through the single homeless young people initiative, funding 14 projects specifically designed to help young people outside London who are homeless, or in danger of becoming so.

Health authorities have an obligation to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for any necessary continuing care, including drawing up an individual care programme, before mentally ill people are discharged. The evidence we have is that homeless mentally ill people sleeping rough are not those who have been recently discharged from long-stay psychiatric hospitals.

Standard Spending Assessments

Mr. Clelland: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to ensure that the area grant adjustment methodology within standard spending assessments reflects accurately the actual level of wage costs to all local authorities.

Mr. Baldry: The general aim of SSAs is not to reflect actual expenditure but to measure each authority's relative need to spend in order to provide a standard level of service. As far as the area cost adjustment is concerned, we are examining the methodology as part of our review of SSAs for 1994-95. We will be announcing our proposals later in the year.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when the outcome of his review of standard spending assessments will be published; in what form; and how long a period there will be for consultation before final decisions by Ministers are made.

Mr. Gummer: I shall discuss the report on the review of standard spending assessments, to be prepared by the SSA sub-group to the settlement working group, with representatives of the local authority associations at the October meeting of the Consultative Council on Local Government Finance.

We shall announce our proposals for the revenue support grant settlement for 1994-95, including SSAs, in the late autumn, and then consult in the usual way.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will place in the Library the representations which he has received in respect of his review of standard spending assessments.

Mr. Gummer: I shall arrange for copies of the representations received so far from local authorities on the review of standard spending assessments to be placed in the Library.

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what has been the annual change in the total standard spending assessments for all English local authorities from 1990-91 to 1993-94; and what were the annual increases in the element for the area cost adjustment over the same period.

Mr. Baldry: The total of standard spending assessments for all local authorities in England for 1993-94 was £36,622 million, of which £1,332 million—3·6 per cent. of the total—was allocated on the basis of the area cost adjustment. The annual percentage changes since 1990-91 have been as follows:

Year	*Percentage changes*	
	Total SSA	*Amount allocated on area cost adjustment*
1990-91 to 1991-92	[illegible]	37·7
1991-92 to 1992-93	6·8	14·1
1992-93 to 1993-94	2·9	7·4

Note: For the purposes of comparison with 1993-94, the 1992-93 figures have been adjusted to allow for the transfer of certain local authority responsibilities, most notably for further education.

Opencast Mining

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the opencast mining applications in the north-west since January 1990 indicating where approval *(a)* has been given to original or revised application without appeal and *(b)* has been given following appeal and those applications rejected indicating where such rejection has been determined following an appeal.

Mr. Baldry: This information is not held centrally.

Ozone Depletion

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will provide details from the maintenance and servicing record of the quantity and type of ozone-destroying chemicals used annually in his Department's refrigeration and air conditioning equipment for servicing and in leakages; and what proportion is removed for recycling.

Mr. Yeo: Tollgate house, Bristol is the only building occupied by my Department where refrigeration plant within the air conditioning system contains ozone depleting substances. It is estimated that consumption of R22 per annum is:

150 kg utilised
15 kg reclaimed

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many refrigeration and air conditioning systems in the Department are equipped with automatic leak detection systems.

Mr. Yeo: Tollgate house, Bristol is the only building occupied by my Department where refrigeration plant within the air conditioning system contains ozone-depleting substances. There are no automatic leak detection facilities but an exercise is under way to consider the removal of these substances. The installation of automatic leak detectors will be considered in the light of the consultants' report.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how his departmental green Minister has promoted protection of the ozone layer with specific policy measures; which possible measures have been considered and rejected; and on what grounds.

Mr. Yeo: My Department's green housekeeping policy statement states the measures we are taking to protect the ozone layer. These are: (1) to continue to eliminate products containing halons, chlorofluorocarbons, carbon tetrachloride, 1,1,1—trichloroethan and other ozone-depleting substances well in advance of the Government's responses to international agreements and EC regulations; (2) to extend the leakage prevention programme through regular servicing of all refrigeration and air conditioning equipment containing ozone-depleting substances in compliance with professional codes of practice. No measures for promoting protection of the ozone layer have been considered but rejected.

Public Appointments

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the number of public appointments for which he is responsible.

Mr. Gummer: I am responsible for 528 appointments to 43 public bodies. In addition, I appoint the rent assessment panel.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Gummer: The decision to provide a publication in media suitable for blind and partially sighted people is taken in the light of the available publicity budgets and the likely number of such people among the target audience.

Recent examples of publications which have been produced in such media include leaflets on the community charge and the council tax.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape.

Mr. Gummer: All the publicity material published by my Department is distributed to a very wide range of media outlets, including broadcasters, for them to report on. Information is also made available to the general public through the offices of such organisations as voluntary groups, citizens advice bureaux and local authorities.

Planning Applications

Mr. Robert Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the average waiting time for the approval of planning applications by *(a)* Harrogate borough council and *(b)* all other authorities.

Mr. Baldry: On Tuesday 20 July 1993, my hon. Friend the Minister for Local Government and Planning launched the planning performance checklists, copies of which have been placed in the House Library. The checklists show the relative performance of local planning authorities against the Government's target that 80 per cent. of applications for planning permission should be decided within eight weeks. In the year to 31 March 1993, Harrogate district council decided 51·3 per cent. of applications within eight weeks. Nationally, during the same period, local planning authorities decided 63 per cent. of applications within eight weeks.

Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he has received all the evidence he requires to make a judgment in relation to the THORP review.

Mr. Yeo: A final decision will be taken after the further consultation announced by my right hon. Friend in his answer on 28 June, to the hon. Member for Norwich, North (Mr. Thompson) *Official Report*, column *392*.

Housing (Disabled People)

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he expects to publish the report which his Department has prepared on housing services for disabled people.

Sir George Young: The report will be published in August.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has for the management and disposal arising from the United Kingdom nuclear power programme of *(a)* the stockpile of plutonium, *(b)* vitrified high-level waste from spent fuel reprocessing, *(c)* intermediate-level waste from reprocessing and *(d)* spent fuel that is not reprocessed but placed in temporary storage.

Mr. Yeo: The policy for vitrified high-level waste from spent fuel reprocessing is to store it for at least 50 years before disposal. The arrangements for disposal have not yet been determined.

UK Nirex Ltd. is the nuclear industry body charged with the responsibility of developing new disposal facilities for low and intermediate-level wastes, including reprocessing waste. The work of Nirex to develop such facilities continues, and it will have to satisfy the planning and regulatory authorities that its proposals are acceptable. The relevant wastes will be stored until the facilities become available.

Plutonium and irradiated nuclear fuel are of potential value. It is for the owners to consider what they wish to do with such material and to satisfy the relevant authorities that their proposals are acceptable.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what studies have been carried out into the environmental and health implications of storing intermediate-level wastes arising from the reprocessing of foreign spent nuclear fuel in the thermal oxide reprocessing plant; and if he will give an estimate of the plutonium content of this waste per tonne of spent fuel reprocessed.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 14 July 1993]:* I have been asked to reply.

Responsibility for the storage of intermediate-level wastes arising from reprocessing rests with British Nuclear Fuels plc as operators of the Sellafield site, subject to meeting the statutory requirements of the Health and Safety Executive's nuclear installations inspectorate. The precise plutonium content of the waste will depend upon the operational performance of the thermal oxide reprocessing plant.

Local Authority Management

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he next plans to meet representatives of the local authority associations to discuss the report on the internal management of local authorities.

Mr. Baldry: My right hon. Friend has regular two-monthly informal meetings with the chairmen of the three local authority associations at which a wide range of issues are discussed. The next meeting is planned to take place in September.

Council Rent Arrears

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list by local authority the rent arrears owed by local authority tenants for the last year for which figures are available and the total rent owing.

Sir George Young: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Hertfordshire, North (Mr. Heald) on 20 July 1993, *Official Report*, columns *104-105*.

Regulated Tenancies (Rents)

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what have been the figures for the increase in rent for regulated tenancies over each of the last five years; what percentage of tenants of regulated tenancies qualify for housing benefit; and what have been the comparable figures over each of the last five years.

Sir George Young: Regulated tenancies may or may not have a fair rent registered by the rent officer. The mean percentage increase on re-registration of fair rents in England for each of the last five years is as follows:

	Per cent.
1988	18
1989	19
1990	22
1991	25
1992	25

Rents may be re-registered every second year: these increases therefore cover a period of at least two years. Comparable figures on rent increases for regulated tenancies without a registered rent are not available.

We do not have statistics showing the proportion of regulated tenants who qualified for housing benefit over each of the last five years. The private renters survey 1990, however, estimated that 52 per cent. of regulated tenants with a registered rent and 35 per cent. of those without a registered rent were eligible for housing benefit. In comparison, the 1988 private renters survey found that 56 per cent. and 39 per cent. respectively would qualify.

Fire Regulations

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish England and Wales Approved Document B (Building Regulations, Fire); and if he will make a statement on the operation and effectiveness of the regulations in England and Wales since they came into force on 1 June 1992.

Mr. Baldry: The current edition of Approved Document B was published in December 1991, replacing an earlier version of 1985. The new approved document has been well received and appears to be operating effectively.

Oil Spills

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many oil spills of over 100 gallons from offshore installations there were in United Kingdom waters in *(a)* 1980 and *(b)* 1990.

Mr. Yeo: *(a)* 52; *(b)* 109.

European Coastal Strategy

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment whether he supports the principle of a European coastal strategy; and what action he will take to urge other member state Governments to support the European Commission's attempt to establish one.

Mr. Yeo: At present, the Commission has not published a proposed directive on a European coastal strategy.

Drinking Water

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what measures his Department is taking to ensure that the incremental benefits of constantly increasing drinking water standards justify the cost to consumers of their implementation; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: Changes to domestic requirements on drinking water are subject to consideration of cost and benefits as a matter of course.

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what further proposals he expects to bring forward within the EC and by the Government directly to improve further drinking water quality; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: We are considering the implications of the revised guidelines which are shortly to be published by the World Health Organisation, and will be playing our part in any negotiations initiated by the European Commission on the drinking water directive.

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the measures introduced by the Government *(a)* directly and *(b)* because of EC directives, to improve drinking water standards since 1979.

Mr. Yeo: The legislative and administrative measures introduced by the Government to improve drinking water standards in England and Wales since 1979 result largely from the implementation of EC directive 80/778/EEC—the drinking water directive. They are as follows:

Department of the Environment circular 20/82, dated 19 August 1982;

The Water Act 1989 as consolidated by the Water Industry Act 1991;

The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 1989 [SI No. 1147], as amended by the Water Supply (Water Quality) (Amendment) Regulations 1989 and 1991 [SI Nos. 1384 and 1837 respectively]; and,

The Private Supplies Regulations 1991 [SI No. 2790].

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what criteria are used to determine the time scales set for implementation of new drinking water quality standards; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: The time scales for implementation of any new drinking water quality standards proposed by the European Commission would be negotiated by member states in the Environment Council. Any changes to domestic standards, including dates of implementation, would take into account all relevant factors including the implications for water consumers.

Mr. David Porter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what assessment he has made of the cost to

each water company of the implementation of each of the EC and United Kingdom measures for improving drinking water standards since 1979.

Mr. Yeo: The total capital cost of improving drinking water quality in England and Wales in the period 1989-90 is estimated to be £2 billion, excluding the cost of improvements resulting from renovation of the distribution system. Comparable estimates for the period before 1989 are not available.

Housing (Tower Hamlets)

Mr. Peter Shore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what was the allocation to the London borough of Tower Hamlets under the housing investment programme in 1992; what is the estimate for 1993; and what have been the allocations in every year since 1979, in current and constant prices.

Sir George Young: The information requested is given in the table. The figures for 1990-91 and subsequent years are not directly comparable with those for earlier years because of the revisions to the capital finance system introduced in April 1990.

Housing Investment Programme (HIP) allocations by Tower Hamlets Borough Council and capital expenditure, 1979-80 to 1993-94

£ thousand

	HIP allocations[1]		*Housing capital expenditure*	
	Cash	*1993-94 prices*[2]	*Cash*	*1993-94 prices*[2]
1979-80	13,635	33,516	n/a	n/a
1980-81	12,584	26,140	n/a	n/a
1981-82	5,318	10,074	n/a	n/a
1982-83	10,542	18,642	6,684	11,820
1983-84	12,000	20,282	9,856	16,658
1984-85	12,311	19,803	11,321	18,210
1985-86	11,644	17,760	12,011	18,320
1986-87	17,397	25,708	27,618	40,812
1987-88	19,587	27,437	29,150	40,832
1988-89	22,985	30,011	34,353	44,854
1989-90	20,448	25,052	121,378	148,707
New capital finance system[3]				
1990-91	25,244	28,635	42,808	48,558
1991-92	21,439	22,800	[4]35,505	[4]37,758
1992-93	23,046	23,680	[5]53,133	[5]54,594
1993-94	23,982	23,982	n/a	n/a

[1] Allocations for the years up to and including 1989-90 are final allocations, i.e. the initial allocation plus any increases to the initial allocation made in-year. The allocations figures for 1990-91 and subsequent years are the HIP allocations—housing annual capital guidelines plus specified capital grants—issued prior to the start of the financial year. These figures do not include any supplementary credit approvals issued during the year.
[2] Cash figures have been converted to 1993-94 price levels by excluding the effect of general inflation as measured by the GDP market prices deflator.
[3] From 1990-91, under the new capital finance system, the HIP allocation is an assessment of relative need for housing capital expenditure rather than a direct borrowing approval. Borrowing approval is now conveyed by the single, all service, basic credit approval.
[4] Provisional.
[5] Estimated.

Mr. Peter Shore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many families were accepted as homeless in the London borough of Tower Hamlets in 1992 or the latest available date; and how many were similarly accepted as homeless in each year since 1979.

Sir George Young: Local authorities report the number of households for whom they accept responsibility to secure permanent accommodation under the homelessness provisions of the housing acts in their quarterly P1(E) returns.

The figures for acceptances reported by Tower Hamlets in the years 1979 to 1992 were as follows:

Year	*Reported acceptances*
1979	687
1980	334
1981	332
1982	808
1983	189 (1)
1984	985
1985	[1]—
1986	[1]—
1987	654 (2)
1988	1,069
1989	884
1990	1,142
1991	542 (2)
1992	851

[1] Not available.

The figures exclude households found to be intenationally homeless from the second quarter of 1991. The figures for 1983, 1987 and 1991 are partial; the figures in brackets indicate the number of quarters for which information was reported.

City Grant (Bradford)

Mr. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the present position of the application for city grant by 3Ds Ltd. for the west end scheme in Bradford; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: My Department has made a formal offer of a city grant of £3·4 million to 3D Bradford Ltd. to aid the construction of a £11·7 million office development on a derelict site in the west end of Bradford and we are waiting to hear whether the company is prepared to go ahead.

Habitats Directive

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he will issue the consultation document on the implementation of the EC directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: The Government are considering the best means of implementing the requirements of the EC habitats directive. Our proposals will be published shortly.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Secretary of State for the environment when his Department expects to publish its consultation document on implementation of the habitats directive.

Mr. Yeo *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* The Government are considering the best means of implementing the requirements of the EC habitats directive. Our proposals will be published shortly.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment whether measures will be included in the consultation document on the implementation of the EC directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the United Kingdom to address the incidental capture and killing of small cetaceans in fishing nets as required under article 12(4); and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: The Government's proposals for implementation of the EC habitats directive paper will address the United Kingdom's obligations. Action is already being taken to deal with the conservation of small cetaceans and I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 11 June 1993 to the hon. Member for Pembroke (Mr. Ainger) *Official Report*, column *358*.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what measures will be included in the biodiversity action plan to improve the conservation status of small cetaceans in United Kingdom waters and, in particular, to address the incidental capture and killing of marine mammals in fishing nets.

Mr Yeo: The biodiversity action plan will address the United Kingdom's obligations at a strategic level. Action is already being taken to deal with the conservation of small cetaceans and I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 11 June 1993 to the hon. Member for Pembroke (Mr. Ainger), *Official Report*, column *358*.

Waste Management

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for the environment (1) pursuant to his answers to the hon. Member for Gower (Mr. Wardell), *Official Report*, columns 101-2, if he will make a statement on the new waste management licensing system;

(2) if he will make it his policy to proceed with the introduction of economic instruments relating to waste management before finalising the regulations implementing the EC framework directive on waste.

Mr. Yeo: On the waste management licensing system, I refer to the answer I gave on 6 July, *Official Report*, column 80.

It is the Government's policy to use economic instruments in preference to regulation to achieve environmental goals. We have already introduced credits for recycling and we are actively considering whether to develop economic instruments to promote the reduction and recycling of waste and, if so, which instruments are likely to be most effective. There is no reason why these considerations should delay the introduction of the waste management licensing system.

Sellafield

Sir Giles Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Norwich, North (Mr. Thompson) of 28 June 1993, *Official Report*, column *392*, whether he has received the information he requested from British Nuclear Fuels plc; when the second period of public consultation into the proposed new discharge authorisation for BNFL's Sellafield site will begin; when it will end; what other information, additional to the material provided by BNFL, he will be making available during the public consultation; who will assess the responses arising from the consultation process; and when he expects to be in a position to take a final decision on this issue.

Mr. Yeo: BNFL has provided the further information mentioned in my right hon. Friend's answer of 28 June to the hon. Member for Norwich, North, *Official Report*, column *392*. The other material referred to in that answer will also be made available for public consultation which is exptected to start shortly and to last for two months. A final decision will be taken following this consultation.

Housing Association

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what further plans he has for financing housing associations following the second report from the Environment Committee of Session 1992-93, HC 466, on the Housing Corporation.

Sir George Young: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Hampstead and Highgate (Ms Jackson) on 15 July, *Official Report*, column *591*.

Local Government Review

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many meetings have been held by Ministers with hon. Members to discuss the review of local government in England; and if he will list these meetings giving dates and the numbers of hon. Members present on each occasion.

Mr. Gummer: I and my ministerial colleagues frequently discuss with hon. Members a wide range of issues, including the local government review, and we welcome the opportunity to do so, whether formally in the Department or informally elsewhere. We keep no list of such discussions.

Standard Spending Assessments

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representations he has received in the course of his review of the standard spending assessment system concerning reform of the area cost adjustment formula.

Mr. Baldry: We have received representations from a large number of authorities about the area cost adjustment. These representations will be considered carefully as part of our review of standard spending assessments.

New Towns (Property Sales)

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is the average amount paid to the Commission for New Towns for the sale of freehold properties to *(a)* private developers and *(b)* leaseholders in each year since 1979.

Sir George Young: This information is not readily available but will be placed in the Library of the House shortly.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many homes have been sold by the Commission for New Towns, and for what total sum, in each year since 1979.

Sir George Young: This information will be placed in the Library of the House.

Carbon Dioxide

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has for completing the United Kingdom's carbon dioxide programme.

Mr. Gummer: In the first half of this year we initiated a wide-ranging debate on the United Kingdom's CO_2 programme. Issues discussed included the type of measures that the Government should take as part of the programme and the role of other organisations and groups outside government.

Our view has been that an effective and efficient national CO_2 programme requires a partnership approach. In the light of the positive response to the consultation exercise, we have concluded that the United Kingdom can create such a partnership.

The Government's role is to provide the right fiscal, regulatory and financial framework for the programme and to help disseminate advice and information on the many actions that can be taken to achieve savings. But it is decision makers in households and businesses throughout the country who will take the actions that will lead to lower emissions. The Government are looking to business groups, trade associations and voluntary and consumer groups to act as channels of information and encouragement to these decision makers. The energy industries have an important part to play in promoting the efficient use of energy and in ensuring that energy is produced in economically and environmentally sound ways.

Several measures have already been announced. These include those announced in the March Budget to increase the price of energy in the domestic and transport sectors, the establishment of the energy saving trust to provide financial incentives to energy efficiency, and an increase in the objective for renewable energy. These measures together are expected to stimulate savings amounting to two thirds of the target.

On Wednesday last week, my hon. Friend the Minister for Energy announced his proposals for further renewable energy orders under the non-fossil fuel obligation, in pursuit of the new objective for renewable energy.

Today I am able to announce a step forward in the trial of local energy advice centres being conducted by the energy saving trust with finance from the Energy Efficiency Office. The first franchises to run these centres are now being offered to successful applicants, and the centres will be operational by October.

We have considered what additional measures should be taken to complete the programme. We have concluded that we should take further action to help business to make energy savings. We will strengthen the Energy Efficiency Office's programmes of advice and information aimed at business and will be discussing with business groups how to obtain the maximum response. We expect that significant additional savings can be achieved in this sector.

We recognise that public sector bodies should provide a lead. We will be setting further targets for the Government estate which should take energy use by central Government down to well below 80 per cent. of 1990 levels by the year 2000. The Government are looking to other public sector bodies to adopt similarly stringent targets.

We will also continue to provide information and encouragement to households to use energy efficiently. We will increase the resources devoted to this, working with the energy saving trust, to reinforce the impact of the trust.

Concern was expressed during consultations about the prospect of rising transport emissions. We believe that, taking account of the views expressed during consultation, it would be reasonable to work towards further savings from transport by the year 2000 over and above the 1·5 MtC expected to be saved as a result of the fuel duty increases announced in the March Budget. We will be discussing with interested parties how such savings can best be realised.

The Government also take the view that energy should be produced and delivered in a way that keeps CO_2 emissions at the lowest cost-effective level consistent with other environmental goals. This is primarily the responsibility of the energy industries. We will be working towards the achievement of 5,000 MW of combined heat and power capacity by the year 2000, an increase of 1,000 MW on the previous target.

The framework for the United Kingdom's CO_2 programme is now in place. Many organisations have indicated their willingness to participate in the programme. We will be discussing with those organisations the contribution they can make in the light of the further Government action announced today, in order for the full programme to be published at the end of the year.

Urban Priority Areas

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when his review of urban priority areas will be completed.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* Consultation is continuing on the outcome of our contractors' work to assess urban conditions in the light of the 1991 census. The contractors are carrying out further analytical work. This consultation and further work should be completed by the autumn.

Local Government Associations

Mr. Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he next plans to meet the chairmen of the Association of District Councils, the Association of Metropolitan Authorities and the Association of County Councils.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* My right hon. Friend plans to meet the chairmen again in September, at the next of their regular two-monthly meetings.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Gummer: The Government continue to help small businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

My Department's Energy Efficiency Office launched the energy management assistance scheme in April 1992 to help smaller businesses reduce their energy costs. The scheme provides grants towards consultants' costs in identifying energy savings and helping in their achievement. Over the last 12 months, more than 1,500 grants, averaging about £400 each, have been paid to small manufacturing and commercial enterprises.

In partnership with the Department of Trade and Industry, my Department is funding a programme to raise awareness of environmental issues among small firms to help them improve their environmental performance. This follows a recommendation made by the Advisory Committee on Business and the Environment. We are jointly supporting 10 local initiatives, which bring together the private sector, the community and local authorities. My Department is supporting projects in Sheffield and Blackburn; a further three will be announced in due course. The programme will also focus on specific industrial sectors, working with trade associations to develop a programme of help and guidance for small businesses.

We continue to review the impact of the integrated pollution control and local authority air pollution control systems on small businesses. This has resulted in the laying of new regulations, the publication of a consultation paper reviewing the scope of the controls, and the issue of guidance to local authorities on exempting certain small industrial processes. Further proposed deregulatory initiatives in relation to the operation of both systems will be of benefit to small businesses.

In November 1992, my Department published planning policy guidance note No. 4, "Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms". This includes a section on how local planning authorities can help small firms through the planning system.

The Planning Inspectorate executive agency continues successfully to work to performance targets for prompt handling of planning appeals, including those for small businesses.

For small firms in the construction industry, we ask for information on a sampling basis to minimise the burden of form filling. We give feedback to small firms on the use of raw data provided to us to indicate the cyclical nature of the construction industry. On research, we encourage better dissemination of results on the construction industry to make it user friendly for smaller firms.

We continue to tackle bureaucracy in the main inner-city programmes. City challenge has been simplified and grant regimes reduced from seven to three. The application form for derelict land grant has been simplified and we have taken through the legislation to set up the urban regeneration agency which will integrate three separate programmes in to a single grant regime.

My Department monitors all its programmes and publishes details of a wide range of outputs and targets in its annual report.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by Ordnance Survey, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Baldry: The chief executive will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from D. Rhind to Mr. John McAllion, dated 26 January 1993:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question about Ordnance Survey expenditure on computer consultancy contracts since November 1991.

The total expenditure on such contracts was £463,000. I attach a list of the contracts awarded showing the name of the contractor and the subject of the consultancy assignment.

A copy of this letter and enclosure will be deposited in the House of Commons Library and the Public Information Office.

List of Consultancies—Computer based—November 1991 to date

Firm	*Purpose*
Data Dictionary Systems	Systems Architecture Plus Support
Roger Hipperson	Agents Plotting System
Oracle	Validation of AAP Database scheme
Mera Business Systems	Enhancements to Mera
London Business	Commercial Exploitation of OS Data
Roger Hipperson	Gui Developments
Mera Business Systems	Tuning of Mera
Mera Business Systems	Night Cover for Year End Procedures
Thew Consulting	PMC System Configuration
Thew Consulting	Training for PMC Package
Mera Business	Improving Service Levels
Roger Hipperson	Superplan Plotting System
Know Edge Ltd.	GIS Support
Documedia	Transfer of Smart Data Base Records to Calm System
Grosvenor Consultancy Services	Market Testing of Computer Operations
Roger Hipperson	Graphic Application Development
Logica Defence	Spatial Database Development
Dr. DeRoure	WAN Consultancy
Smallworld Systems Ltd.	GIS Consultancy
Mera Business	Modification of Software

Systems	*Purpose*
Compass	P.C. Based output system for Customer Supply
Oracle	Database design review
Oracle	Support for Purchase and Payables System
Mera	Enhancements to Mera System
CSC Europe	Configuration Management Investigation
ESRI	Software development Project 1993
C and G College of Higher Education	Use of SDM Methodology for in-house Oracle Programme
Mera	Enhancement to Mera System

Systems	Purpose
GID	Validation of NTF Version 2·0
MVA Systematica	OSCAR Database Project
Oracle	Addresspoint Database Configuration
CSL	Market Testing—Preparation of Bid for Computer Operations
Mera	Enhancement to Mera System
Dr. DeRoure	Use of UNIX Daemons
Oracle	Addresspoint Database Health Check
Digital	DEC System Ultrix Performance Assessment
Mera	Enhancements to Mera System
[illegible]ral	Feasibility study for ICS function for registration under BS5750
Alprange	Development of Electronic Mail System
Mera	Development of Mera
AIM	Consultancy for trial to meter use of OS Data

SOCIAL SECURITY

Housing Benefit

Mr. Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what plans he has to review the regulations governing entitlement to housing benefit in the cases of those claimants whose savings exceed the prescribed limit only by virtue of delayed back-payment of other allowances by the Benefits Agency; and what action he has taken in the case of the couple in Forest Hill, London SE23, raised with him by the London borough of Lewisham.

Mr. Burt: All of the income-related benefits treat back payments of these allowances in the same way. We have no plans at present to change these arrangements. In the case of the couple in Forest Hill, an interim reply was sent to the London borough of Lewisham on 23 July 1993. I will write to the hon. Member with further details shortly.

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what evidence he has received about the administration of housing benefit; and what plans he has to improve the speed and standard of service.

Mr. Burt: The day-to-day administration of housing benefit is the responsibility of local authorities. The Department routinely collects statistical information from authorities about housing benefit and council tax benefit including information about the way that the benefits are administered. Evidence shows that in 1991-92, around 75 per cent. of all housing benefit claims were processed within 14 days of receipt of all the necessary information.

The Department has also received a number of reports, including "Remote Control and Benefits Administration —a Management Handbook" from the Audit Commission and "Managing Housing Benefit" from the Accounts Commission. Both commissions have emphasised that authorities can do much by improved organisation and by setting and monitoring standards to improve the way they deliver housing benefit.

Households Below Average Income

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the average disposable income at *(a)* actual and *(b)* April 1993 prices per adult, distinguishing those under and those over the pensionable ages, and per child applying the appropriate equivalence scale according to age, for the two lowest decile groups in the latest households below average income analysis for 1979, 1988-89 and 1990-91, before and after housing costs.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the tables.

The results do not show what has happened to the income of the groups over time. They reflect changes in composition of the bottom and second deciles (see note 2).

Median net equivalised household income in the two lowest whole population deciles for pensioners adults, non-pensioner adults and children, 1979, 1988-89 and 1990-91 in actual prices[1] and in April 1993 prices

Pensioner adult (equivalised £ per week)

Decile		1979	1988-89	1990-91
Actual prices				
Bottom	BHC	35	72	82
	AHC	32	57	63
Second	BHC	42	89	104
	AHC	38	74	82
April 1993 prices				
Bottom	BHC	89	92	90
	AHC	76	73	71
Second	BHC	106	114	115
	AHC	91	94	92

[1] Actual prices for 1979, 1988-89 and 1990-91 refer to the middle of the period covered; that is June 1979, January 1989 and January 1991 respectively.

Non-pensioner adult (equivalised £ per week)

Decile		1979	1988-89	1990-91
Actual prices				
Bottom	BHC	32	66	72
	AHC	29	51	51
Second	BHC	43	89	103
	AHC	39	73	81
April 1993 prices				
Bottom	BHC	82	83	79
	AHC	68	65	58
Second	BHC	108	113	113
	AHC	93	93	91

Dependent child (equivalised £ per week)

Decile		1979	1988-89	1990-91
Actual prices				
Bottom	BHC	33	69	77
	AHC	30	54	59
Second	BHC	43	89	102
	AHC	39	73	81
April 1993 prices				
Bottom	BHC	84	88	84
	AHC	70	69	66
Second	BHC	109	113	112
	AHC	92	93	91

Notes:

1. The estimates have been calculated by taking the median income

of pensioners, non-pensioners and children in each of the two bottom deciles of the total Households Below Average Income distribution.

2. The HBAI publication does not present results in the form requested here. The results in the form requested cannot be interpreted as indicating the incomes of these groups have gone up or down over the period. Any income changes will reflect shifts of the number of people in each group—pensioners/non-pensioners/children—from one decile group to another. For example, if pensioners incomes remained unchanged but there was a shift of pensioners from the top of the bottom decile into the second decile, the median income of the pensioners in the bottom decile in these tables would show a fall. Conversely, if pensioners incomes again remain the same, but there was a shift of pensioners from the second decile into the bottom decile, the median income of the pensioners in the bottom decile in these tables would show a rise. But in both those examples the real incomes amongst pensioners did not change. For information on changes in income of low-income pensioners and non-pensioners see Table A5 of HBAI 1979—1990-91.
3. All estimates are subject to sampling error which may affect the validity of comparisons between groups at a point in time and over time. More information about sampling errors can be found in appendix 5 of "Households Below Average Income", a copy of which is in the Library.

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the equivalent monetary value in pound per week at April 1993 prices, following table A2 of the latest HBAI report, in 1979, 1988-89 and 1990-91, before and after housing costs, of the decile medians of the two poorest decile groups, the poorest quintile and the total population mean of *(a)* a single adult, *(b)* a couple with no children, *(c)* a couple with one child aged three, *(d)* a couple with one child aged 16, *(e)* a couple with two children aged three and eight, *(f)* a couple with three children aged three, eight and 11, *(g)* a couple with three children aged 11, 16 and 17 years, *(h)* a single adult with children, *(i)* all households with children equivalised and *(j)* all households equivalised.

Mr. Burt: The information has been placed in the Library.

The estimates follow table A2 of Households Below Average Income (HBAI) 1979—1990-91. It is not possible to give equivalent monetary values for the requested groups *(h)*, *(i)* and *(j)* as the calculation of these figures is dependent on the number and age of children in each household. The money values for the bottom quintiles for family groups is provided in table A5 of HBAI.

The information that can be provided is subject to the same qualifications as HBAI 1979—1990-91, in particular paragraph 1.4 which points out that the results do not track what happens to a particular set of individuals and are as likely to be influenced by changes in the mix of groups as changes in income levels within each group.

Disability Benefits

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list all the changes made since 1979 in benefits for disabled people; for each case where there are savings, how much has been saved to date; and how much is projected to be saved up to *(a)* 2000 and *(b)* 2025.

Mr. Scott: A list of 65 changes made since 1979 to incapacity benefits and benefits for disabled people has been placed in the Library. Of the 65 changes, 14 relate to savings measures and are identified with an asterisk, 46 incurred costs and one change involved a transfer of expenditure. An estimate of the savings in each case to date and projected as requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. It is not possible to provide projections as far ahead as 2025 since they would depend on a large number of factors which cannot be accurately forecast.

Caring

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what plans he has for changes to the benefits system in recognition of the costs incurred in caring.

Mr. Scott: Invalid care allowance, the main benefit for carers, has been uprated consistently in line with the retail prices index. The weekly earnings limit has been increased in each of the past four years and is currently £50, net of allowable expenses. In addition carers who receive either income support, housing benefit or council tax benefit are entitled to the carer premium. The earnings disregard for carers in receipt of any of those benefits was increased to £15 from April this year.

Some 195,000 carers benefit at a current cost in 1992-93 of £366 million. We have no plans to make further changes to the benefits.

Correspondence

Mr. Temple-Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will acknowledge the letter of Ms J. J. Lowmass of 28 April to the head of section, disability allowance, Blackpool—his reference JE 553986C Sherwood—together with subsequent correspondence, including a letter to himself from Ms J. J. Lowmass and Mr. E. M. Sherwood dated 23 June; and when he expects his Department to be able to deal with the matter.

Mr. Scott: The administration of disability living allowance is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mr. M. Bichard to Mr. Peter Temple-Morris, dated 23 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to the points raised in your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking if he will acknowledge the letter of Ms J. J. Lowmass of 28th April to the Head of Section, Disability Allowance, Blackpool (his reference JE 553986C Sherwood) together with subsequent correspondence, including a letter to himself from Ms J. J. Lowmass and Mr. E. M. Sherwood dated 23rd June; and when he expects his Department to be able to deal with the matter.

Ms Lowmass wrote to the Attendance Allowance Unit (AAU) on the 17 November 1992 asking for confirmation that her letter of 1 September 1992, which detailed a change in Stephen's circumstances, had been received.

The AAU which was dealing with Stephen's claim at the time (Attendance Allowance (AA) for customers under the age of 65 became DLA from 6 April 1992, but no conversion had taken place at that time on Stephen's case) wrote to Mrs. Lowmass stating that they had no record of receiving this letter. A copy of this letter was then provided by Ms Lowmass in November 1992.

You will be aware of the delays that have resulted due to the backlog of work on DLA. Unfortunately, because of these delays it was March 1993 before the file was referred to an Adjudication Officer who decided that Stephen was not entitled to the care component of DLA, and advised Stephen's parents accordingly.

Further correspondence was received from Ms Lowmass and Mr Sherwood on the 28 April and 28 June respectively. The letter of 28 April is now being treated as a request for a review.

The present situation is that a review claim pack was issued to Ms Lowmass by first class Post on 15 July 1993. Ms Lowmass was given the opportunity to complete the pack by phone but declined. When the pack is returned it will be dealt with as a matter of priority.

This case has clearly not been handled with the efficiency I would expect. Please convey my sincere apologies to Ms Lowmass and Mr. Sherwood for the delays they have suffered and for any distress or inconvenience caused.

I am pleased to say that the overall situation at the DLA Unit is much improved and 80 per cent. of new cases are now being cleared inside 30 days.

I thank you for bringing this matter to my attention and for giving me the opportunity to explain the situation. A copy of this letter will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Hospital Patients (Pensions)

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many state pensioners in York have had their pensions suspended in the last 12 months because of a long stay as a hospital in-patient.

Mr. Hague: The administration of benefits is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mr. M. Bichard to Mr. Hugh Bayley, dated 26 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency, it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many State pensioners in York have had their pensions suspended in the last twelve months because of a long stay as a hospital in-patient.

I regret that the information is not available in the form requested and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. However, I can inform you that on 30 September 1992, the latest date for which information is held, a total of 47,170 pensioners (0·51 per cent. of the national pensioner population) had their Retirement Pension reduced because they were receiving treatment as hospital in-patients.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy of this letter will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Disability Working Allowance

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will give details of the assumptions made in his Department's estimates of the cost of disability working allowance in the years 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 and 2000-01; and on what grounds his Department no longer expects to make savings as a result of the introduction of this benefit.

Mr. Scott: The estimates of the gross cost of disability working allowance in each year are based on a projection of the increase in the case load. There will be savings in other benefits to off-set the gross cost but until further analysis has been done it is not possible to quantify these. The further analysis cannot be completed until we have the results of research which the Policy Studies Institute has been commissioned to conduct.

Income Support

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many 16 and 17-year-olds for each month since January 1992 have made applications for income support on grounds of extreme hardship by region and for Great Britain as a whole, shown separately for male and female; how many have been granted or refused; what information he has about the grounds on which applications were turned down; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Burt: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to her on 21 May 1992 at columns *238-9* and on 30 October 1992 at columns *923-4*. Such information as is available about claims after September 1992 is in the tables. Some people will have made more than one claim.

Scotland

	Total	*Successful*	*Refused*
1992			
October	2,083	1,631	452
November	2,004	1,547	457
December	1,618	1,234	384
1993			
January	2,459	2,037	422
February	2,343	1,870	473
March	2,687	2,172	515
April	2,957	2,491	466
May	2,531	2,140	391
June	2,490	2,095	395

North Eastern

	Total	*Successful*	*Refused*
1992			
October	1,468	1,133	335
November	1,306	993	313
December	1,137	907	230
1993			
January	1,944	1,638	306
February	1,731	1,408	323
March	2,064	1,709	355
April	1,894	1,622	272
May	1,838	1,576	262
June	1,876	1,626	250

North Western

	Total	*Successful*	*Refused*
1992			
October	1,272	1,018	254
November	1,214	943	271
December	1,102	874	228
1993			
January	1,800	1,536	264
February	1,740	1,403	337
March	1,948	1,632	316
April	1,859	1,593	266
May	1,893	1,605	288
June	1,902	1,633	269

Midlands

	Total	*Successful*	*Refused*
1992			
October	1,180	961	219
November	1,167	905	262

	Total	Successful	Refused
December	926	727	199
1993			
January	1,800	1,503	297
February	1,512	1,207	305
March	1,701	1,416	285
April	1,605	1,393	212
May	1,553	1,310	243
June	1,627	1,404	223

Wales and South Western

	Total	Successful	Refused
1992			
October	1,104	930	174
November	1,006	805	201
December	852	688	164
1993			
January	1,657	1,443	214
February	1,384	1,145	239
March	1,642	1,372	270
April	1,498	1,282	216
May	1,406	1,216	190
June	1,409	1,211	198

London North

	Total	Successful	Refused
1992			
October	1,091	895	196
November	998	813	185
December	745	621	124
1993			
January	1,498	1,326	172
February	1,247	1,049	198
March	1,469	1,282	187
April	1,332	1,169	163
May	1,294	1,114	180
June	1,293	1,130	163

London South

	Total	Successful	Refused
1992			
October	1,056	848	208
November	972	776	196
December	800	662	138
1993			
January	1,483	1,310	173
February	1,348	1,120	228
March	1,474	1,257	217
April	1,376	1,209	167
May	1,330	1,140	190
June	1,336	1,139	197

Great Britain

	Total	Successful	Refused
1992			
October	9,256	7,418	1,838
November	8,668	6,783	1,885
December	7,183	5,716	1,467
1993			
January	12,647	10,797	1,850
February	11,305	9,202	2,103
March	12,985	10,840	2,145
April	12,521	10,759	1,762
May	11,845	10,101	1,744
June	11,933	10,238	1,695

Source: Severe Hardship Claims Unit Database.

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many recipients of income support who have deductions for voluntary unemployment are also subject to other deductions; and what is the average amount per person of these deductions.

Mr. Burt: There are 1,000 recipients of income support whose benefit is reduced because of voluntary unemployment who also have other deductions. The average amount of these other deductions is £5·15 (£19·86 including the voluntary unemployment deduction).

Source: Income Support Statistics Annual Enquiry, May 1992.

Notes: Average amounts are correct to the nearest penny.

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many overpayments of income support have been caused by a failure to report a reduction in interest rates.

Mr. Burt: I understand from Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency, that the information is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the total amount spent by local authorities in Wales on housing benefit in the last three available financial years.

Mr. Burt *[pursuant to his reply, 19 July 1993, c. 73]:* I am advised that the reply contained incorrect information. The correct information is:

	£ million
1990-91	242
1991-92	306
1992-93	340

(excludes expenditure on community charge benefit).

Source: 1993 Departmental Report date.

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many claimants who receive the lower rate of income support for persons aged under 25 years and are living away from home also have deductions; and what is the average amount per person of these deductions.

Mr. Burt: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many recipients of income support had reductions in their benefit *(a)* including and *(b)* excluding deductions for voluntary unemployment, but excluding payments of current mortgage interest in each year since 1989.

Mr. Burt: The information available is in the table.

	1989	1990	1991	1992
(a) Including voluntary unemployment reduction	629,000	613,000	715,000	1,000,000
(b) Excluding voluntary unemployment reduction	600,000	581,000	678,000	975,000

Source: Income Support Statistics Annual Enquiries, May 1989-1992.

Note:
1. All figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. The figures exclude cases with deductions solely for payment of current mortgage interest and arrears.
3. Recipients with deductions for mortgage interest payments are included in the figures if they also have other deductions.
4. Recipients with the voluntary unemployment reduction may be included in (b) if they have other deductions.

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many claimants who receive the lower rate of income support for person aged under 25 years also have deductions; and what is the average amount per person of these deductions.

Mr. Burt: There are 85,000 recipients receiving the lower rate of income support for a person aged less than 25 years who have deductions from benefit. The average amount of the deductions is £4·85. The corresponding figures where benefit is also reduced because of voluntary unemployment are 98,000 and £6·13.

Source: Income Support Statistics Annual Enquiry, May 1992.

Notes:
1. The figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand, average amounts are correct to the nearest penny.
2. Recipients with the lower rate of income support for those aged under 25 have been identified on the basis that they are under 25, single and without dependants, and do not therefore qualify for the higher rate of benefit.

Severe Hardship, Wales

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many claims have been made for severe hardship in Wales in each year from 1989-90; and if he will indicate *(a)* total requests, *(b)* claims accepted, *(c)* claims refused and *(d)* the percentage of successful claims.

Mr. Burt: Such information as is available is in the table. Information prior to January 1991 is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Year	Awarded	Refused	Total	Percentage successful
1991	1,876	433	2,309	81
1992	3,696	813	4,509	82
[1]1993	2,641	506	3,147	84

[1] January-June.

Source: Severe hardship claims unit database.

Incomes

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the percentage change in income during the period 1979 to 1987, both before and after housing costs, of each percentile group in the population.

Mr. Burt: The information for each decile median is in the tables. Greater disaggregation would not provide statistically reliable results.

Percentage changes in real income by decile group 1979-1987

Decile group medians	Income before housing costs	Income after housing costs
Decile 1	5	−4
Decile 2	4	0
Decile 3	5	2
Decile 4	9	7
Decile 5	12	11
Decile 6	14	14
Decile 7	16	17
Decile 8	19	20
Decile 9	24	25
Decile 10	35	38

Note: All estimates are subject to sampling error.

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer of 16 July 1992, *Official Report*, columns *946-47*, what was the average equivalised income at April 1993 prices of the poorest 20 per cent. and richest 20 per cent. before and after housing costs for 1979, 1981, 1987, 1988-89 and 1992-93.

Mr. Burt: Average median net equivalised income in April 1993 prices (in pounds per week) for the bottom and top 20 per cent. of the income distribution.

Before housing costs

	Bottom 20 per cent.	Top 20 per cent.
1979	98	294
1981	96	303
1987	102	382
1988-89	102	408
1990-91	101	437

After housing costs

	Bottom 20 per cent.	Top 20 per cent.
1979	84	260
1981	80	270
1987	83	338
1988-89	83	366
1990-91	81	390

Notes:
1. The information in the tables, before and after housing costs, for the years 1979, 1981, 1987, 1988-89 and 1990-91 (latest years available).
2. All estimates are subject to sampling error.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is his estimate of the total expenditure in 1993-94 on housing benefit broken down between *(a)* council tenants, *(b)* housing association tenants and *(c)* private tenants; and what these figures would have been if

the uprating of the applicable amount for each type of household had been 1 per cent. below the retail prices index.

Mr. Burt: It is not currently possible to disaggregate expenditure of rent allowance between housing association and private sector tenants. Estimates for 1993-94, are that housing benefit expenditure will be £4,920 million in respect of council tenants in the form of rent rebates and £3,250 million in respect of housing associations tenants in the form of rent allowances.

If the 1993-94 uprating had been 1 per cent less than the RPI, the figures would be £4,885 million and £3,240 million respectively.

Source: 1989-90-91 Family Expenditure Surveys modelled at 1993-94 prices and benefit levels.
All figures rounded to the nearest £5 million.

Uprating Costs

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is his estimate of total expenditure in 1993-94 on *(a)* income support, *(b)* housing benefit and *(c)* council tax benefit; and what these figures would have been if the uprating of the applicable amount for each type of applicant had been 1 per cent. less than the retail prices index.

Mr. Burt: It is estimated that total expenditure on income support, housing benefit and council tax benefit for 1993-94 will be £16,485 million, £8,170 million and £1,630 million respectively.

The estimated expenditure, if income-related benefit rates had been uprated in 1993-94 by 1 per cent. less than the RPI, would be £16,390 million, £8,125 million and £1,615 million respectively.

Notes:
Source: 1989-90-91 Family Expenditure Surveys and the 1991 Annual Statistical Enquiry modelled at 1993-94 prices and benefit levels.
All figures rounded to the nearest £5 million.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Hague: The Government continue to help small businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

Measures operated by the Department to assist small business include:

Production of a self-employed starter pack "Working for Yourself". This assists the newly self-employed in understanding their National Insurance liability.

Introduction, from April 1993, of a quarterly billing system for self-employed National Insurance contributions.

Other measures aimed at business in general, which should help small businesses, include:

For national insurance contributions (NIC) changes made from April 1993 to align the treatment of certain expenses with PAYE rules.

Setting up of a working group, on which small businesses are represented, to consider further options for reducing the administrative burden caused by the operation of different rules for PAYE and NIC purposes in defining earnings and expenses.

Establishing a working group of employers' organisations, which includes representatives of small business, to examine the scope for removing or easing the administrative burdens imposed by the statutory sick pay scheme.

The Department has a system to monitor proposals which impact on business, to ensure that the needs and costs to small businesses are taken into account, although there are no performance indicators specifically for monitoring achievements in this area. However, we attach particular importance to action taken to help small businesses and will continue to explore further ways of doing so.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Hague: Whether or not TUPE applies in any particular case will depend on the nature of the work awarded and the contractor's proposals for carrying the work out.

The following services have been contracted out since November 1991 without application of the TUPE regulations:

Business information
Catering
Casual hire
Child care
Cleaning/window cleaning
Communications audit
Conference
Consultancy
Courier/parcel services
Closed circuit television
Estates maintenance
Facilities management
Gas purchases
Invalid car parts distributors
Medical
Messenger
Porterage
Postal
Removals/relocation
Secretarial
Security
Training
Travel

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print;

(2) what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape.

Mr. Scott: Decisions to publish material in forms other than standard print are taken on a case by case basis. Currently the Department has the following number of publications available nationally in leaflets, tapes and Braille.

Four benefits audio tapes
Two benefits large-print leaflets—individual requests or information obtainable from the benefit inquiry line
Nineteen general social security leaflets
One child Support Agency leaflet in Braille
One child Support Agency tape
Two disability working allowance booklets
One disability working allowance audio tape
One disability working allowance brochure in large print
Two family credit leaflet tapes

Blind and partially sighted people and their representatives can ring the Department's range of telephone advice services. In particular, the benefits inquiry line gives free confidential advice and information for all social security benefits for people with disabilities. Callers then receive Braille or large print as required. The benefits inquiry line also completes forms over the telephone and sends Braille copies to the caller for signing.

Blind and partially sighted people can also ring or visit their local office for a personal interview. Home visits can be arranged if needed.

The Department's advertising campaigns are supported by tape or Braille publications.

The advertising campaign to publicise the new disability benefits in 1992 was the first such campaign to be signed for deaf people.

Lone Parents

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is his most recent estimate of the number of one-parent families; and what percentage of the heads of lone-parent families are aged *(a)* under 20, *(b)* 20 to 25, *(c)* over 25 years and *(d)* female.

Mr. Burt: The number of lone parent families with dependent children in Great Britain is provisionally estimated from the 1991 census of population to be 1·27 million.

Information on the age and sex of lone parents is not yet available from 1991 census of population but is scheduled to be published next year in the Household and Family Composition Volume, a copy of which will be placed in the Library.

However, data from the General Household Survey for the years 1989 to 1991 give the following estimates for the percentages of lone parent families in Great Britain with the stated characteristics.

	Per cent.
Aged under 20	2
Aged 20 to 25 inclusive	11
Aged over 25	88
Female	92

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many lone parents there are in *(a)* Inverclyde, *(b)* Strathclyde and *(c)* Scotland as a whole; and how many and what proportion of income support claimants are lone parents in each area.

Mr. Burt: Provisional estimates of the number of lone parent families with dependent children in 1991 are as follows: *(a)* Inverclyde 3,200, *(b)* Strathclyde, 69,400, and *(c)* Scotland 132,000[1].

Data on the number of lone parent families in receipt of income support in individual locations are not available. However, the total number of lone parents receiving income support in Scotland in 1992 was 106,000[2], representing 20 per cent. of all income support claimants in Scotland.

[1] 1991 population census, provisional estimate.
[2] 1992 Income Support Annual Statistical Enquiry. The definition of lone parents used excludes those temporarily separated.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the table:

Grade	*Numbers*
SEO	326
HEO	937
EO	1,285
AO	596
AA	821
Total	3,965

Notes:
The figures show those staff entitled to receive an automatic data processing (ADP) pay allowance as at 22 July 1993. They may:
(a) include some staff who have transferred to other duties but retain the ADP pay allowance on a mark-time basis* and
(b) exclude some staff in executive grades who have not completed the qualifying period of receipt of the ADP pay allowance.

Spending

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security which other EC countries have reduced social security spending in the last year; and what information he has on the changes they have introduced.

Mr. Scott: Measures to contain the growth in social security spending have recently been announced in a number of EC countries, including France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. Information on the changes in EC countries is regularly collected by the Department.

Disabled Voluntary Workers

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what plans he has to allow disabled voluntary workers to continue to carry out unpaid work without loss of welfare benefits; and whether he will make a statement.

Mr. Scott: Disabled voluntary workers can carry out unpaid work without loss of social security benefits as long as they continue to satisfy the entitlement conditions. We are currently reviewing the benefit system and will be looking at benefits for disabled people in that context. No decisions have been taken.

Benefits

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will estimate the number of (i) taxpayers and (ii) tax-paying households in receipt of *(a)* family credit, *(b)* housing benefit, *(c)* community charge benefit, *(d)* retirement pension, *(e)* unemployment benefit and income support to an unemployed claimant, *(f)* statutory sick

pay, *(g)* widows' benefits, *(h)* industrial death benefit, *(i)* invalid care allowance, *(j)* invalidity allowance paid with a retirement pension, *(k)* statutory maternity pay and *(l)* at least one of those benefits.

Mr. Burt: The information requested is not readily available. I will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available.

Private Pensions

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many contracted-out rebates to private pension plans are currently outstanding; how many are due to inadequate or inaccurate information supplied by employers or insurance companies; how many are due to the application forms APP1 being misplaced; and when he expects the backlog of rebates will now be paid.

Mr. Hague: The information requested is not available. the Contributions Agency pays rebates outstanding as soon as it is able to establish entitlement. We are actively pursuing a satisfactory solution to the problem of misplaced APP1s with the Association of British Insurers (ABI).

Yugoslavia

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) how Her Majesty's Government administers the payment of social benefit entitlements to recipients living in Yugoslavia, pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 724; and if he will make a statement;

(2) how his Department administers the obligations of United Nations Security Council resolution 757 on payment of social benefits to civilians living in Yugoslavia; and if he will make a statement;

(3) whether foreign pensions, child and other social benefit entitlement held by persons resident in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have been frozen; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hague: The United Nation Security Council Committee, established pursuant to resolution 724, ruled that it was up to individual Governments to decide whether to pay social benefits to people in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). In cases where Governments decide to make such payments, it was up to the Government concerned to devise a mechanism for doing so without contravening the mandatory sanctions established by the Security Council under resolution 757. In accordance with this ruling, Her Majesty's Government informed the committee that on humanitarian grounds the United Kingdom would continue to pay social security benefits to beneficiaries in the federal republic. United Kingdom benefit entitlement is not, therefore, frozen. We are continuing to send payable orders to the federal republic by post.

Independent Living Fund

Mr. Alan Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many applications for support have been made to the Independent Living (1993) Fund; how many offers of support have been made by the trustees; how many awards are now in payment; and how many cases there have been where the trustees of the fund have been unable to reach agreement on the sharing of responsibility with local authority social services departments.

Mr. Scott: I am informed by the director of the Independent Living (1993) Fund that as of 19 July 1993, 260 applications for support had been received by the fund. Of these 67 were rejected because they did not meet the basic eligibility criteria for help from the fund. The remainder are at various stages in the application process, and 14 offers of help have been made. There are four awards that have been accepted and put into payment. There has been one case where an applicant gained the initial support of a local authority which then failed to agree a care package with the fund.

Mr. Alan Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will set out in detail how accountability is to be made to Parliament for the use of public funds provided to the trustees of the Independent Living (1993) Fund and the Independent Living (Extension) Fund.

Mr. Scott: The published Government accounting rules and procedures, as set out in "Government Accounting —A guide on accounting and financial procedures for the use of Government Departments", apply to both the Department and the funds in accounting to Parliament for this use of public money.

Mr. Alan Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what assurances he has received from statutory and charitable services that they will be able to fill the gap created by the decision of the trustees of the Independent Living (1993) Fund to exclude seriously disabled people who are terminally ill from eligibility for support from the fund.

Mr. Scott: The aim of the Independent Living (1993) Fund is to provide long-term support for severely disabled people who wish to live independently.

It is the statutory responsibility of health authorities and local social service departments to make provision for people who are terminally ill. Support for such people is also provided by charitable and voluntary organisations.

Mr. Alan Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security whether he is satisfied that care of severely disabled people who are terminally ill will now normally be provided on a cost-effective basis following the decision of the trustees of the Independent Living (1993) Fund to exclude the terminally ill from the scope of the fund.

Mr. Scott: The action of the trustees of the Independent Living (1993) Fund in no way detracts from the responsibility of health authorities and local social services departments to provide care and support for terminally ill people in a cost-effective way.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Dewar: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many asylum seekers who receive income support also have deductions; and what was the average amount per person of these deductions.

Mr. Burt: The information requested is not available.

Earnings

Mr. Raynsford: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how much income net of tax, national insurance and benefit reductions, is retained out of each £1 per week increase in gross earnings by *(a)* a single adult aged 26 years earning £132 per week, *(b)* a lone parent with one child aged nine years earning £136 per week and *(c)* two adults with two children aged 12 and 14 years earning £196 per week, on the assumption that each is paying rent of £48 per week and council tax of £10 per week.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the table. Marginal deduction rates in excess of 90 pence in the pound are estimated to affect less than half of 1 per cent. of the working population.

	Single adult age 26	*Lone parent with 9-year-old child*	*Two adults with children aged 12 and 14*
	£	£	£
Gross earnings	132·00	136·00	196·00
Tax	14·03	7·33	21·76
National insurance	7·96	8·32	13·72
Take-home pay	110·01	120·35	160·52
Child benefit	0·00	16·05	18·10
Family credit	0·00	17·31	14·14
Rent	48·00	48·00	48·00
Rent rebate	8·35	16·12	9·13
Council tax	10·00	10·00	10·00
Council tax benefit	0·00	0·19	0·00
Total net income	118·35	170·01	201·88
Net income after R and CT	60·35	112·01	143·88
Marginal increase rate	0·23	0·03	0·07

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Criminal Offences

Sir Richard Body: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what criminal offences she has introduced in the last five years under delegated legislation.

Mr. Jack: The powers to introduce criminal offences in statutory instruments are provided for in primary legislation. It is estimated that in the last five years the Department has been responsible for 55 statutory instruments introducing criminal offences which still exist.

Wheat

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the average on-farm selling price of wheat in the United Kingdom for each of the years from 1979 to 1993 at actual and also at constant prices, showing the 1979 price as 100.

Mr. Jack: Information for Great Britain is set out in the table. Comparable information for the United Kingdom is not available.

Great Britain on-farm selling price of wheat

£ per tonne

Harvest years	*Actual price*	*Constant price*	*Relative constant price*	*RPI 1979 = 100*
1979-80	98·13	100·00	100·00	100·00
1980-81	104·98	106·98	90·67	117·99
1981-82	112·38	114·52	86·81	131·92
1982-83	119·08	121·35	84·74	143·21
1983-84	124·33	126·70	84·62	149·74
1984-85	111·26	113·38	72·07	157·32
1985-86	112·20	114·34	68·53	166·84
1986-87	112·67	114·82	66·57	172·49
1987-88	111·20	113·32	63·05	179·72
1988-89	114·19	116·37	61·72	188·54
1989-90	112·23	114·37	56·29	203·17
1990-91	119·56	121·84	54·78	222·40
1991-92	122·31	124·64	52·94	235·45
1992-93	N/A	N/A	N/A	244·27

Notes:
1979-80 to 1985-86 are August to July years.
1986-87 to 1992-93 are July to June years.
RPI are calendar years.
N/A = not available.
Source of actual price data: Home-Grown Cereals Authority.

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what has been the price of *(a)* bread and *(b)* wheat in each year since 1988, with the annual increases in actual terms and real terms.

Mr. Jack: The information requested is given in the table.

Bread-large white sliced loaf	*Average price (pence/loaf)*	*Percentage change from previous year (actual)*	*(in real terms)*[1]
1990	50	+4·7	−4·4
1991	53	+6·1	+0·3
1992	54	+1·3	−2·4

[1] Deflated by All Items RPI.

Breakmaking wheat	*Average price (£/tonne ex-farm)*	*Percentage change from previous year (actual)*	*(in real terms)*[1]
1990	118·27	+3·7	−5·2
1991	132·28	+11·8	+5·6
1992	135·01	+2·1	−1·6

[1] Deflated by All Items RPI.

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the average on-farm selling price of wheat in the United Kingdom for 1961, 1973 and each year since 1990 in cash terms and at 1979 prices.

Mr. Jack: Information for Great Britain is set out in the table. Comparable information for the United Kingdom is not available.

Great Britain On-Farm selling price of wheat

£ per tonne

Harvest years	*Actual price*	*Relative price*	*Relative constant price*	*RPI 1979 = 100*	*Constant 1979 Prices*
1961	20·26	20·65	90·89	22·72	89·19
1973-74	58·39	59·50	142·29	41·82	139·63
1989-90	112·23	114·37	56·29	203·17	55·24
1990-91	119·56	121·84	54·78	222·40	53·76
1991-92	122·31	124·64	52·94	235·45	51·95
1992-93	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	244·27	n.a.

Notes: 1961 is a calendar year.
1973-74 is an August/July year.
1989-90—1992-93 are July/June years.
RPI are calendar years.
1961 and 1973-74 are for England and Wales only.
n.a. = not available.

Source of Actual Price Data: Home-Grown Cereals Authority.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in her Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Jack: The number of automatic data processing functional specialists employed in the Department and agencies, by grade is as follows:

Officers	*Numbers*
Executive Officers	132
Higher Executive Officers	140
Senior Executive Officers	78
Total	350

Fishing By-catches

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many reports of by-caught marine mammals have been received by his Department under the voluntary reporting scheme since its introduction; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Jack: Since the scheme for voluntary reporting was introduced on 1 January 1992, there has been only one report for England and Wales which recorded the incidental catch of three common porpoises. Officials are at present considering how to encourage fishermen to report as many incidents as possible under this scheme.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) what measures her Department will be taking to monitor the incidental capture and killing of small cetaceans in fisheries and to ensure that this capture does not have a significant negative impact on the species, as required under the EC directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora;

(2) what measures are being taken to fulfil the commitment made under the agreement on the conservation of small cetaceans of the Baltic and North seas to reduce by-catches of small cetaceans in fisheries and to prevent fishing gear being lost or discarded at sea.

(3) what measures her Department will be taking to meet the requirements of the resolution on harbour porpoises in the north Atlantic and Baltic seas, which was co-sponsored by the United Kingdom Government and adopted at the recent meeting of the International Whaling Commission, to *(a)* collect data on the by-catch mortality level of harbour porpoises and *(b)* to give high priority to reducing by-catches of harbour porpoises.

Mr. Jack: On 1 January 1992, United Kingdom fisheries departments introduced a reporting scheme seeking information from fishermen on incidental by-catches of marine mammals including the gear involved. The information from this scheme together with data from the 1994 project funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Department of the Environment, other North sea states and the EC to assess small cetacean populations in the Baltic sea, North sea and channel will help to enable us to make an informed judgment of the extent of fisheries by-catches of small cetaceans and the impact they might have on the species.

MAFF and DOE are also funding work into the use of sonar reflectors to warn cetaceans away from fishing nets. Discarding of fishing gear at sea is an offence unless undertaken in accordance with a licence under part II of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what is her Department's policy on which information produced by her Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Jack: MAFF aims to publish as much information as possible in formats which are readily accessible to a wide variety of users. The Department has recently responded to the needs of blind and partially sighted people by publishing one of its "Food Sense" information booklets in Braille, large print and audio-cassette versions. This was done in close co-operation with the Royal National Institute for the Blind, and we hope it will be the forerunner of similar ventures in the future.

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

Sir Richard Body: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will publish the evidence she has on whether the number of cows affected by bovine spongiform encephalopathy is falling.

Mr. Soames: The detailed epidemiological evidence of the effects of the ruminant feed ban on the number of suspected cases of BSE being reported was published in the progress report which was placed in the Library of the House in my reply of 27 May, *Official Report*, column *689*, and updated in my reply of 14 July, *Official Report*, columns *544-45*.

I have arranged for a graph to be placed in the Library of the House which brings up to date the information presented in figure 1 of this report.

Equine Viral Arteritis

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many cases of equine viral arteritis have been reported to date in the current year within each member state of the European Community.

Mr. Soames: We have no comprehensive or reliable information on the number of outbreaks of equine viral arteritis (EVA) in other member states.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food which European Community member states currently designate equine viral arteritis as a notifiable disease; and what plans she has to embark on such a classification in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Soames: There is no requirement in EC law for equine viral arteritis (EVA) to be made notifiable, but I am informed that the disease is notifiable in Italy.

The Government have decided that, for the following reasons, EVA should not be made notifiable. First, there is no EC requirement to do so. Secondly, movement restrictions would have to be applied to horses on infected premises and could not be removed from those animals that were permanent carriers. This would cause financial hardship out of all proportion to the severity of the disease.

The United Kingdom thoroughbred industry has for some time operated a voluntary code of practice for the prevention and control of EVA, which includes guidance on the appropriate measures to prevent the introduction and spread of the disease. The code is considered to be an effective means for stud owners and others to protect their animal health status, and its use is commended to all sectors of the equine industry.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list each occasion on which her Department was issued with warnings of inadequate testing arrangements in Poland by the Animal Health Trust prior to the recent outbreak of equine viral arteritis in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Soames: On two occasions, the Animal Health Trust has drawn to the Department's attention seropositive test results for equine viral arteritis virus in imported horses accompanied by Polish certification. However, on neither occasion has there been any conclusive evidence of inadequate testing arangements in Poland.

Hens

Mr. Dowd: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) what rules or guidance her Department provides on the transportation for slaughter of spent hens; and if it is permissible for injured hens with broken limbs to be transported before slaughter;

(2) whether consignments of hens transported from the United Kingdom to other member states within the European Community require a veterinary check before transit; and whether they must be free from serious injury for such a journey to be permissible;

(3) what is her Department's policy on the transportation of spent hens via ferry to Holland for slaughter; and if she will make a statement;

(4) what guidelines are given by her Department to battery egg producers on how to dispose of spent hens which have sustained serious injury during their productive life.

Mr. Soames: Harmonised EC animal health rules governing the intra-Community trade in poultry require, inter alia, that consignments be examined for clinical signs or suspicions of disease shortly before export by an official veterinarian. In addition, the Welfare of Animals during Transport Order 1992 makes it an offence to cause or permit animals—including poultry—to be transported in a way which causes or is likely to cause injury or unnecessary suffering. The order, which implements European Community directive requirements, also makes it unlawful to transport diseased, ill or injured poultry and imposes a limit of 12 hours on the period which poultry may be transported without being fed and watered. Further provisions set standards for the carriage of poultry, including transport in road vehicles on board ship.

The joint industry welfare guide to the handling of spent hens—published by the National Farmers Union and the British Poultry Meat Federation—recommends that visibly unfit or injured birds must not be loaded but should be slaughtered on the farm as quickly and humanely as possible. The Ministry's code of recommendations for the welfare of domestic fowls—applicable to all on-farm, egg-laying hens—states that ailing birds and birds suffering from injury such as open wounds or fractures, or from prolapse of the vent should be segregated and treated or, if necessary, be humanely killed without delay. The law requires that any bird arriving at the slaughterhouse which is found to be suffering must be slaughtered immediately.

Food Prices

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the average price to the consumer of *(a)* a pint of milk, *(b)* a 2lb loaf of bread and *(c)* a pint of beer in 1970, 1980 and each year since 1990.

Mr. Jack: The annual averages of the prices used for calculating the retail prices index are given in the table.

	Annual average price (£)
Bread—800g white sliced loaf	
1990	0·50
1991	0·53
1992	0·54
Milk—1 pint pasteurised	
1990	0·31
1991	0·32
1992	0·34
Beer—1 pint draught bitter	
1990	1·09
1991	1·24
1992	1·31

Botswana (Beef)

Mr. Worthington: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what will be the consequences for beef prices in Botswana of the proposed agreement at the general agreement on tariffs and trade.

Mr. Jack: The proposed GATT agreement includes a commitment to reduce both the volume of and expenditure on subsidised exports of beef. This should help to produce a firming of prices for beef on world markets, which would benefit Botswana.

Mr. Worthington: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what assessment she has made of the benefits the Botswana beef industry gains from Lomé IV and of how this will be affected by the present GATT talks.

Mr. Jack: Under the terms of protocol seven of Lomé IV on beef and veal, Botswana benefits from a 90 per cent. reduction in the variable levy on beef and veal for an annual quantity of 18,916 tonnes of boneless meat. This would not be affected by the proposals in the draft Uruguay round agreement on agriculture.

Self-Sufficiency

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the level of United Kingdom self-sufficiency in all agricultural products in 1979, 1985 and each year since 1990.

Mr. Jack: I refer my hon. Friend to the tables in section 5 of the publication "Agriculture in the United Kingdom, 1992" copies of which have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Wool Sales (Penalties)

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what proposals she has to bring forward legislation to increase the maximum penalty which the British Wool Marketing Board may impose on members who sell wool to independent merchants; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Jack: Any amendment to the British wool marketing scheme would be initiated by the board and then, following consultation with producers, submitted to Ministers for consideration. None on this matter has been received.

Northmoor

Mr. Morley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what is the total cost of the proposal to replace the diesel pumps at Northmoor pumping station with electric pumps; what is the expected amount of grant that would be paid by the Ministry towards the replacement of the pumps; and what proportion of residual costs after grant aid would fall upon the Somerset county council as a levy-paying authority to the National Rivers Authority and Northmoor district drainage board.

Mr. Jack: The estimated cost of the proposed electric pumps at Northmoor pumping station in the Somerset levels is £415,334 at current prices. If approved, MAFF grant aid would be available at 45 per cent. of eligible costs, with the remainder funded by the National Rivers Authority (NRA) from levies on Somerset county council. The NRA proposals do not envisage any contribution from Northmoor internal drainage board.

Slaughter of Animals

Mr. Etherington: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what steps Her Majesty's Government will now take to ensure that EC colleagues adopt the proposed EC directive on the welfare of animals at the time of slaughter or killing.

Mr. Soames: We initiated discussion on this proposal during the United Kingdom presidency. We have been at the forefront of member states seeking agreement on it. We shall continue to press for adoption during the Belgian presidency.

Mr. Etherington: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what discussions have been held with EC colleagues on imposing an eight-hour limit on slaughter journeys for live farm animals.

Mr. Soames: On 1 January a new directive came into operation setting Community standards for the welfare of all animals during transport. We have been pressing the Commission strongly to submit proposals for the additional rules which are needed on key issues such as maximum journey times for certain types of animal.

I am pleased to say that the Commission announced on 13 July that the proposals were now ready and would be submitted to the Council. We hope that the negotiations in the Council will start shortly. The United Kingdom will be pressing for Community rules which reflect the high standards which we are applying in this country.

Surplus Food

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what arrangements will be made in the United Kingdom for 1993-94 under the EC surplus food scheme.

Mr. Jack: The United Kingdom's full share of EC funding 1993-94 for the Community's surplus food scheme will be used for the distribution of beef. In previous years, butter has also been distributed but successful reductions of intervention stocks has meant that butter cannot now be made available under the scheme.

Some 6,200 tonnes of beef are being released from intervention stocks to be canned for allocation to designated organisations. Further quantities of beef may be made available early next year.

In addition to asking existing designated organisations to confirm that they still wish to participate in the scheme during 1993-94, agriculture Departments will also be inviting new applications from appropriate charitable and other non-profit-making organisations who wish to be designated.

Fishing Vessels (Prosecutions)

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the names, the port of registry and the length or tonnage of British registered fishing vessels that have been successfully prosecuted under the Sea Fish Conservation Act 1967, listing the particular offence they were found guilty of and the penalty imposed.

Mr. Jack: This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Fishing Vessels (Licences)

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) if she will make it her policy to revoke fishing licences on British-registered vessels if sufficient evidence is presented of extensive breaches of regulations from investigations carried out in other states;

(2) how many fishing vessels on the British register have had their licences revoked because of breaches of regulations which resulted in successful prosecutions in the United Kingdom;

(3) in what circumstances fishing vessel licences are revoked for breaches of regulations following successful prosecution in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* Powers to revoke or suspend fishing licences following breaches of licence conditions are set out in section 4(9)(b) of the Sea Fish (Conservation) Act 1967, as amended, but have not yet been exercised.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) when she will be raising with the European Commission and the Spanish Government the subject of undersize fish caught in the British quota and landed in Spanish ports;

(2) what action she intends to take to protect and conserve undersize fish in British waters from British registered vessels that land their catch in Spanish ports.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* Any vessel retaining on board or landing undersize fish is breaching the rules of the common fisheries policy. I am raising this matter with the EC Fisheries Commissioner, Mr. Y. Paleokrassas and will be sending him a copy of the video tape of the recent "Cook Report" programme highlighting the problem of illegal fishing activity.

Mr. Ainger: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the names of current British-flagged fishing vessels which were formerly Spanish registered or owned by Spanish individuals or companies prior to their British registry; and when they were entered on the British register, their port of registration and their tonnage, length and horsepower.

Mr. Steven Norris: I am sending relevant extracts from the register of fishing vessels to the hon. Member and will place copies in the Library.

DEFENCE

Single-role Minehunters

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress his Department has made in preparing tenders for a further batch of Sandown single-role minehunters; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: We expect to make an announcement on the next batch of single-role minehunters shortly.

Sennybridge Range

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list each type of ammunition which has been *(a)* tested or *(b)* stored at the Sennybridge range since 1979.

Mr. Hanley: Army units using the Sennybridge training range bring their own ammunition with them. Sennybridge is an Army training range, it is not used in a testing/proofing role. About 150 different types of conventional ammunition have been stored. These are as follows:

Pellet air gun ·177 inch
Round ·22 inch ball Mk 2
Round ·22 inch ball high velocity Mk 3
Round ·303 inch ball bandolier Mk 7
Round ·303 inch ball carton Mk 7
Cartridge blank ·303 inch carton L10A1
Round ·50 inch 4B/1T belted M33 [K] M17 belts of 100
Cartridge shotgun 12 bore No. 6 shot
Cartridge shotgun 12 bore SG shot
Cartridge shotgun 12 bore LG shot
Cartridge shotgun 12 bore solid shot (Brenneke)
Round 5·56 mm ball carton M193
Cartridge blank 5·56 mm carton
Round 5·56 mm ball carton L2A1 (SA80)
Round 5·56 mm ball bandolier L2A1 (SA80)
Round 5·56 mm tracer carton L1A1 (SA80)
Round 5·56 mm tracer carton LA71 (SA80)
Cartridge blank 5·56 mm carton L1A1 (SA80)
Round 7·62 mm ball bandolier L2A2
Round 7·62 mm ball bandolier L2A2 (sniper)
Round 7·62 mm ball carton L2A2
Round 7·62 mm tracer carton L5A1 (obsolete)
Round 7·62 mm 4B/1T belted L2A2/L5A3 or M62
Round 7·62 mm 1B/1T belted L2A2/L5A3 or M62
Round 7·62 mm ball belted L2A2
Cartridge blank 7·62 mm carton L13A1
Cartridge blank 7·62 mm belted L13A1
Round 7·65 mm x 17 mm ball carton DM11
Round 9 mm ball carton Mk 2Z
Round 9 mm plastic blank carton L2A1
Round 9 mm ball carton M39 (FFV) (pistol)
Cartridge signal 1 inch red Mk 13T
Rocket hand fired illuminating parachute L5A4
Signal kit pyrotechnic pistol 16 mm No. 1 Mk 3 (white)
Signal kit pyrotechnic pistol 16 mm No. 1 Mk 3 (green)
Signal kit pyrotechnic pistol 16 mm No. 1 Mk 3 (red)
Cartridge illuminating 38 mm L30A1
Flare tripwire Mk/2/2
Flare ground indicating No. 1 yellow Mk 3
Thunderflash Mk 8
Portfire friction Mk 2
Generator smoke L1A1
Simulator atomic explosion 5·5 inch
Grenade hand No. 83 smoke red Mk 3/4
Grenade hand No. 83 smoke blue Mk 3/4
Grenade hand No. 83 smoke green Mk 3/4
Grenade hand No. 83 smoke yellow Mk 3/2
Grenade hand signal smoke yellow L38A1
Grenade hand signal smoke blue L35A2
Grenade hand signal smoke blue L52A1
Grenade hand signal smoke green L52A1
Grenade hand signal smoke red L54A1
Grenade hand signal smoke orange L55A1-3
Grenade hand signal smoke green L64A1
Grenade hand signal smoke orange L65A1
Grenade hand signal smoke red L66A1
Grenade hand signal smoke blue L67A1
Round 40mm practice M407A1/M781C
Grenade rifle 40mm AA/heat L74A1
Grenade hand HE L2A1 with fuze L25A4
Grenade hand practice L56A1
Rocket 66mm HE anti-tank L1A1 pinned
Rocket 21mm sub-calibre L1A1
Mortar bomb 2in HE Mk 1 fuzed 161
Mortar bomb 2in smoke emission Mk 2 50 GR cart/steel tail
Mortar bomb 2in illuminating Mk 2/2
Mortar bomb 2in practice Mk 1/1 with cart
Mortar bomb 51mm HE L1A1 fuzed L98A1
Mortar bomb 51mm illuminating L3A2
Mortar bomb 51mm smoke screening L2A1
Mortar bomb 81mm HE L15A3 fuzed No. 162
Mortar bomb 81mm illuminating para L28A2 fuzed FH81B
Mortar bomb 81mm practice L22A1 fuzed L67
Round 84mm heat L40A3 British fuzed L42
Round 84mm practice L41A3
Round 6·5mm L11A1 (indoor)
Round 6·5mm L10A1 (outdoor)
Rocket system 94mm heat L1A1
Round 9mm spotter tracer L3A1
Simulator rocket fire 94mm L23A1
Fuze grade percussion practice L134A1
Cartridge 2in mortar primary 50 gr Mk 1/1
Cartridge 81mm mortar primary L33A1
Cartridge 81mm primary L35A1
Cartridge 81mm mortar augmenting L36A1 sets

Round 7·62mm tracer (Argentinian)
Round ·30 inch 4B/IT nelted Mk 4z/Mk 1Z
Cartridge blank ·30 inch belted L10A1
Round ·50 inch observing L11A2 belts of 98 rounds
Simulator gunfire AFV flash and sound L16A1
Cartridge blank 25pr 4oz GP L1A1 W/Prim No 11 Mk 4/3
Cartridge blank 25pr 8oz GP Mk 2 W/Prim No 11 Mk 4/3
Cartridge signal 1·5in white smoke puff Mk 4T
Actuating charge L1A1
Simulator projectile airburst liquid L1A2
Cartridge 1·5 inch irritant CS anti-riot L2A2
Grenade hand irritant CS anti-riot L13A1
Grenade hand practice anti-riot L16A1
Generator irritant CS hand held L1A1
Irritant kit smoke respirator testing L1A1
Cartridge and irritant powder dispenser
Powder dispenser and support assembly
Simulator small arms fire L19A1
Simulator small arms strike L21A1
Simulator small arms Ricochet L22A1
CNSTR IRRT CS PRSZD hand held L1A4
CNSTR PRSZD practice self/protect L5A4
Grenade discharger practice anti-riot L14A1 long range
Generator training irritant CS Mk 1
Fuze safety L1A2 (metric)
Fuze instantaneous L1A1 (metric)
Cord detonating L1A1 (metric)
Detonator demolition electric L2A1
Detonator demolition L1A1
Igniter safety fuze electric
Firing device kit demolition grip
Match fuzee
Firing device kit demolition combination L26A1
Injector kit ammunition EOD L46A1 (pigstick)
Cartridge ·50in electric EOD propelling XL1E1
Sound unit EOD electric L1A1
Sound unit EOD electric L2A1
Charge linear cutting 25gm type B XL1E1
Charge linear cutting 40gm type B XL2E1
Charge linear cutting 100gm type B XL3E1
Charge linear cutting 180gm type B XL4E1
Charge linear cutting 80gm type B XL5E1
Charge linear cutting 120gm type B XL7E1
Charge demolition 4oz cartridge nobels 808 plastic
Charge demolition 8oz cartridge nobels 852 plastic
Charge demolition explosive sheet explosive No. 2
Charge demolition No. 1 6 inch Mk 3
Charge demolition necklace L1A1
Charge demolition No. 11 30 LB Mk 1B
Charge demolition L3A1
Bangalore torpedo sets 1·5 inch 6 feet Mk 2
Mine anti-personnel practice C4A1
Charge spotting mine C3 (smoke refill)
Mine anti-personnel M18A1
Refill kit practice mine anti-tank L31A2
Mine anti-tank Mk 7/1 with TDP
Mine anti-tank practice L2A1
Smoke unit anti-tank mine L1A2
Mine anti-tank HE blast L9A1 without fuze
Explosive kit cratering rapid L25A1
Initiator flash L3A2
Coupler kit demolition
Clip demolition spring steel
Dems box
7·62 ball NATO 9 BIT

Depleted Uranium

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, column 709, what was the source of data on pyrophoric qualities of depleted uranium to which he refers; and if he will arrange for copies of the relevant information to be placed in the Library.

Mr. Aitken: The data from United States sources referred to in my answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, column 709, is classified. However, the office of the United States Assistant Secretary of Defence (Public Affairs) recently issued an unclassified fact sheet on "Health effects of depleted uranium" which was placed in the Library in response to a question from the hon. Member for Newport, West (Mr. Flynn) of 29 June, *Official Report*, column *491*.

Aldermaston

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he last visited the atomic weapons establishment at Aldermaston; what was the purpose of his visit; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: My right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence last visited AWE Aldermaston in June. The purpose of his visit was a briefing on the role and work of AWE.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the fire which occurred in a glove box in the A area of AWE Aldermaston on 15 June.

Mr. Aitken: There was no such incident on 15 June 1993.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list by year for the last five years, the cost of running the Aldermaston atomic weapons establishment.

Mr. Aitken: The costs of the defence nuclear programme, including the costs of AWE, are classified, in accordance with the practice of successive Governments.

Hunting

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in what circumstances stewards employed by hunts are allowed on to Ministry of Defence land where the hunt that employs them has a licence to hunt on Ministry of Defence land.

Mr. Hanley: My noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Defence will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what were the total receipts in 1991-92 from licences for hunting on Ministry of Defence land, from all hunts that held a licence.

Mr. Hanley: I refer the hon. Member to the answer that my right hon. Friend the Member for Epsom and Ewell (Mr. Hamilton) gave him on 29 March at column *11*.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements exist for beagle hunts to hunt or have access to Ministry of Defence land other than those licensed to do so.

Mr. Hanley: My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many licences to hunt on Ministry of Defence land are not subject to an annual fee.

Mr. Hanley: My noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Defence will write to the hon. Member.

Shooting Clubs

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many licences his Department issued to shooting clubs allowing them to shoot birds and mammals on Ministry of Defence land in *(a)* 1991, *(b)* 1992 and *(c)* 1993 to date.

Mr. Hanley: My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence will write to the hon. Member.

Northumberland National Park

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to intensify or increase infantry training at Otterburn in the Northumberland national park; and what plans he has to acquire additional land for military training in the national park.

Mr. Hanley: The concentration of infantry recruit training at Catterick will mean an increase in man training days at Otterburn training area. Some additional land may be required. This will be subject to the outcome of an independent environmental impact assessment study and further discussions with the National Park Authority.

Land Purchases

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much land in the United Kingdom his Department purchased over each of the past five years.

Mr. Hanley: My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence will write to the hon. Member.

Married Quarters

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the cost of providing security for empty Ministry of Defence married quarters over the past year.

Mr. Hanley: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 16 July, *Official Reply*, column *723*. The cost of caretaking covers security.

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is his policy towards residence by widows of late service personnel with children in Ministry of Defence married quarters not required for use.

Mr. Hanley: All widows of late service personnel are allowed to remain in a married quarter for up to six months after the death of their husband. Procedures vary slightly within individual services, but all widows continue to pay the standard accommodation charge during this period. Accommodation may sometimes be available in surplus married quarters and widows may be allowed to remain there beyond the six-month period until they have found alternative accommodation, so long as there are no pressing service requirements for the property.

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many discount sales of Ministry of Defence married quarters have been made in the past year to service personnel leaving the forces.

Mr. Hanley: Further to the answer I gave my hon. Friend on 20 July 1993, *Official Report*, column *165*, during 1992-93, 346 sales were completed through the services discount scheme.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Aitken: Numbers of staff by grade that are employed in the automatic data processing functional specialism as at 22 July 1993 are as follows:

	Number
Executive officer	1,254
Higher executive officer	711
Senior executive officer	229

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Aitken: Further to the reply given to my hon. Friend on 15 July 1992, *Official Report*, column *817*, I can inform him that our new suppliers service has given marketing advice to about 2,000 companies over the past 12 months. Also, in November 1992 the MOD reissued its advisory booklet on selling to the MOD. The publication is intended to be of particular value to small companies.

Details of payments made to small firms during 1992-93 are not yet available, but during 1991-92, some 6,300 small companies secured contracts valued at approximately £1·16 billion. A significant number of these orders went to companies with less than 50 employees. In the same period Ministry of Defence establishments awarded 276,000 local purchase orders valued at about £222 million, a large number of which went to small firms.

Land Sales

Mr. Barry Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list by Welsh local authority the extent of the land held by his Department indicating in each area the amount of land to be sold by the end of 1993.

Mr. Hanley: The information requested is provided by county. A breakdown by local authority could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

County (Wales)	*Area (hectares) totals of freehold and leasehold interests*	*Area (hectares) land it is proposed to sell by the end of 1993*
Clwyd	383	0
Dyfed	6,716	2·727
Gwent	670	0·291
Gwynedd	798	0
Mid Glamorgan	8	0
Powys	12,059	0
South Glamorgan	402	0
West Glamorgan	1	0
Totals	21,037	3·018

Military Hospitals

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many *(a)* service personnel and *(b)* civilians were treated at (i) Royal Navy hospital Stonehouse, (ii) RAF hospital Ely and (iii) RAF hospital Halton in each of the last three years for which figures are available;

(2) how many beds were provided at *(a)* Royal Navy hospital Stonehouse, *(b)* RAF hospital Ely and *(c)* RAF hospital Halton in each of the last three years for which figures are available;

(3) what discussions his Department has had with local health authorities regarding the closure of military hospitals.

Mr. Hanley: The information requested in respect of patients treated and bed numbers is as follows:

	1990	*1991*	*1992*
Royal Navy hospital Plymouth (Stonehouse)			
Service patients	14,861	13,418	11,224
Civilian patients	38,025	38,135	31,453
Available beds	89	86	100
The Princess of Wales' Royal Air Force hospital Ely[1]			
Service patients	13,175	10,899	7,278
Civilian patients	37,121	12,599	5,578
Available beds	137	82	81
Princess Mary's Royal Air Force hospital Halton			
Service patients	12,378	11,231	15,455
Civilian patients	25,875	21,404	23,835
Available beds	141	127	158

[1] The Princess of Wales' Royal Air Force hospital Ely ceased patient care on 31 July 1992.

My Department has sought the views of all local health bodies affected by our proposals for the reorganisation of the armed forces' secondary medical care in the United Kingdom under which a number of military hospitals have been proposed for closure. Our discussions with the NHS continue.

Mine Hunters

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 11 May, *Official Report*, column *458*, to the hon. Member for Colchester, South and Maldon (Mr. Whittingdale) what progress he is making in issuing invitations to tender for a further batch of Sandown class mine hunters before the House rises for the summer recess.

Mr. Aitken: We expect to make an announcement on the next batch of single role minehunters shortly, but I regret this will not be before the House rises.

Anthrax Vaccine

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if his Department has facilities for the manufacture or storage of anthrax vaccine.

Mr. Hanley: This is a matter for the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment under its framework document and I have asked the chief executive to reply.

Letter from Mr. G. Pearson to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 26 July 1993:

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him if his Department has facilities for the manufacture or storage of anthrax vaccine (Question 3, Order Paper 20 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. The role of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment is to carry out research to ensure that the UK Armed Forces are provided with effective protective measures against the threat that chemical or biological weapons may be used against them. As part of this work research is carried out into medical countermeasures including vaccines against the chemical and biological warfare agents that might be used against the UK Armed Forces.

3. There are no facilities for the manufacture of anthrax vaccine in the Ministry of Defence. However, storage facilities for a wide range of medical products used by the Armed Forces including vaccines are available in the Ministry of Defence.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the expenditure on the purchase of anthrax vaccine in each of the last three financial years.

Mr. Hanley: Details relating to all vaccines giving protection against biological warfare agents are classified.

Military Training Overseas

Mr. Campbell-Savours: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will now make it his practice to give details of the cost of the military training provided by Her Majesty's Government to individual overseas countries.

Mr. Hanley: There are no plans to change the current practice of not divulging such information as it is a confidential matter between the Governments concerned.

Near-collision (Irish Sea)

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his American counterpart concerning the near-collision which occurred between a United States nuclear submarine and the MFV Lupina C in the Irish sea on 16 September 1992; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: My right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Defence has had no such discussions. Officials have, however, discussed the incident with the United States authorities and the latter have now completed an investigation into the incident and have recently passed a copy of their report to us. A press statement has also been issued by the United States authorities. The marine accident investigation branch is now conducting an investigation of the incident.

Arms Sales

Mr. Gapes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on British arms sales to Israel.

Mr. Aitken: The sale of defence equipment to Israel has been restricted since 1982 in direct response to Israel's invasion of southern Lebanon.

Mr. Gapes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on British arms sales to the middle east.

Mr. Aitken: It is our policy to support the sale of British defence equipment overseas wherever this is compatible with our political, strategic and security interests, and does not conflict with our international obligations.

Mr. Gapes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Finchley of 28 June, *Official Report*, column 345, on United Kingdom arms sales in 1992, if he will place similar information for each year from 1979 in the Library.

Mr. Aitken: The 1992 United Nations register return was the first such return made. Information relating to earlier defence exports is contained in "UK Defence Statistics". A copy of the 1993 edition has recently been placed in the Library of the House.

Sir Michael Grylls: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the Government's policy on arms sales to countries in the Indian sub-continent; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: All exports of arms require an export licence. Each application is carefully considered on a case by case basis taking into account a range of factors including international and national security and regional stability. In particular, no arms are allowed to be exported when they are judged likely to be used for internal repression or terrorist activities. This system of control applies to all destinations, including the countries of the Indian sub-continent.

Army (Training Needs)

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 28 June, *Official Report*, columns 377-78, on training land, whether he intends to publish the results of the work his Department is conducting in the assessment of the Army's training needs; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: My Department's proposals for the future organisation of the Army's individual training organisation were set out in the answer my right hon. Friend the Member for Epsom and Ewell (Mr. Hamilton) gave my hon. Friend the Member for Wimbledon (Dr. Goodson-Wickes) on 16 December 1992 at columns *335-36* and the answer that I gave my hon. Friend the Member for South Dorset (Mr. Bruce) on 22 July at column *351-52*. These, together with the Army's requirements for unit and formation training, will form the basis of the Army's training needs. Any requirement for training land to meet that requirement will be subject to rigorous scrutiny before any final decisions are taken.

I am placing in the Library of the House a copy of a summary of the Army's collective training strategy.

Nimrod

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the RAF bases at which Nimrod aircraft are still based; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: Royal Air Force Nimrod aircraft are based at RAF Kinloss and RAF Wyton.

Overseas Land

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list all the land overseas which is owned by the Government, which has a defence role, giving the number of hectares; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The Ministry of Defence owns 15 married quarters in the United States of America, five in north-west Europe, 17 in Gibraltar and two in the Bahamas for the use of serving personnel. In the Falkland Islands the Ministry of Defence owns eight aerial/radar sites. All other facilities overseas are either leased or made available under various intergovernmental agreements.

RAF St. Mawgan

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to develop a listening device out to sea from the joint maritime communications centre at RAF St. Mawgan; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: I have nothing to add to the answer that I gave the hon. Member on 28 June at column *379*.

Trident

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what cost savings he estimates would be made in each of the next four years if one Trident was mothballed; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: The Government remain committed to a four boat Trident force. Estimates of the possible savings which could accrue from mothballing any of the Vanguard class submarines are not, therefore, available.

RAF Training Ranges

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many practice bombs have been dropped at the Wiley Sike range in each year since 1977; and if he will list the permitted types of weaponry at the Wiley Sike range;

(2) if he will list the locations of each of the remote threat emitter sites at RAF Spadeadam, the date on which each became operational and the number of days on which each has been active in each year since becoming operational;

(3) if he will list the amounts spent on capital investment in buildings and equipment at RAF Spadeadam in each year since 1977; and if he will specify what amounts were paid from *(a)* United Kingdom funds, (b) United States air force funds and *(c)* NATO funds;

(4) within what radius of RAF Spadeadam the dropping of chaff is permitted; and what are the restrictions on the amount of chaff dropped by each aircraft;

(5) how many electronic training runs were carried out by aircraft at RAF Spadeadam in each year since 1977;

(6) what communications he has received from telecommunications operators and customers concerning interference caused by electronic emissions from RAF Spadeadam;

(7) how many Skyguard radars are in service at RAF Spadeadam; what are the roles of each; and if he will specify the circumstances in which these radars are deployed beyond the boundaries of the RAF Spadeadam range;

(8) if he will list the radio frequency ranges on which RAF Spadeadam is permitted to transmit; what changes have taken place in these permitted ranges since 1985; and what plans he has for further changes;

(9) if he will list the number of occasions on which RAF Spadeadam has been activated later than 6 pm in each year since 1988.

Mr. Hanley: I will write to the hon. Member.

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the purchase of equipment to provide simulation of non-Soviet threats at RAF Spadeadam.

Mr. Aitken: My Department has no such plans at present.

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for alterations to the boundaries of the tactical training areas.

Mr. Hanley: There are no plans to alter the boundaries of the tactical training areas used for operational low flying. From October however, we intend to dispense with the administrative separation of the Borders tactical training area into east and west sections. This will simplify the management of the low-flying system and will mean that statistics on movements in the Borders tactical training area will be directly comparable with those for the northern Scotland and central Wales tactical training areas. At present the division of the Borders area can lead to a single sortie generating more than one movement in central records.

Airwork Ltd.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many MOD contracts Airwork Ltd. currently has; what is their approximate total value; and when the last contract currently held by Airwork Ltd. was last awarded.

Mr. Aitken: Further to my answer to the hon. Member for South Shields (Dr. Clark) on 27 April 1993 at column *394*, the position at the end of June was that Airwork Ltd. held 51 contracts from my Department. The original value of these was just over £95 million, but the value of work still to be carried out was approximately £28·3 million. The most recent of these contracts was placed on 28 April.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which companies tendered for the 134 F3 Tornado 25 fatigue index modification contract awarded to Airwork Ltd. in September 1992.

Mr. Aitken: Four companies submitted tenders for the 25 FI modification programme:

Airwork Ltd.
Lovaux Ltd.
BAe Warton
BAe Hamble

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department's assurance periodic surveillance reports on the quality of performance by Airwork Ltd. on the F3 Tornado modification contract by RAF St. Athan from September 1992 to March 1993 identified the problems leading to the cancellation of the contract on 25 May.

Mr. Aitken: In view of our pending claim, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on the contents of the surveillance reports by the MOD quality assurance staff.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the estimated turn-round time per aircraft for the modification programme for RAF F3 Tornados to be carried out by Airwork Ltd. pursuant to its September 1992 contract; and in what way its quality assurance procedures and surveillance work differed from those agreed with British Aerospace on the preceding contract.

Mr. Aitken: The Airwork contract required a turnround time of 45 working days for each aircraft, though 60 days were allowed for the first aircraft off each production line. The same quality assurance procedures applied to both the Airwork and BAe contracts for Tornado F3 fatigue modifications.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the flight safety risk of the damage done by Airwork Ltd. in the course of the F3 Tornado modification programme; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken:: The damage, if unrepaired, would have reduced the aircraft's safe fatigue life and could have posed a flight safety risk. The detailed investigation now underway will assess the extent to which the damage to each aircraft affects its structural integrity and determine the most appropriate repair scheme.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what consultations he has had with Deutsche Aerospace in relation to inspection of fasteners and fastener holes with respect to the manufacturer's guarantee on the centre fuselage section of F3 Tornados damaged by Airwork Ltd. in the course of the modification programme.

Mr. Aitken: The investigation by the aircraft design authorities into the precise extent of the damage to each aircraft is not yet complete and we have still to receive their assessment.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date and at which RAF station the structural damage to F3 Tornados was first discovered, which led to the cancellation of the Airwork modification contract.

Mr. Aitken: Damage to one aircraft was discovered on 29 March at RAF St. Athan where Airwork was carrying out the embodiment of the modifications. However, this was not sufficiently serious to justify termination of the contract. More serious damage was discovered subsequently.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date Airwork secured AQAP4 registration; when that registration was last reviewed and checked; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: Airwork Ltd. has held AQAP1 registration (a higher level which embraces AQAP4) for a number of years. The registration was last reviewed in August 1992, when the company was reassessed against the new ISO 9001 requirement and certificated for a further three years.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if Airwork remains on the defence contractors list; and when its ownership and financial standing and level of performance indemnity assurance was last reviewed.

Mr. Aitken: Airwork Ltd. remains on the defence contractors list, a position which is subject to regular review. In making decisions on the award of contracts, we take account of contractors' past performance.

The ownership and financial standing of Airwork were last reviewed by my officials on 17 May. My Department holds a performance guarantee from Airwork Ltd's holding company, supported by guarantees from the holding company's shareholders; these are not limited in value and are still current.

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the average cost of the 25 fatigue index modification programme carried out on the F3 Tornado RAF aircraft at RAF St. Athan by British Aerospace; what the quality assurance procedures and surveillance were; and what the average turn-round times per aircraft.

Mr. Aitken: Contract prices are commercially confidential. The normal MOD quality assurance arrangements applied to both the BAe and Airwork contracts. Under these a contractor with the appropriate QA registration is responsible for the quality of his work in accordance with the contractual quality plan; there is some limited MOD QA surveillance. The average turnround time on the BAe contract was 63 days. However, the two contracts called for different turnround times and hence different shift and resource patterns.

Depleted Uranium

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those air-to-ground weapons ranges in the United Kingdom at which the practice firing of depleted uranium shells by United States Air Force aircraft has been permitted.

Mr. Aitken: None.

RAF Institute of Aviation Medicine

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the titles and names of contractors for all externally commissioned research work on behalf of the Royal Air Force Institute of Aviation Medicine since 1985.

Mr. Hanley: The Royal Air Force Institute of Aviation Medicine has commissioned only one such contract since 1985. This contract, placed with a British university, was ended in 1991. It is not the practice of my Department to release the names of contractors undertaking work on its behalf.

NATO Standardisation

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date the NATO standardisation agreement 3531 was implemented in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Hanley: NATO standardisation agreement 3531 was implemented in the United Kingdom in April 1992.

Low Flying

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the current requirements for operational low flying by Royal Navy Sea Harrier aircraft.

Mr. Hanley: The Sea Harrier is required to conduct low level operational flying as part of its air to ground role. The aircrew have to train regularly at low level over land to maintain this expertise.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will give a breakdown, for each type of Royal Navy aircraft, of the number of *(a)* hours and *(b)* sorties flown at low level in each year since 1979.

Mr. Hanley: Records are not held centrally in the form requested, so the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Harrier

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the estimated total cost of the rectification programme for the Harrier GR5/GR7 fleet following the series of electrical faults during 1991.

Mr. Aitken: The estimated total cost to my Department is £8·4 million.

Researchers (Attacks)

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 20 July, *Official Report*, column 174, if he will list the incidents reported to his Department in which academic researchers assigned to Ministry of Defence contracts have been physically attacked as a result of their work.

Mr. Aitken: I will write to the hon. Member on the specific point raised in his question. In the meantime, I can tell him that at a recent meeting with my officials the research councils strongly endorsed my Department's policy that universities should decide whether or not to disclose their receipt of funds from the Ministry of Defence for research contracts.

Uranium Enrichment

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes have been made in arrangements for the enrichment of uranium for defence purposes since the announcement by his predecessor of 23 June 1982, *Official Report*, columns 128-29, following the closure of enrichment plants in the United States of America.

Mr. Aitken: There have been no changes in the arrangements for the enrichment of uranium for defence purposes announced by the then Defence Secretary in 1982.

Porton Down (Animal Experiments)

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library the papers which have been published since 1984 on the experiments that have taken place on animals at Porton Down.

Mr. Hanley: This is a matter for the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment under its framework document and I have asked the chief executive to reply.

Letter from Mr. G. Pearson to Mr. Harry Cohen, dated 26 July 1993:

1. Your Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him if he will place in the Library the papers which have been published since 1984 on the experiments that have taken place on animals at Porton Down (Question 40, Order Paper 23 July 1993) has been passed to me to reply as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment.

2. Although as Chief Executive of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment I am keen to provide as much information as possible on the work of the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment, I have to do so with due regard to the security and safety of the staff at the Establishment. I regret that the activities of animal rights activists, who placed a bomb under the car of a member of my staff from which she was lucky to escape with her life, necessitate that I should not provide this particular kind of information relating to animal experiments. I therefore regret that I cannot be more helpful on this occasion.

Army Air Corps Aircraft

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will give a breakdown for each type of Army Air Corps aircraft, of the number of *(a)* hours and *(b)* sorties flown at low level in each year since 1979.

Mr. Hanley: Army records, which are kept for a period of three years, show only the flights booked at low level rather than the actual number of flights. These are manual records and the information requested for the past three years could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Tritium

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes have been made in arrangements for procurement of tritium for defence purposes in the last 10 years.

Mr. Aitken: There have been no changes in the arrangements for procuring tritium for defence purposes in the last 10 years.

Refits

Mr. Trotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Swan Hunter can compete for future Royal Navy refits.

Mr. Aitken: Swan Hunter in Receivership will be eligible to compete for unallocated RN refits subject to the usual requirements in respect of financial status, facilities, resources and qualifications.

Mr. Trotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he will now arrange for the refit of a destroyer or frigate to be put out to competitive tender.

Mr. Aitken: We plan to invite tenders for the refit of HMS Birmingham, a type 42 destroyer, in the near future.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Hanley: I will write to the hon. Member.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 27 July 1993

LORD CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENT

Inquests

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what action will be taken to ensure that the operation of the inquest system is expedited.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Under the present inquest procedures in Northern Ireland, decisions about the commencement, adjournment and timing of a particular inquest are matters largely for the coroner tasked with responsibility for the conduct of the inquest. The Government are satisfied that those arrangements are right in principle, because the coroner is in the best position to judge these matters based on his knowledge of all the circumstances of the case. In a small minority of cases, there is a degree of unavoidable delay due to a range of factors, such as the complexity of the circumstances giving rise to the death; the necessary time taken by the authorities fully to investigate the circumstances of the death, to make proper decisions about criminal prosecutions, and to bring appropriate cases to trial; and legal challenges to coroners' decisions made in the higher courts by the next-of-kin of the deceased or other interested parties. The Government are conscious, as are the coroners and all those involved in the inquest system, of the need to ensure that delays in the holding of inquests are kept to a minimum. The Government believe, nevertheless, that the present arrangements generally work well in practice and do not propose any action at this time.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr John M. Taylor: Between 1 November 1991 and 30 June 1993, the Lord Chancellor's Department has awarded contracts for information technology services to 38 companies. The total cost of these contracts is £2,182,473.

Information about the companies to whom contracts were awarded is commercial in confidence and may not be revealed.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by the Land Registry, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The hon. Member's question concerns a specific matter on which the chief executive of Her Majesty's Land Registry is best placed to provide an answer and I have accordingly asked the chief executive to reply direct.

Letter from John Manthorpe to Mr. John McAllion, dated 26 July 1993:

Parliamentary question No. 93/480 computer consultancies employed by HM Land Registry

As Chief Executive it is my responsibility to answer questions on operational matters concerning HM Land Registry. Consequently, the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department, has asked me to reply to your Parliamentary Question to him concerning the use of computer consultants.

In reply to your question, I can confirm that no computer consultancies have been employed by HM Land Registry since November 1991.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the House library.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The following numbers of staff are employed on work which qualifies them to receive the automatic data processing allowance.

	Number of staff
SEO	37
HEO	92
EO	121
AO	41
AA	22

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in the Land Registry in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The hon. Member's question concerns a specific matter on which the chief executive of Her Majesty's Land Registry is best placed to provide an answer and I have accordingly asked the chief executive to reply direct.

Letter from John Marthorpe to Mr. John McAllion, dated 26 July 1993:

Parliamentary Question No. 93/481

Land Registry staff in the ADP functional specialism

As Chief Executive it is my responsibility to answer questions on operational matters concerning HM Land Registry. Consequently, the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department, has asked me to reply to your Parliamentary Question to him concerning the staff we employ in the automatic data processing (IT) functional specialism.

I have set out below the staff in post figures (full time equivalents) for HM Land Registry staff currently employed in the Civil Service's Information Technology Functional Specialism.

Grade	*Number*
SEO	23
HEO	52
EO	85

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the House library.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The Government continue to help small businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1988 were not applied.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Whether or not TUPE applies in any particular case will depend on the nature of the work awarded and the contractor's own proposals for carrying out this work. Since November 1991, the Lord Chancellor's Department has completed market tests for the professional services required to manage its accommodation and development of new court buildings, and the internal audit function. None of these services or functions has attracted TUPE. A list of services and functions contracted out outside the Department's market testing programme is not readily available and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in the Land Registry, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1988 were not applied.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The hon. Member's question concerns a specific matter on which the chief executive of Her Majesty's Land Registry is best placed to provide an answer and I have accordingly asked the chief executive to reply direct.

Letter from John Manthorpe to Mr. John McAllion, dated 26 July 1993:

As Chief Executive it is my responsibility to answer questions on operational matters concerning HM Land Registry. Consequently, the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department, has asked me to reply to your Parliamentary Question to him concerning contracted out services in HM Land Registry.

Since November 1991, there have been no services or functions carried out by Land Registry staff which have been contracted out. Market Testing exercises are currently being carried out in which the TUPE regulations may apply once the successful bid has been identified.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will be placed in the House Library.

Magistrates Courts

Mr. Riddick: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what conclusions he has reached about the amalgamation of magistrates' courts committees outside Greater London.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The White Paper "A New Framework for Local Justice", published in February 1992, announced our intention of reducing the number of magistrates' courts committee areas from the present 105 to 50 to 60 in due course. In the light of extensive consultation with magistrates' courts committees and others in the magistrates' courts service, the Lord Chancellor has concluded that the following magistrates' courts committees outside Greater London should be amalgamated:

Manchester City, Tameside, Oldham and Stockport;
Trafford, Salford, Wigan, Bury, Rochdale and Bolton;
Knowsley, Liverpool, St. Helens, Sefton and Wirral;
Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull;
Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton;
Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland;
Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland;
Leeds and Wakefield;
Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees:
Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham;
Avon and Somerset;
Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire;
Hereford and Worcester and Shropshire;
Hampshire and the Isle of Wight;
Devon and Cornwall;
Warwickshire and Staffordshire.

In Wales, the new magistrates' courts committee areas will cover the following unitary authority areas:

Anglesey, Caernarfonshire and Merionethshire, Aberconwy and Colwyn, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham;
Powys, Pembrokeshire, Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire;
Swansea, West Glamorgan and Bridgend;
Vale of Glamorgan, Glamorgan Valleys and Cardiff;
Heads of the Valleys, Caerphilly, Torfaen, Newport and Monmouthshire.

These amalgamations can be brought into effect only by an order made by the Lord Chancellor. At present, such an order can be made only on the application of the local magistrates. Legislation will be introduced at the earliest opportunity to enable the Lord Chancellor to make such an order. Before making any order amalgamating magistrates' courts committee areas, the Lord Chancellor will take into account the views of those affected. No order will be made without an opportunity for those locally to make representations. The Lord Chancellor will therefore require local consultation to have taken place, and views reported to him, when considering whether an order should be made.

All other committee areas outside London should remain organised as they are at present. The Lord Chancellor will announce his decisions about the future organisation of the magistrates' courts service in London separately.

Legal Aid

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department what was the cost of legal aid for immigration cases in each of the last five years.

Mr. John M. Taylor: The only immigration cases for which civil legal aid is available are judicial review

proceedings. It is not possible to provide separate expenditure figures for judicial review proceedings involving immigration cases. Green form advice is, however, available for immigration and nationality matters and gross expenditure in each of the last five years on those matters was as follows:

	£000's
1988-89	782
1989-90	1,682
1990-91	2,653
1991-92	5,018
1992-93	7,248

PRIME MINISTER

Engagements

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 27 July.

Sir Peter Tapsell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list his official engagements for Tuesday 27 July.

The Prime Minister: This morning, I had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others, and I shall be having further meetings later today.

Iraq (Sanctions)

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister what action has been taken as a result of a meeting on 22 June, arranged by him, between the Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, Sir Michael Burton, and the hon. Member for Linlithgow, on the effect of sanctions on the health, infant mortality and economy of Iraq.

The Prime Minister: Since the meeting referred to, £1 million has been transferred through the UN escrow account for purchasing part of the crop grown in northern Iraq to help feed the local population. We have also agreed to finance a programme of water and sanitation work in schools in the south. Emergency relief is to be provided to people fleeing repression in the south.

No. 10 Downing Street

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Prime Minister what income was received from the use of No. 10 Downing street for non-official functions in the last three financial years.

The Prime Minister: The costs of catering staff and other expenses are met directly by the organisers of such events. No charge is made for the use of 10 Downing street.

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the non-official or party receptions or functions at 10 Downing street during the coming 12 months for which permission has been given.

The Prime Minister: I am not prepared to give advance notice of functions at 10 Downing street, whether official or non-official.

Desert Storm Syndrome

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister if he will discuss Desert Storm Syndrome when he meets the French President on 26 July.

The Prime Minister: No. The subject was not discussed.

Scott Inquiry

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the witnesses who have appeared to date before the Scott inquiry; what is the total cost incurred to date by Her Majesty's Government in providing documents, witnesses and support services for the Scott inquiry; and what allocation of resources has been made for future activities of the inquiry.

The Prime Minister: To date, the following have given oral evidence in open session to Lord Justice Scott's inquiry:

Ministers/former Ministers
Sir Richard Luce
Sir Adam Butler
Paul Channon Esq.
Sir Patrick Mayhew

Government officials/former Government officials
S. P. Day Esq.
D. Q. Bryars Esq.
J. M. Hart Esq.
C. T. Sandars Esq.
Lt. Col. R. Glazebrook
A. S. Collins Esq.
Sir Stephen Egerton
W. C. Patey Esq.
R. Fellgett Esq.
P. W. M. Vereker Esq.
M. Higson Esq.
Sir David Miers

Non-Government
Sir Hal Miller
D. James Esq.

In addition, nine witnesses have given oral evidence in closed session.

The records of the Department of Trade and Industry show that the total amount charged by the inquiry to that Department for the provision of support services—permanent costs of most staff, equipment, and other general administrative costs—up to 23 July 1993 is £310,000. The cost to Government Departments of providing to the inquiry documents and witnesses requested is not held centrally and could be given only at disproportionate cost.

Specific allocation of resources for the future activities of the inquiry has not been made.

Thailand (Drug Smugglers)

Mr. Beith: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he made to secure the release from gaol in Thailand of two women convicted of drug smuggling; what is the policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to seeking the release of United Kingdom citizens detained abroad for drugs offences; and if he will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: I shall write to the right hon. Member.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

Open Government

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how his proposals in relation to access to personal information as described in the White Paper on

open government differ from those proposed in the data protection directive—COM. (92) 422; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Waldegrave: The White Paper on open government proposes a clear and effective free-standing right for people to have access to personal information held about them by a wide range of public authorities. It complements the right of access to computerised data provided by the Data Protection Act 1984. The subject of access provisions in the draft directive on data protection are only one part of an elaborate structure for the control of personal data, whether held on computer or otherwise, in all sectors.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many appointments to public bodies since April 1992 have been advertised; and if he will list them by Department.

Mr. Waldegrave: This information is not held centrally.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. David Davis: The cost of computer consultancy contracts awarded by the Office of Public Service and Science and its agencies since November 1991 is £818,000. This figure does not include the cost of CCTA computer consultancies. The information requested is not held centrally within CCTA in the form requested and is available only at disproportionate cost.

The consultancies and assignments for which they were engaged are as follows:

Consultant	*Assignment*
Amtec Consulting	To specify and set up Communication link
Amtec Consulting	Network consultancy
Amtec Consulting	System administration support
CCTA	IT Strategy Scoping Study
Computer Answers	Database conversion and installation
CSC Europe	Tutor input (four consultancies)
Daton Systems Ltd.	Integrated Accounting, Statistical and Management Information System
David Best	Tutor input
Direct Technology	Automator (QA) package to test on line main frame systems (two consultancies)
DSS	Development of database system
Eider Computers Ltd.	Rewrite and enhance Oracle databases in MAGIC
Eider Computers	Develop new database
Eider Computers	Database design and installation
Eider Computers	Database conversion and installation
Eider Computers	Database conversion and installation
Eider Computers	Database design and installation
Gamma Secure Systems	System security profiles
Gresham	Implementation of new job Assembly automation system
ICL	Performance monitoring
ICL	Performance consultancy
ICL	Enhancement of Office Power system
ICL	IS Strategy and Networking
Ingres	Database Implementation
LBMS	Novell Netware installation for SSE
Magic Software Enterprises	Annual on-site consultancy for MAGIC software
PC Security Ltd.	Enhancements to access control software
Rollstest	Network consultancy
Sandra Skemp	Maintenance, development and modification of software (two consultancies)
Sapphire ASC	Setting up and implementation of Management Accounting System (four consultancies)
Satelcom	Installation of communication system—Megapac
Simdell	Office Automation
Specif(ix) Ltd.	Appraisal of unix-based computer system to rectify performance problems
Systematika	Development and maintenance of database
Touche Ross	Security/Contingency CRAM
Triad Special Systems	Database enhancements installations and support
Trident	Database conversion and installation
Triad Special Systems Ltd.	Outline User Specification for Office Services Database

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Waldegrave: The Government continue to help small businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific

programmes of support and assistance. Work carried out by my Department over the last 12 months to assist small businesses includes:

publishing the science engineering and technology White Paper "Realising Our Potential". This paper sets out how Government will be giving increased priority to smaller firms within their programmes for encouraging industrial research and development; and will be seeking to involve companies of all sorts, including small businesses, in the new technology foresight programme;

running two full-day conferences designed to inform businesses of the potential opportunities for competing for Government contracts under the market-testing programme. These were attended by representatives from over 400 companies, including many small businesses;

encouraging Government Departments and agencies to assist business, including small firms, through citizens charter initiatives such as the VAT charter produced by Customs and Excise, and the Employer's charter produced by the Contributions Agency;

helping the DTI's deregulation unit to frame a code of good practice for enforcement agencies in accordance with citizens charter principles. The code was published on 20 July;

overseeing an efficiency scrutiny into the implementation and enforcement of EC law in the United Kingdom; the report of the scrutiny was also published on 20 July.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and Agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1988 were not applied.

Mr. David Davis: Whether or not TUPE applies in any particular case will depend on the nature of the work awarded and the contractors' own proposals for carrying out that work. The services and functions contracted out since November 1991 by the Office of Public Service and Science, including its agencies, and Her Majesty's Stationery Office and the Central Office of Information in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1988 did not apply are as follows:

Service/Function (and area)

Conference and Event Management (CCTA)
Data Preparation (Chessington Computer Centre)
Distribution of College 1993-94 Prospectus (Civil Service College)
Elements of Payroll Development (Chessington Computer Centre
Reprographics Unit Basildon (HMSO)
Telephonist Service for Downing Street (OPSS)
Training (Chessington Computer Centre)
Typing Services at Publications Centre (HMSO)

Research Council Chair

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what consideration he is giving to having a research scientist as opposed to an industrialist as chairman of the one research council which will be concerned under his proposals with basic science.

Mr. Waldegrave: Although the new Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council will not be exempt from a responsibility to consider its contribution to wealth creation, I would not wish to rule out the appointment of a suitably qualified research scientist as part-time non-executive chairman of the council.

Research Vessel Services

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much money was raised by Research Vessel Services (Barry) in commissioned research and charter income in each of the last three years; and what is the estimated income from this source in the 1993-94 financial year.

Mr. David Davis: Research Vessels Services does not itself carry out commissioned research. Charter receipts are as follows:

Year	*Charter Receipts (£k)*
1990-91	35
1991-92	0
1992-93	348
1993-94	91

Notes.
1. The 1992-93 figure is provisional, as the council's accounts for that year have not yet been audited.
2. The 1993-94 figure is an estimated one.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to whom each of the executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by the Cabinet Office is responsible; whether the public bodies or their members in each case are subject to *(a)* surcharge, *(b)* investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner, *(c)* scrutiny by the National Audit Office, *(d)* statutory provisions for open government, *(e)* performance indicators and *(f)* provisions under the citizens charters; and whether the chairpersons and members of the boards of each of these bodies are required to declare and interest.

Mr. David Davis *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* The executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by the Office of Public Service and Science—which forms part of the Cabinet Office—are as follows:

Agricultural and Food Research Council
Economic and Social Research Council
Medical Research Council
Natural Emvironment Research Council
Science and Engineering Research Council

The research councils are responsible to my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

(a) Neither the councils nor their members are subject to surcharge;

(b) the councils are subject to investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner;

(c) the councils are subject to scrutiny by the National Audit Office;

(d) the councils are not subject to open government provisions applying to local government—other than the Data Protection Act 1984—but they will come within the proposals contained within chapters 4, 5 and 6 of the open government White Paper (Command 2290);

(e) the councils publish performance indicators in their annual corporate plans;

(f) all public servants are subject to the citizens charter. The research councils are encouraged to adopt charter principles.

The Cabinet Office also sponsors the Chequers Trust, which is an independent trust.

(a) Neither the trust nor its members are subject to surcharge;

(b) the trust is not subject to investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner;

(c) the trust is subject to scrutiny by the National Audit Office;
(d) the trust is not subject to statutory provisions for open government;
(e) the trust is not required to publish performance indicators;
(f) the trust operates on citizens charter principles.

Before any appointments are made to public bodies great care is taken to ensure that there is no conflict of interest.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what was the total expenditure by all Departments on executive non-departmental public bodies for each year since 1970-71 in 1991-92 prices.

Mr. David Davis *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* The following table gives details of the total Government expenditure in 1991-92 prices on executive non-departmental public bodies for the financial year 1978-79 and then each financial year since 1981-82 to 1991-92. Figures for the financial years 1970-71 to 1977-78 and 1979-80 to 1980-81 are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Executive non-departmental public bodies

	Total government expenditure (in 1991-92 prices) £ million
1978-79	8,010
1981-82	6,960
1982-83	8,510
1983-84	8,200
1984-85	7,710
1985-86	7,640
1986-87	7,910
1987-88	7,810
1988-89	7,480
1989-90	9,940
1990-91	10,730
1991-92	10,320

NATIONAL HERITAGE

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Sproat: My Department sponsors 44 non-departmental public bodies and has policy responsibility for five public corporations. None of their board meetings is held in public. Some bodies, however, hold conferences, open days and other kinds of meetings from time to time on matters of general interest attended by members of the public.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage to whom each of the executive non-departmental public bodies is sponsored by the Department of National Heritage is responsible; whether the public bodies or their members in each case are subject to *(a)* surcharge, *(b)* investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner, *(c)* scrutiny by the National Audit Office, *(d)* statutory provisions for open government, *(e)* performance indicators and *(f)* provisions under the citizens charters; and whether the chairpersons and members of the boards of each of these bodies are required to declare an interest.

Mr. Sproat *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* My Department's executive non-departmental public bodies —NDPBs—are listed in "Public Bodies 1992", to which should be added the Geffrye museum and the Horniman museum which became executive NDPBs during the course of 1992. The functions and responsibilities of each body are specified in its founding legislation or charter.

(a) There are no surcharging arrangements.

(b) Bodies subject to the jurisdiction of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration are listed in schedule 2 to the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1967, as amended. This includes:

Arts Council of Great Britain
British Film Institute
British Library Board
Crafts Council
English Tourist Board
Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission (English Heritage)
Museums and Galleries Commission
Trustees of the National Heritage Memorial Fund
Registrar of Public Lending Right
Sports Council

(c) All of my Department's executive NDPBs are subject to scrutiny by the Comptroller and Auditor General with the exception of the national film development Fund.

(d) There are no statutory provisions on open government which apply to executive NDPBs.

(e) Performance indicators for my Department's executive NDPBs can be found in their annual reports and are summarised in the DNH annual report 1993, Cm 2211.

(f) The principles of the citizens charter apply to all the Department's executive NDPBs. All appointments to NDPBs are made in accordance with guidance provided by the Cabinet Office and the Treasury, which requires Ministers to satisfy themselves that there is no conflict of interest.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and Agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Sproat: Whether or not the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations apply in any particular case will depend on the nature of the work awarded and the contractors' own proposals for carrying out the work.

My Department has contracted out mailroom services, minor maintenance, office cleaning, reprographics, security, central typing and secretarial cover, and the provision of computer equipment and new associated services.

The Royal Parks Agency has contracted grounds maintenance and the provision of nursery services and the Historic Royal Parks Agency has contracted out manning of vehicle entrances, ticket checking and the security control room at the Tower of London.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Sproat: My Department has used the Government's centre for information systems, the CCTA, to advise on its computer requirements and future information systems strategy. It has also used Sema Group Ltd. to advise on transferring data from former parent Departments, and on various proposals for computer software. To date, the Department has spent £416,658 inclusive of VAT on computer consultancies.

The Royal Parks Agency has used KPMG to develop IT-based systems for financial monitoring, grounds maintenance monitoring and crime monitoring for the Royal Parks constabulary. It has also used Mr. Geoffrey Page, an individual consultant, to develop and commence implementation of an IT strategy. To date, it has spent £82,547 inclusive VAT on consultancies.

The Historic Royal Palaces Agency has used Ibex Systems Ltd. to develop the agency's financial system at a cost of £1,462 inclusive of VAT.

ITV Levy

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage how he proposes to refund any overpayments of ITV levy.

Mr. Brooke: During the current financial year it will be necessary to make payments, via the Independent Television Commission, to independent television companies that, in the accounting period to 31 December 1992, made excess payments of levy into the Consolidated Fund. Parliamentary approval to this new service will be sought in a supplementary estimate for the Department of National Heritage home broadcasting vote—class XI vote 4. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £4·1 million will be met by repayable advances from the Contingencies Fund.

The levy came to an end on 31 December 1992 when it was replaced by the new arrangements for Channel 3 licences laid down in the Broadcasting Act 1990.

National Lottery

Mr. Coe: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will make a statement about the benefits which may accrue to tourism as a result of the national lottery.

Mr. Sproat: I hope and expect that the tourism industry will benefit considerably as a result of funds arising from the national lottery. Fixed percentages of the net proceeds of the national lottery will be specifically allocated to areas which will enable British tourist attractions to be improved and enhanced. These allocations, amounting to hundreds of millions of pounds annually, and being additional to any spending otherwise available from the Government, will enable more capital provision to be made for both the natural and built heritage, for the arts, and for sport. For example, funds arising from the national lottery will enable further restoration, preservation and presentation of historic houses, historic sites, galleries and museums to be undertaken. They would also enable capital funding to be made available for visitor centres, designed to increase appropriate access to, and understanding of, our rich heritage. Again, extra funds would be available, for example, for improving existing theatres, or for building new theatres. Similarly, sports stadiums, and other sporting facilities, will be eligible to receive capital sums, which would not otherwise have been available, to improve existing sports facilities, or to add new ones.

Funds from the national lottery, however, will not be used to make direct grants to hotels or restaurants on the pattern of the old grants under section 4 of the Development of Tourism Act 1969.

In addition to funds arising from the national lottery which are allocated to the improvement of heritage, arts and sport, funds will also be allocated to the Millennium Commission, which is a new body established by the Bill charged with funding projects which celebrate the best of the old millennium and look forward to the new one. The commission will fund a number of visionary projects which, it is hoped, will attract interest worldwide, and thus add to tourist attraction for the United Kingdom.

Mr. Brandreth: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will make a statement on the timetable for the process of tendering for the licence to run the national lottery.

Mr. Brooke: The National Lottery etc. Bill has now been read the Third time in another place and the only stage remaining is this House's consideration of Lords amendments. Its passage is therefore virtually completed, and I expect the National Lottery etc. Bill to receive Royal Assent in the autumn. The director general will be appointed and the invitation to tender will be issued shortly thereafter.

It is, therefore, intended that urgent work on the preparation of the invitation to tender, and on the selection process for the national lottery operator, should now be set in hand, in consultation with the regulatory adviser whom I expect to appoint shortly.

Parliamentary approval to this new service will be sought in a winter supplementary estimate for the office of the national lottery vote—class XI, vote 8—the main estimate for which was presented to Parliament on 17 June. Pending that approval and Royal Assent to the National Lottery etc. Bill, urgent expenditure estimated at £200,000 will be met by repayable advances from the Contingencies Fund. The fact that the National Lottery etc. Bill has completed virtually all of its parliamentary stages is a material factor in the decision to seek recourse to the Contingencies Fund.

Sports Grants

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will give a breakdown of grants given to individual sports by the Sports Council for the last available year.

Mr. Brooke: The Sports Council's grants to individual sports in 1992-93 were:

Sport	*Total* £
Angling	46,800·00
Archery	83,675·00
Association football	522,275·00

Sport	Total £
Athletics	682,212·00
Badminton	297,363·00
Ballooning	4,108·00
Baseball	22,250·00
Basketball	419,817·00
Bobsleigh	70,000·00
Bowls	161,080·00
Boxing	109,000·00
Canoeing	344,426·00
Caving	32,000·00
Cricket	802,114·00
Croquet	24,250·00
Cycling	563,924·00
Diving	12,764·00
Fencing	176,530·00
Flying	8,297·00
Gliding	50,250·00
Golf	90,075·00
Gymnastics	653,700·00
Handball	15,445·00
Hang and Para Gliding	70,000·00
Hockey	1,249,166·00
Judo	375,850·00
Karate	13,400·00
Lacrosse	160,150·00
Land Yachting	18,000·00
Lawn Tennis	518,301·00
Life-Saving	52,008·00
Luge	5,000·00
Modern Pentathlon	159,500·00
Motor Sports	27,500·00
Mountaineering	219,650·00
Multi-Sports	5,532,202·00
Movement and Dance	179,572·00
Netball	600,040·00
Orienteering	151,290·00
Outdoor Activities	188,168·00
Parachuting	93,500·00
Patanqua	18,500·00
Riding	201,000·00
Roller Hockey	18,000·00
Roller Skating	18,000·00
Rowing	445,000·00
Rugby League	322,110·00
Rugby Union	118,320·00
Sailing	513,772·00
Shooting	422,304·00
Skating	107,000·00
Skiing	372,325·00
Squash Rackets	25,880·00
Sub-Aqua	2,200·00
Surfing	23,500·00
Swimming	462,565·00
Table Tennis	501,726·00
Tenpin Bowling	9,430·00
Triathlon	62,500·00
Tug-of-War	18,875·00
Volleyball	343,828·00
Water Skiing	237,662·00
Water Sports	120,506·00
Weight Lifting	163,119·00
Wrestling	71,250·00
Rounders	12,055·00
Other, includes grants to disability, youth, school sports organisations etc.	1,377,356·00
Total	20,985,435·00

Items in Lieu of Tax

Mr. Faulds: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Warwick and Leamington (Sir D. Smith) of 21 July, *Official Report*, column *247*, concerning the two paintings by Edward Vuillard accepted in lieu of inheritance tax, what were the relevant amounts of tax satisfied in respect of each of the paintings; and what conditions were attached, or wishes expressed, as to their destinations.

Mr. Sproat: I regret that it has not been possible to provide an answer before the summer recess. I shall therefore write to the hon. Member and place a copy of the letter in the Library.

Writers in Residence

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage, pursuant to his answer of 14 July, *Official Report*, column *508*, if he will state the country of origin of the writers from abroad to which grants were made by the Arts Council of Great Britain under its writers in residence scheme; and if he will indicate the place of residence of writers to whom other residency schemes have been made in the United Kingdom during the last five years.

Mr. Brooke: I regret that it has not been possible to provide an answer before the summer recess. I shall therefore write to the hon. Member and place a copy of the letter in the Library.

Tourism

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage if he will make a statement on his Department's review of regulations in the tourism industry.

Mr. Sproat: I told the House on 14 June that my Department proposed to carry out an urgent and detailed inquiry into the damaging effects of regulation on the tourism industry. This was because I was extremely concerned at reports of the expensive and time-wasting consequences of many regulations, and of their harmful effects on the competitiveness of our tourism industry.

I promised that I would report to the House before the summer recess on what the inquiry had achieved by that date. This I now do.

Following my announcement of an inquiry, I wrote asking for facts, examples, opinions, and proposals for change to the chairman of every regional tourist board, to scores of tourist-related trade associations, other relevant bodies, such as local authorities, and individuals such as hoteliers and restaurateurs. I also wrote personally to some 60 Members of Parliament with constituencies where tourism is a significant industry. I held meetings with the chairman of the British Tourist Authority, who is also chairman of the English tourist board, and with the chairmen of the Scottish and Wales tourist boards. I also met many delegations of those directly and personally involved in the tourism industry. I have met the chairman of the Retail and Tourism Task Force and the task force members representing the tourism industry, who have already done much work in this area as part of the deregulation initiative.

Officials of my Department have also had many detailed discussions with appropriate individuals and bodies.

The result of all this activity has been a deluge of valuable information from the industry on the subject. I am very grateful to the tourism industry for the swift, detailed and helpful responses I have received.

As a background to action that will follow from this inquiry, I want to make clear two matters: these regulations, or their interpretation, derive from several very different sources. These sources are the British Government, the European Community, local authorities, NDPBs, individual officials of local authorities and NDPBs, and rumour, ignorance, and misunderstanding; and regulations are, or are perceived to be, damaging for very different reasons. Here are 12 of many such reasons:

(i) Some regulations are damaging because they are inappropriately conceived from the start.

(ii) Some regulations were well-intentioned in theory but have proved ill conceived in practice.

(iii) Some regulations are interpreted in far too heavy-handed or officious a way.

(iv) Some regulations are applied in different ways in different parts of the country.

(v) Some regulations are applied in different ways in the same tourist outlet, such as a hotel or restaurant, by different officials at different times.

(vi) Some regulations are applied in a way where the punishment for non-compliance appears wholly disproportionate to the original breach, or alleged breach, of the regulation.

(vii) Some regulations are applied without a clear and straightforward right of appeal against an enforcement.

(viii) Some regulations are communicated in language so ill-written, or with guidance so complicated or so lengthy (or both), that they cannot be readily understood.

(ix) Some regulations require an implementation which is contradictory to another regulation.

(x) Some regulations are enforced strictly in the United Kingdom but are enforced laxly, or not at all, in other parts of the European Community, thus damaging the United Kingdom's competitiveness against tourism overseas.

(xi) Some regulations are damaging because they were promulgated originally with other industrial sectors primarily in mind, and without necessary thought being given to their effects on the tourism industry.

(xii) Some "regulations" are not regulations at all, but are misinterpretations of regulations by individual bodies or by individual officials of those bodies, or by firms and companies in the pursuit of contracts.

In addition to the damaging effect which individual regulations may have on individual businesses at individual times, there is a damaging effect brought about by the accumulation of these regulations—a damaging, cumulative effect which can be far greater than the sum of its parts.

I should also wish to emphasise most strongly that many regulations are wise and practical.

My Department's review has so far identified more than 80 pieces of legislation and regulations which affect the industry. It may be that we shall discover even more. I intend to investigate each of these individually and in detail in order to assess whether it imposes unnecessary burdens on tourism businesses.

Having identified the more than 80 pieces of legislation which I mention above, my inquiry has focused on the damage caused by burdensome regulations, and in particular the seven areas most often complained about. These are the subject of detailed and on-going study by my Department. These areas are:

(i) Food Safety and Hygiene;
(ii) Fire Safety;
(iii) Package Travel Regulations;
(iv) the Electricity at Work Regulations;
(v) Public Entertainment Licensing;
(vi) Tourism Signposting; and
(vii) Price Display Regulations.

Drawing on the information received from tourism businesses, and my Department's consequent research into the regulations concerned, a number of preliminary conclusions and recommendations have been arrived at in each case. I intend to discuss these conclusions and recommendations with ministerial colleagues.

I also intend to take up two further issues which have been raised with me where the interest of the tourism industry were not primarily considered:

First, I want to ensure that sufficient account is taken of tourism interests when air services agreements are being negotiated, and that benefits to regional airports can be maximised.

Second, there is growing concern, particularly, but not exclusively, in coastal resort towns, about the number of hotels which are being converted to hostels for benefit recipients, and about the unpleasant and harmful effects which this change of use is having on tourism, and the quality of life, in those areas.

My Department's review has also produced the preliminary recommendation that the Department should establish better communications with the grass roots of the tourism industry. My Department must also in future be even more closely linked into the Whitehall consultation process. This is in order to ensure that the implications for tourism of any regulatory proposal are recognised and fully taken into account.

The preliminary overall conclusion of my review is that the complex proliferation of regulations is unquestionably having a damaging effect on the tourism sector. This should now cease. I intend it to do so.

In addition to the detailed work which will now be undertaken on individual regulations, my Department is now advancing five guiding principles to be adopted whenever new regulations are being proposed:

(i) the specific nature and size of the problem or ill which the regulation is designed to curb must be identified and substantiated, clearly and in detail, before any regulation is proposed;

(ii) there should be both a compliance cost assessment, and risk assessment, for every regulation, to produce a cost-benefit analysis which should make specific reference to the impact on small businesses and on tourism;

(iii) the Department concerned should consider the new regulation in the context of the body of existing regulations, assess the cumulative effect of this body of regulation, and look at the case for excision, rationalisation or streamlining;

(iv) an automatic review should be built in, so that after a set time the Department concerned will assess whether the regulation is achieving its purpose, and is still necessary;

(v) consultation machinery between the Department concerned and the tourism industry, and between my Department and other Government Departments, will be improved; in particular, so that the views of the tourism industry are more fully taken into account.

I wish to emphasise strongly that this inquiry, and the specific actions that flow from it, are only the start of a continuing campaign to rid the tourism industry of unnecessary regulatory burdens. I shall continue to welcome advice and information from the tourism

industry on this subject. During the summer recess, I intend to see representatives of every regional tourist board, in my office, and then to visit every regional tourist area in the field. I shall also be seeing more delegations from those involved directly in the tourism industry.

English Tourist Board

Mr. Allason: To ask the Secretary of State for National Heritage what is the outcome of the English tourist board's strategic review.

Mr. Brooke: The English tourist board—ETB—has concluded a review of how best it might help the tourism industry make its full contribution to the economy by generating additional tourism business. The board retained consultants to conduct the review, and sent me a copy of their report earlier this month. The report contains new prioritised objectives for the board arising from the review, which are supported by the regional tourist boards —RTBs. These give top priority to the ETB's lead body function and action to improve the quality and value for money of the English tourism product. They give lower priority to marketing and programmes designed to encourage visits to a greater variety of destinations. The review also acknowledges the importance of the RTB network to the achievement of the ETB's objectives.

I look forward to receiving from the board a fully developed strategy to deliver such objectives in the most effective way within the resources allocated to it in the 1992 public expenditure survey. The board has also bid for additional resources by way of grant-in-aid from 1994-95 onwards. That bid will be considered in the process of the current survey.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Attorney-General if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in the Crown Prosecution Service in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

The Attorney-General: The Crown Prosecution Service has 31 staff in the automatic data processing functional specialism. They are graded as follows:

Grade	*Number*
5	1
7	2
SEO	5
HEO	16
EO	7

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Attorney-General if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in the Treasury Solicitor's department in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

The Attorney-General: The Treasury Solicitor's department has three staff in the automatic data processing functional specialism. They are graded as follows:

Grade	*Number*
7	1
EO	2

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Attorney-General if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in the Treasury Solicitor's department, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

The Attorney-General: No services or functions have been contracted out in the Treasury Solicitor's department since November 1991.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Attorney-General if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in the Crown Prosecution Service, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

The Attorney-General: The Crown Prosecution Service has contracted out one function since November 1991 to which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied. This was its headquarters reprographics service, involving two permanent members of staff, both of whom were offered alternative posts within CPS (HQ).

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Attorney-General if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by the Crown Prosecution Service, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

The Attorney-General: The computer consultancies employed by the Crown Prosecution Service since November 1991 and the tasks for which they were engaged are as follows:

Consultants	*Task engaged*
Yale Consulting	Local Area Networking Strategy and Technical Support
Integrated Project Support	Establishment of a Project Support Office
Oracle Corporation	Software Development
Bull Information Systems	Software Development
Infact Ltd	Cabling Specification for New Buildings and Supervision of Cabling Installation
Axsis Consultants	Telecommunications Strategy
Mouncey and Partners	System Integration Consultancy
Sequelgic	Software Development
Amtec Consulting	Information Systems Strategy Study
Olivetti Ltd	Software Integration
Quadratron	Software Integration
Hunterskil	Software Development
Comshare	Software Design
Hoskyns	Project Support Set Up
Art of Management Ltd	Risk Management

The total cost to the Crown Prosecution Service is £746,946, inclusive of VAT.

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Attorney-General if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by the Treasury Solicitor's Department, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

The Attorney-General: The computer consultancies employed by the Treasury Solicitor's Department since November 1991 and the tasks for which they were engaged are set out in the following list.

CCTA
Procurement replacement UNIX system
Procure PC maintenance contract
Recruitment advice and assistance
IS strategy study

AXSIS Consultants
Advise on, and assist with, local area network and software requirements, selection and implementation

Telecom Capita
Advise on alternative wide area network strategy and costs

B. Yates
Advise on loading disbursement data

The total cost to the Treasury Solicitor's Department is approximately £84,385, inclusive of VAT.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Attorney-General if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

The Attorney-General: The Government continue to place a high priority on helping small businesses through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

The departments for which I am responsible are the legal secretariat to the Law Officers, the Treasury Solicitor's department, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Serious Fraud Office. The services provided by the first two are largely internal to Government. The functions of the Crown Prosecution Service and the Serious Fraud Office relate purely to the criminal justice system.

As regards purchasing, all the departments have regard to the desirability of encouraging small businesses in line with the policy of the Government as a whole. However, no specific programmes of support and assistance operate in the departments for which I am responsible.

Regina v. Brown

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Attorney-General what action he is intending following the Court of Appeal decision in Regina *v.* Brown of 28 May; and if he will place a transcript of the judgment in the Library.

The Attorney-General: The Director of Public Prosecutions has invited the Court of Appeal to certify that a point of general public importance arises in relation to the meaning to be attached to the words "use" when applied to personal data within section 5 of the Data Protection Act 1984, and to grant leave to appeal on this point to the House of Lords.

No transcript of the judgment of the Court of Appeal is yet available.

Court Proceedings

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Attorney-General when the Crown Prosecution Service expects to proceed with the case against the prisoner, details of which have been communicated to his office by the hon. Member for Stretford.

The Attorney-General: The case to which the hon. Member refers is listed for trial at Manchester Crown court on 1 November 1993. I will write in more detail to the hon. Member in due course.

EDUCATION

Complaints (Young People)

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many complaints have been made under section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988 concerning the specific actions of local education authorities in relation to the curriculum or religious worship; and what were the figures for each local education area in each year since 1989.

Mr. Robin Squire: The table shows the number of complaints received by local education authorities in academic years 1990-91 and 1991-92—the only years for which information is available. The figures include complaints received via the governing body of a school as well as those made direct to the local education authority. Only those authorities that have notified the Department of one or more complaints are included.

	1990-91	*1991-92*
Avon	3	—
Bedfordshire	—	1
Bradford	1	—
Bury	—	1
Coventry	—	1
Cumbria	—	1
Derbyshire	—	1
Ealing	1	—
East Sussex	—	2
Greenwich	1	—
Harrow	1	—
Hillingdon	1	1
Islington	—	3
Kensington	1	—
Kent	1	—
Lancashire	—	1
Leeds	—	1
Manchester	1	—
Northamptonshire	—	1
Oxfordshire	—	1
Richmond	—	1
Rochdale	1	—
Sheffield	—	4
Southwark	—	5
Suffolk	1	1
Tameside	1	—
Trafford	—	1
Total	14	27

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many complaints have been received from children or young people aged 18 years or under in relation to section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988 according to each local education authority area for each year since 1989.

Mr. Robin Squire: The returns which local education authorities make to the Department for Education do not specify the age of the complainant.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many complaints have been received by his Department in relation to section 219 of the Education Reform Act 1988 in each year since 1989; and how many complaints related to *(a)* the conduct of local education authorities, *(b)* the conduct of governing bodies of maintained schools, *(c)* grant-maintained schools, *(d)* higher education corporations and *(e)* institutions of further and higher education maintained or assisted by local education authorities.

Mr. Robin Squire: This information will take some time to collate. I will write to the hon. Member as soon as it is available.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will make it his policy to amend circular 1/89 on local arrangements for the consideration of complaints to include references to complaints from pupils.

Mr. Robin Squire: No. Circular 1/89 already states that complaints may be made by "parents and others" and section 23 of the Education Reform Act places no restrictions on who may make a formal complaint about the curriculum or collective worship.

Nursery Education

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what percentage of children receive publicly funded nursery places in *(a)* Belgium, *(b)* Italy, *(c)* Spain, *(d)* Greece, *(e)* Germany and *(f)* the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Robin Squire: Information is not centrally available in the form requested. The table shows the latest available information on combined public and private participation rates in pre-compulsory schooling. Separate participation rates are not available. There are also some differences between countries in the distinction drawn between education and day care. If the United Kingdom figures are defined to include nursery schools, nursery classes, infant classes, pre-school play groups and group day care, the participation rates for both three to four and three to five-year-olds increase to over 90 per cent.

Participation in pre-primary education by age group, 1989[1]
Percentage of age group

	Age at which compulsory schooling starts	*Education 3 to 5*	*3 to 4*	*Percentage of private sector provision 1987*
Belgium[1]	6	96	96	58
Germany	6	63	52	[2]71
Italy[1,3]	6	76	76	33
Spain	6	69	53	37
United Kingdom	5	64 [4]66	46 [4]50	6

[1]1988 data for Belgium and Italy.
[2]In Germany, some providers of private sector provision receive some public subsidy.
[3]Estimated.
[4]1991 data.
Sources: Table AA: Education Statistics for the United Kingdom, 1992 edition.

Student Unions

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list the dates of each visit undertaken by members of his Department to student unions since April 1992; and what plans he has to visit student unions before the end of October.

Mr. Boswell: Officials have made visits to universities and colleges relating to student unions since April 1992 on 26 October and 8 and 9 December 1992; and on 26 January; 8, 12, 19, 22 and 25 February; 4, 5, 8, 11, 12 and 16 March; 22 April; and 7 and 14 May 1993. Other visits by Ministers and officials to universities and colleges also commonly include discussions with representatives of students.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Boswell: None.

Student Funding

Mr. Rowe: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to alter the funding arrangements for British students undertaking first degrees at United Kingdom universities; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Boswell: My right hon. Friend keeps the arrangements for the funding of students under periodic review. Any plans for changes, in this or any other field, would be announced at the appropriate time.

Public Spending

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what has been the total gross public spending on *(a)* grant-maintained schools and *(b)* city technology colleges for the years since 1988-89; and what is the projected expenditure for the years to 1995-96 at 1991-92 prices.

Mr. Forth: Spending to date on grant-maintained schools and city technology colleges has been as follows:

	1988-89 outturn £ million	*1989-90 outturn £ million*	*1990-91 outturn £ million*	*1991-92 outturn £ million*	*1992-93 provisional £ million*
Grant-maintained schools	0	18	69	183	485
City technology colleges	14	30	58	56	50

Total spending in future years on grant-maintained schools will depend on the number of schools becoming grant maintained, their size and location, and the balance between primary and secondary schools. However, on current trends a reasonable estimate would be about:

£ million (1991-92 prices)

	1993-94	*1994-95*	*1995-96*
Grant-maintained schools	1,100	2,300	4,000

Projected future spending on city technology colleges is as follows:

£ million (1991-92 prices)

	1993-94	*1994-95*	*1995-96*
City technology colleges	47	46	48

Note:

Figures for GM schools include annual maintenance grant, which is recovered from local authorities; special purpose grants; capital grant; cost of GM ballots; the Grant Maintained Schools Centre; the projected cost of the Funding Agency for Schools. They exclude other spending by local authorities, who remain responsible for some services to GM pupils, and DFE running costs.

Assisted Places

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many pupils attended each school taking part in the assisted places scheme in 1992-93 during the year; and how many in each case were on an assisted place.

Mr. Forth: The information requested is given in the table:

Numbers of pupils in APS schools in AY 1992-93

School name	*Number of pupils on roll*	*Number of assisted pupils*
Abbey School, Reading	1,035	48
Abingdon	762	94
Ackworth	507	18
Aldenham	334	26
Alice Ottley	715	86
Alleyns, Dulwich	1,038	203
Ardingly College	632	19
Arnold School, Blackpool	1,143	80
Ashford	606	41
Ashville College	700	9
Austin Friars	300	8
Bancrofts	905	80
Barnard Castle	586	13
Bath High GPDST	626	114
Batley Grammar	595	253
Bedales	628	7
Bedford	1,123	103
Bedford High	987	120
Bedford Modern	1,204	154
Belvedere GPDST	567	178
Berkhamstead Girls	594	11
Berkhamstead	748	21
Birkenhead	1,112	205
Birkenhead High GPDST	1,021	243
Bishop's Stortford College	591	47
Blackheath High GPDST	526	101
Bloxham, Banbury	341	20
Bolton School Boys	1,003	267
Bolton School Girls	1,139	254
Bootham, York	346	20
Bradfield College	589	6
Bradford Girls Grammar	880	63
Bradford Grammar School	1,145	222
Brentwood School	1,196	100
Brighton College	477	116
Brighton-Hove High GPDST	730	148
Bristol Cathedral	467	137
Bristol Grammar	1,232	267
Bromley High GPDST	760	87
Bromsgrove	1,178	20
Bruton Girls	573	130
Burgess Hill Girls	611	20
Bury Grammar Boys	790	204
Bury Grammar Girls	1,128	246
Canford	494	27
Carmel College	236	72
Casterton	330	53
Caterham	1,049	127
Central Newcastle High GPDST	861	127
Charterhouse	699	9
Cheadle Hulme	907	129
Cheltenham Ladies College	834	14
Chigwell	647	71
Christ's Hospital	815	21
Churchers College	565	128
City of London	840	138
City of London Freemans	675	16
City of London Girls	643	114
Clifton College, Bristol	1,170	69
Clifton High, Bristol	789	46
Colfe's	892	186
Colston's Girls	555	170
Colston's, Bristol	616	88
Coventry, Bablake	926	178
Cranleigh	720	27
Croham Hurst	528	19
Croydon High GPDST	1,065	84
Culford	621	49
Dame Alice Harpur	977	140
Dame Allans Boys	462	112
Dame Allans Girls	452	127
Dauntseys	614	54
Denstone College	273	103
Derby High	528	15
Douai, Reading	238	20
Dover College	272	18
Downe House, Newbury	481	10
Dulwich College	1,380	273
Durham	486	29
Edgbaston College Girls	385	19
Edgehill College	509	141
Ellesmere College	352	9
Eltham College	751	109
Emanuel, London	763	290
Epsom College	664	27
Exeter	834	168
Farnborough Hill	503	150
Felixstowe College	306	20
Felsted, Dunmow	562	45
Forest School	1,200	130
Framlingham College	720	9
Francis Holland	366	18
Friends, Saffron Walden	272	85
Giggleswick, Settle	435	12
Godolphin and Latymer	702	157
Godolphin, Salisbury	352	20
Greshams	753	10
Guildford High Girls	616	16
Haberdashers Askes Boys	1,327	250
Haberdashers Askes Girls	1,134	123
Haileybury and ISC	628	15
Hampton	908	200
Harrogate College	391	18
Headington	714	14
Hereford Cathedral	587	233
Highgate	914	35
Hipperholme Grammar	366	9
Holy Child	338	15
Hulme Grammar Boys	832	210
Hulme Grammar Girls	626	184

School name	Number of pupils on roll	Number of assisted pupils
Hurstpierpoint College	505	18
Hymers College	937	148
Ipswich	759	77
Ipswich High GPDST	611	102
James Allens Girls	1,039	168
John Lyons	523	107
Kent College	696	88
Kimbolton Schools	712	20
King Edward VI High	549	127
King Edward VI Norwich	745	113
King Edward VI Southampton	958	241
King Edward VII Lytham	597	225
King Edwards at Bath	855	110
King Edwards Birmingham	844	244
King Edwards Witley	507	61
King Henry VIII	1,084	92
Kings College Wimbledon	910	64
Kings High Girls, Warwick	558	124
Kings, Bruton	309	17
Kings, Chester	610	92
Kings, Macclesfield	1,026	150
Kings, Rochester	609	64
Kings, Tynemouth	895	15
Kings, Worcester	931	182
Kingsley	583	16
Kingston Grammar	585	160
Kingswood School, Bath	469	44
Kirkham Grammar	653	80
La Sagesse Convent	493	161
Lady Eleanor Holles	816	37
Latymer Upper	1,049	312
Laxton	185	2
Leeds Girls High	986	78
Leeds Grammar	1,137	168
Leicester Grammar	561	30
Leighton Park	311	21
Leys, Cambridge	378	36
Liverpool College	694	185
Lord Wandsworth College	432	81
Loreto Convent Grammar	812	57
Loughborough Grammar	918	126
Loughborough High	527	89
Magdalen College	484	125
Malvern College	672	87
Manchester Grammar	1,436	274
Manchester High	959	175
Marist Convent Senior	400	9
Maynard	564	163
Merchant Taylors Girls	906	187
Merchant Taylors, L'pool	844	213
Merchant Taylors, N'wood	715	81
Mill Hill	556	69
Monkton Combe	323	41
Mount Carmel, Cheshire	577	20
Mount St. Mary's College	319	70
Mount, York	297	18
Newcastle under Lyme	1,329	390
Newcastle upon Tyne Church	608	20
North London Collegiate	915	98
Northampton High	804	149
Norwich High GPDST	855	164
Notting Hill/Ealing High	774	105
Nottingham Girls High GPDST	1,078	194
Nottingham High	827	160
Oakham	1,015	20
Old Palace, Croydon	743	205
Oxford High, GPDST	648	76
Pangbourne College	416	19
Perse School for Boys	653	52
Perse School for Girls	691	66
Plymouth College	866	200
Pocklington	702	146
Polam Hall	468	27
Portsmouth Grammar	1,102	191
Portsmouth High GPDST	755	137
Prior Park College	446	20
Putney High School GPDST	807	79
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	503	169
Queen Elizabeth, Blackburn	1,220	260
Queen Elizabeth, Wakefield	744	132
Queen Mary, Lytham	622	233
Queens College, London	389	81
Queens College, Taunton	699	67
Queens School, Chester	613	69
Ratcliffe College	459	77
Red Maids, Bristol	573	173
Redland High, Bristol	656	93
Reed's School, Cobham	391	20
Reigate Grammar	812	99
Rendcomb College	227	20
Repton	584	54
Rossall	705	42
Royal Grammar, Guildford	794	140
Royal Grammar, Newcastle	1,128	239
Royal Grammar, Worcester	916	282
Ryde School	629	9
Salesian College	502	65
Scarborough College	416	21
Sedbergh	424	47
Sevenoaks, Kent	939	16
Sheffield High GPDST	753	93
Shrewsbury High GPDST	599	84
Silcoates	564	8
Sir William Perkins	538	96
Solihull	1,006	28
South Hampstead High GPDST	743	72
St. Albans	637	120
St. Albans High Girls	681	53
St Ambrose College	820	59
St. Anselms College	919	207
St. Bede's College	1,136	220
St. Bees	285	77
St. Benedict's	595	77
St. Catherine's	578	34
St. Dunstan's College	746	147
St. Edmund's College	573	79
St. Edward's College	937	396
St. Felix, Southwold	360	18
St. George's College	474	34
St. Helen and St. Katherine	518	95
St. Helen's, Northwood	924	48
St. John's College, Southsea	855	200
St. John's, Leatherhead	390	6
St. Joseph's College, Ipswich	646	76
St. Joseph's College, Stoke	450	15
St. Joseph's Convent, Reading	422	131
St. Lawrence College, Ramsgate	356	22
St. Margaret's, Bushey	453	20
St. Margaret's, Exeter	448	19
St. Mary and St. Anne	277	15
St. Mary's College, Crosbey	789	254
St. Mary's Convent, Cambridge	592	118
St. Mary's Hall, Brighton	389	63
St. Maurs Convent, Weybridge	668	58
St. Paul's Girls, Hammersmith	611	73
St. Paul's, Barnes	1,169	80
St. Peter's, York	756	120
St. Swithun's Winchester	642	0
Stafford Grammar	274	15
Stamford	930	98
Stamford High	1,014	101
Stockport Grammar	994	240
Stoneyhurst College	398	35
Stowe	572	8
Streatham Hill/Clapham High	537	153
Surbiton High	737	20
Sutton High GPDST	808	74
Sutton Valence	368	58
Sydenham High GPDST	683	129
Talbot Heath	519	140
Taunton	987	52
Teesside High	550	14

School name	Number of pupils on roll	Number of assisted pupils
Tonbridge	638	6
Tormead	564	20
Trent College	650	124
Trinity—of John Whitgift	812	140
Truro	876	116
Truro High	355	64
University College School	770	72
Upton Hall Convent	604	170
Ursuline Convent, Kent	268	20
Ursuline High, Ilford	383	138
Wakefield High	1,066	148
Walthamstow Hall	612	50
Warwick	999	147
Wellingborough	771	68
Wellington College	802	37
Wellington, Somerset	838	226
Wells Cathedral	801	76
West Buckland	555	83
Westholme	990	20
Westminster	649	56
Whitgift, Croydon	956	106
William Hulme Grammar	793	220
Wimbledon High GPDST	793	76
Winchester College	664	23
Wisbech Grammar	628	326
Withington Girls	590	74
Wolverhampton Grammar	646	256
Woodbridge	748	121
Woodhouse Grove	737	135
Worksop	346	20
Wrekin College	317	9
Wycliffe College	565	43
Yarm	586	29

Churston Grammar School

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will increase the maximum allocation for the next academic year for the Churston grammar school, Churston, to 120 pupils as requested by the school.

Mr. Robin Squire: My right hon. Friend has not received a request to increase the standard number for Churston grammar school.

Primary School Teachers

Mrs. Ann Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many responses have been received to his draft circular on the initial training of primary school teachers issued on 9 June; how many of those responses were unfavourable; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Robin Squire: The consultation period on my right hon. Friend's draft circular on the initial training of primary teachers lasts until the end of July. We will consider the responses carefully before making announcements. We plan to issue the circular in its final form in the early autumn.

City Technology Colleges

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what rules cover the personal responsibility of governors of city technology colleges; whether members are required to declare interests; what statutory provision is made for public access to information about a college or its governors' proceedings; what charter provisions apply to their activities; and whether they are subject to performance indicators.

Mr. Forth: Governors of city technology colleges hold office under schemes of government—approved under the funding agreements for the colleges. Governors must declare an interest in respect of any contract in which they have an interest and may not vote on the matter. Like maintained schools, CTCs publish prospectuses and annual reports to parents and, as companies, their annual accounts are open to public inspection. In general, the provisions of the parents charter apply to the parents of pupils at CTCs, but CTCs are independent schools and the funding agreements for the colleges predate the charter. These funding agreements provide for the supply of information on performance indicators.

Governing Bodies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education from which categories the governing bodies of further education colleges and six-form colleges are obliged to appoint new members; what are the rules about the personal responsibility of members of the governing bodies of such colleges; if members are required to declare interest and whether a register of such interests is open to public inspection; what statutory provisions govern public access to information about a college and its governors' proceedings and for holding public meetings; to which provisions of the citizens charter or specific charters relating to their own activities they are subject; and what performance indicators are in place.

Mr. Boswell: Further education corporations were established on 30 September 1992 to conduct further education and sixth-form collegese. The composition of corporations is set out in their instrument of government, which has been prescribed by statutory instrument—1992 No. 1957 and 1992 No. 1963. New members are appointed as and when vacancies arise following the resignation, or completion of the terms of office, of existing members. The conduct of FE corporations is governed by their instruments and articles of government.

Colleges are not required to keep a register of members' interests, but corporation members are required, under the instrument of government, to declare any financial interest in the supply of work or goods to the institution or any contract concerning the institution. They must not take part in any discussions relating to a matter in which they have a financial interest nor may they vote on it. Minutes of corporation meetings are made available for inspection at the institution during normal office hours.

Governors will have a part to play in ensuring that their college meets the requirements of the forthcoming charter for further education and develops its own charter within the national framework set.

My right hon. Friend has asked the Further Education Funding Council to work with colleges on the development of performance indicators for the sector. At present, colleges collect and use whatever information they think necessary to assist them in assessing their performance. Later this year, the Department will be publishing comparative tables of the academic and vocational achievements of 16 to 18-year-olds in colleges in the further education sector, and colleges themselves will be required to publish comprehensive information on the achievements and career routes of their students.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what is the current total of grant-maintained

schools; what are the rules about the personal responsibility of members of the government bodies of such schools; whether members are required to declare interests; what statutory provision is made for public access to information about a school and the governors' proceedings; what charter provisions apply to their activities; and whether they are subject to performance indicators.

Mr. Robin Squire: A total of 493 schools have been incorporated as self-governing—grant-maintained—in England to date. A further 170 have been approved to become self governing. Grant-maintained schools in Wales are the responsibility of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales.

As in LEA schools, individual governors of self-governing schools are not normally personally liable for actions and decisions of the governing body. However, appeals committees members may be personally liable for the decisions they make. The Department recommends that governing bodies take out insurance against this contingency.

Members of governing bodies of self-governing schools are required by their instrument of government to declare any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any matter which is to be considered at a governing body meeting.

The articles of government of a self-governing school provide that a copy of each of the instruments and articles of government, the prospectus, the governors' annual report, the audited accounts for the previous school year and non-confidential parts of the minutes of meetings of the governing body must be made available for public inspection.

The parents charter makes a number of references to the responsibilities of self-governing schools' governing bodies. These responsibilities are set out in full in the schools' articles of government.

Requirements in respect of schools' performance apply equally to self-governing and local education authority-maintained schools.

Schools Funding Agency

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether the Schools Funding Agency, its chairperson and members will be subject to *(a)* surcharge, *(b)* investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner, *(c)* scrutiny by the National Audit Office, *(d)* statutory provisions for public access to information, *(e)* performance indicators and *(f)* provisions under the citizens charter; and whether the chairperson and members will be required to declare relevant interests, in a form available for inspection.

Mr. Robin Squire: The information is as follows:

	Declare interests
Surcharge	No
Investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner	No
Scrutiny by National Audit Office	Yes
Statutory provisions for public access to information	No
Performance indicators	Yes
Citizens' Charter	Presumed yes
Requirement to declare an interest	[1]Yes

[1] Availability to be considered

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to his answer of 6 July, *Official Report*, columns *95-96*, whether his Department maintains a register of the interests declared by chairpersons and board members of the executive non-departmental public bodies, available for inspection at his or at the main offices of the eight relevant bodies.

Mr. Boswell: As each of our non-departmental public bodies maintains a proper degree of operational independence, the Department does not recognise a need to maintain a central register giving these details. It is for the bodies themselves to decide whether to maintain records of their members' interests.

Drugs

Mr. Rathbone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps he intends to take to promote drugs education and prevention within the education system.

Mr. Forth: We will continue our policy of stimulating, encouraging and supporting work within schools and the youth service, with a view to ensuring that young people are made aware of the dangers of drug misuse, and are equipped with the attitudes and skills they need to resist pressures to use or misuse them. In addition, all maintained schools are already required to promote education about drugs as part of national curriculum science.

Pupil Exclusions

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to publish details of the number of pupils excluded from individual grant-maintained schools.

Mr. Forth: Information on permanent exclusions from maintained schools in England was collected by the Department over a two-year period, starting with summer term 1990, under the national exclusions reporting system. The results of the survey were published on 23 April and showed that a total of 6,743 permanent exlusions had been reported, with 2,910 in year one and 3,833 in year two. This information was collected for purposes of national aggregation and it is not possible to provide a breakdown of the figures by school or by sector because of assurances given as to confidentiality.

Further Education Funding Councils

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education if he will list the names of the members of the regional committees of the further education and higher education funding councils who have already been nominated, together with the regional committees to which no appointment has yet been made and the date on which any outstanding appointment will be made; which organisations were consulted on the appointments; and what was the form and nature of any such consultation.

Mr. Boswell *[pursuant to his reply, 16 June 1993, c. 599]:* I am pleased to announce the appointment of Lady Mary Holborow as chairman of the south-west regional committee of the Further Education Funding Council.

EMPLOYMENT

Devon and Cornwall TEC

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what proportion of trainees on courses sponsored by Devon and Cornwall training and enterprise council entered full-time employment in the year to March.

Miss Widdecombe: The latest full year for which figures are available is April 1991 to March 1992. During that year, 21 per cent. of those leaving employment training went into full-time employment and 7 per cent. into part-time employment. A further 11 per cent. undertook activities including training, full-time education, work experience or voluntary work.

Over the same period, 56 per cent. of those leaving youth training went into full-time employment and 4 per cent. into part-time employment. A further 12 per cent. went into other training or full-time education.

Training

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the latest information he has on the number of people who are participating on training courses which are supported by the European social fund; how many are operated by *(a)* training and enterprise councils and local enterprise companies, *(b)* local authorities and further education colleges and *(c)* voluntary organisations; how many people will benefit from ESF training courses in the current operational year; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: The latest information available on numbers of participants on European social fund—ESF—courses in 1993 organised by the three organisational sectors requested, is as follows:

Sector	*Beneficiaries*
Training and Enterprise Councils, Local Enterprise Companies (including Departmental programmes to help the unemployed):	692,000
Local Authorities/Further Education Colleges:	438,000
Voluntary sector:	106,000

Overall we currently expect some 1,308,000 people to benefit from ESF-funded training during 1993. This figure is likely to rise as further projects continue to be approved.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will make a further statement on the implementation of the training for work scheme.

Miss Widdecombe: Training for work became available from 29 March as a major part of the range of opportunities available to help people back to work. It is being delivered in all parts of the country by the network of training and enterprise councils.

Methyl Bromide

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what information he has on reported cases of *(a)* illness, *(b)* eye infections and *(c)* cases of skin damage directly related to contact with methyl bromide.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: In the period January 1987 to March 1993, a total of four cases of reported ill health, relating to two incidents, were confirmed by the pesticides incidents appraisal panel as being attributable to the use of methyl bromide.

Information has also been obtained from incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1986. Since these regulations came into force, five such cases have been reported. These included one case of nose irritation; one of respiratory irritation and neurological symptons; and one of acute irritant effects.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Miss Widdecombe: The Government continue to help small businesses through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

Measures operated by the Department to assist small businesses include:

The Business Start Up Scheme (formerly the Enterprise Allowance Scheme), which provides an allowance and training/counselling support in the early months of trading to unemployed people who start their own businesses. Its performance is measured in terms of numbers taking up support and the survival rate of these businesses. Around 50,000 people were awarded an allowance in 1991-92, and just over 40,000 in 1992-93. Survey evidence has consistently shown that of those people completing the full term of Enterprise Allowance, approximately 76 per cent. were still trading 6 months later (ie 18 months after start-up).

From April 1991, Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) have been delivering the Scheme and have enjoyed considerable local discretion in its design and selection criteria. They have been placing greater emphasis on increasing the quality of the businesses they support in order to improve survival. Evaluation studies assessing the performance of the Business Start Up Scheme have recently been completed and are expected to be published in due course.

The Department makes significant funds available to TECs to enable them to support the development of small businesses. TECs provide a varied range of help including consultancy support, advice and guidance and training audits. TECs increasingly are linking this support to achievement of the Investors in People national standard. Action materials to specifically help small businesses achieve the standard have been developed. Investors in People sets a standard for the training and development of people to achieve business objectives—a vital requirement for business, regardless of size. Of the 307 organisations which have met the standard so far, 179 are employers with less than 200 employees. There are over 3,300 employers committed to achieving the Standard, including many small businesses.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment (1) what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape;

(2) what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Miss Widdecombe: The Department aims to provide the general public with a wide range of information relating to employment and training. We ensure that important information is available in formats other than hard text to make it accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired. The decision about what is translated depends on the content and intended audience for the document. Some information is provided in direct translation, for example, the job seekers charter and leaflets on the Department's services, such as "Make It Work". The Department is most likely to produce translations of material that covers a summary of services or programmes rather than producing several versions of small leaflets. We can arrange for correspondence to be sent in Braille where it is requested.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1988 were not applied.

Miss Widdecombe: The Department currently contracts out a large proportion of its services and functions. To list them all would involve disproportionate cost. The application of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 depends upon the facts of each case. The regulations have not been treated as applying to any of the activities contracted out since November 1991.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and Agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Miss Widdecombe: The Employment Department group employs a total of 732 staff in the automatic data processing—ADP—functional specialism. A breakdown of staff numbers by grade within the Department and its agencies as in July 1993 is given in the table:

Employment Department Group
Numbers of staff by grade in ADP functional specialism (July 1993)

Part of group	*Grade*	*Number of staff*
Employment Department HQ (ED HQ)	SEO	60
	HEO	121
	EO	147
	AO	[1]29
	AA	[2]88
Employment Service (ES)	SEO	36
	HEO	76
	EO	106
	AO	2
	AA	nil
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	SEO	9
	HEO	21
	EO	37
	AO	nil
	AA	nil

[1]Includes 3 part-time staff.
[2]Includes 35 part-time staff.
19 full-time casual staff.
11 part-time casual staff.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Miss Widdecombe: The Employment Department group has employed a total of 299 computer consultancies involving 106 companies since November 1991, a list of these is given at annex A. The tasks for which they were engaged are listed in annex B. The total cost of these consultancies to the Department amounts to:

	£
Employment Department Head Quarters (EDHQ)	4,197,139
Employment Service (ES)	5,530,503
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	655,824
Total	10,383,466

Annex A
Employment department group
List of computer consultancies since November 1991

Company	*Number of contracts* ED HQ	ES	HSE
451 Computer Services	1	—	—
ACT Logsys	3	3	1
Admiral Management Services	3	1	—
Amtec	—	1	2
Andersons	—	4	—
Ansley Gutherie	1	—	—
Arena Resources	7	—	—
Ashberry	2	—	—
ASK Ingres	2	—	—
Atlantic	—	4	—
BIS Information Systems Ltd.	1	1	—
Bull HN Information Systems Ltd.	—	—	1
C. Newton Associates	—	1	—
CAS	—	1	—
CCC	—	1	—
Class	—	1	—
Compel Systems Ltd.	—	—	2
Computer Associates	—	2	—
Computer People	2	—	—
Computer Search and Select	2	—	—
Comtex UK Ltd.	—	—	1
Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte	2	3	—
CPI	—	5	—
CSS Trident	3	—	—
Data Sciences	—	1	—
Dataflex	1	—	—
DBI Associates	5	11	—
Derengrove	1	—	—
Digital Equipment Co. Ltd.	4	—	2
Disc Europe	—	—	1
E. Bingham	2	—	—
Easams	4	1	—
EFD Total System Consultants	1	—	—
Elan	1	—	—
Emslie Phelps	2	—	—

Company	Number of contracts ED HQ	ES	HSE
Ernst and Young	16	2	—
Executor	1	1	—
Fl Kernal	2	—	—
Franklin	1	—	—
Future Dimension	4	—	—
Hewlett Packard Ltd	—	—	1
HI-BROW	—	1	—
Hoskyns Group	3	2	2
Human Factors Consultancy	1	—	—
Hunterskill Limited	4	—	—
ICL	1	—	1
Ingres	2	1	—
ISM	—	3	—
Keisley Harris	—	—	1
Kermon	1	—	—
Kernal Technology	2	—	—
Kinesis	—	—	3
Inference (Europe)	4	—	—
IQ Software	1	—	—
LA International	1	—	—
IBMS	—	—	1
Logica	3	—	—
London HCI	—	1	—
Look Systems	1	—	—
Lorien	4	3	—
M Brookes	1	—	—
Marcol	2	—	—
Michael Gore	—	1	—
MSW	—	—	3
Myriad	—	4	—
Novatek Limited	1	—	—
Olivetti	1	—	—
Oracle	—	1	3
PA Consulting	3	6	—
Pactum	1	—	—
PE International	7	—	—
Perfect Recall	2	—	—
Portfolio Systems Ltd	1	—	—
Price Waterhouse	1	4	—
Prospective Technica	1	1	—
Puretrans	1	—	—
Quadraton	13	—	—
Quality Projects	—	—	2
Quando	—	1	—
RCMS	—	—	1
South Yorks SAT Systems	—	1	—
Sapphire	—	2	—
SBS	—	2	—
Scientific and Business Systems	8	—	—
Sema Group	1	2	—
Sheffield Hallam	—	1	—
SIA Langton Ltd	1	—	—
Silkglade	2	—	—
Software Sciences	—	1	—
Span Computer Contracts	2	—	—
Staffwise	2	—	—
System Applied Technology	1	—	—
Tailor Made Software	—	1	—
Tamar Computer Services	1	—	—
Task Force	—	1	—
Traid	2	—	—
Trainvalue	1	—	—
Trident	1	—	—
Unicorn Training Partnership	2	1	—
UNIX System Labs	—	1	—
Xentec Limited	4	—	—
V Keehan	1	—	—
VNG	—	2	—
World Systems	—	2	—
WS Atkins	1	—	—
Yale Data	16	—	—
Total	184	87	28

Annex B

Employment Department Group
List of tasks undertaken by computer consultants since November 1991

Task	ED HQ	ES	HSE
Analysis and programming	•	•	—
Audit	—	—	•
Contract advice	—	—	•
Data management	—	•	—
Database management/administration	•	—	—
Evaluation	—	—	•
Hardware testing	—	•	—
Help desk	—	•	—
Human computer interface	—	•	—
Infrastructure	—	•	—
IT strategy consultancy/advice	•	•	•
Market testing	—	•	—
Micro installation	—	•	—
Networking	—	•	—
Plans review	—	•	—
Procurement	—	•	—
Project management	•	—	•
Project review	—	•	—
Project support	—	•	—
Quality assurance analysis	•	•	—
Quality assurance analysis	•	—	—
Quality audit	—	•	—
Risk assessment	—	•	—
Scoping study	—	•	—
Security	—	•	—
Service level agreements	—	•	—
Service management	—	•	—
Software development	—	•	—
System analysis	•	—	—
System design/development	•	•	•
System testing	—	•	—
Technical accountancy	•	—	—
Technical authorship	•	—	—
Technical training	•	•	—
Telecomms	—	•	—
TPM	—	•	—
Unit costing	—	•	—
Voice cabling	—	•	—

Executive Staff

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list the number of executive staff employed in his Department in *(a)* Scotland and *(b)* the United Kingdom in the current year, and in each of the previous five years.

Miss Widdecombe: The information available is given in the table. Information is not readily available in the form requested before 1989:

	Executive staff employed in Scotland	Executive staff employed in the United Kingdom
1993	1,945	22,334
1992	1,902	22,238
1991	2,047	19,833
1990	2,106	20,360
1989	2,066	20,407

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Miss Widdecombe: The following public bodies hold meetings in public:

Industrial Tribunals
Employment Appeal Tribunal
Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal
Central Arbitration Committee (for hearings into complaints about non disclosure of information).

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment, pursuant to his reply of 6 July, *Official Report*, columns *107-8*, whether he takes into account the interests of chairpersons and members of the boards of executive non-departmental public bodies when making appointments to these bodies; and what steps he takes to identify relevant interests.

Miss Widdecombe: Yes, appropriate steps are taken to avoid a conflict of interests, depending on the appointment.

Earnings

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment on average in terms of percentage how much female *(a)* part-time and *(b)* full-time workers earn; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: Information on the earnings of female part-time and full-time workers can be found in table 19 of part A of the new earnings survey, the 1992 edition of which can be found in the Library. Part A of the 1993 new earnings survey will be published in September.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment (1) what were the figures for average weekly earnings for *(a)* males and *(b)* females in (i) Scotland, (ii) Wales and (iii) England for 1979 and the latest year for which figures are available;

(2) what were the figures for average weekly earnings for *(a)* males in manual work, *(b)* males in non-manual work, *(c)* females in manual work and *(d)* females in non-manual work in (i) Scotland, (ii) Wales and (iii) England for 1979 and the latest year for which figures are available.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The information requested is published in tables 12 and 13 of part A of the new earnings survey for 1979 and 1992.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what were the figures for average hourly earnings for *(a)* males and *(b)* females in (i) Scotland, (ii) Wales and (iii) England for 1979 and for the latest year for which figures are available.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The information requested is published in tables 122 and 123 of part E of the new earnings survey for 1979 and 1992.

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Leeds, West (Mr. Battle) of 15 July, *Official Report*, columns 608-12, if he will provide for Scotland, Wales and each English region equivalent figures on earnings to those given in his answer.

Miss Widdecombe *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* Information available from the new earnings survey can be found in the following tables.

Average gross weekly earnings of part-time employees on adult rates-pay unaffected by absence: April 1992

	Manual (£)	Non-manual (£)
Greater London	87·7	127·5
South East	77·7	113·1
South West	67·9	97·2
West Midlands	71·0	100·8
East Midlands	70·1	95·1
Yorkshire/Humberside	70·8	97·2
North West	75·0	100·7
North	69·1	93·0
Scotland	70·7	108·1
Wales	69·4	101·5

Full time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence
Proportion with gross weekly earnings including overtime below the following amounts: April 1992

	Greater London	South East	East Anglia	South West	West Midlands	East Midlands
Manual men						
£100	0·6	0·5	0·9	0·7	0·6	0·8
£150	5·1	5·9	7·1	9·6	8·3	9·0
£200	16·4	20·6	27·1	31·2	27·8	28·9
£250	35·7	41·8	52·7	55·7	52·7	53·4
Non Manual men						
£100	0·4	0·3	0·7	0·4	0·7	0·4
£150	1·7	2·4	4·5	4·6	4·2	4·3
£200	6·7	8·7	13·7	13·1	14·1	15·1
£250	15·1	17·8	27·9	26·2	26·6	28·3
Manual women						
£100	3·1	4·6	6·1	8·0	7·8	6·8
£150	22·6	32·2	50·4	49·0	49·0	52·6
£200	53·3	63·5	81·1	79·9	79·5	82·7
£250	74·8	81·2	93·6	91·5	92·9	91·9
Non Manual women						
£100	0·4	0·7	0·9	1·8	1·4	1·6
£150	3·3	6·8	16·4	17·0	18·7	17·2
£200	14·5	24·5	47·4	46·0	50·1	47·1
£250	34·0	45·6	65·9	64·8	67·2	65·1

	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West	North	Scotland	Wales
Manual men					
£100	0·8	0·5	0·8	0·4	0·7
£150	8·1	8·0	8·3	8·0	9·9
£200	27·0	27·5	25·9	27·1	31·4

	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West	North	Scotland	Wales
£250	50·5	51·0	50·6	52·4	54·1
Non Manual men					
£100	0·8	0·4	0·5	0·4	0·5
£150	5·5	4·8	4·5	5·5	5·2
£200	16·1	14·6	13·6	15·2	15·4
£250	28·9	25·0	25·2	26·2	28·3
Manual women					
£100	8·3	9·2	5·3	6·4	7·6
£150	52·9	46·8	47·7	47·6	48·8
£200	80·1	79·0	76·7	78·6	81·4
£250	92·6	91·5	92·6	91·7	94·4
Non Manual women					
£100	1·4	1·2	1·7	1·3	2·1
£150	19·3	16·5	18·7	18·8	18·7
£200	47·7	45·7	48·6	47·8	46·4
£250	65·8	63·8	65·6	65·3	65·8

Full time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence
Proportion with gross weekly earnings excluding overtime below the following amounts: April 1992

	Greater London	South East	East Anglia	South West	West Midlands	East Midlands
Manual men						
£100	0·7	0·7	1·0	0·8	0·7	1·1
£150	6·9	8·2	11·8	14·0	13·0	14·5
£200	24·6	30·8	41·8	45·2	40·6	43·8
£250	50·6	58·7	71·4	72·7	69·3	71·6
Non Manual men						
£100	0·4	0·3	0·9	0·4	0·7	0·4
£150	1·9	2·8	5·4	5·5	5·0	5·5
£200	7·5	10·1	16·5	17·5	16·4	17·3
£250	17·4	20·3	31·5	29·0	29·9	31·7
Manual women						
£100	3·2	5·1	7·6	8·5	8·6	7·0
£150	26·0	37·2	54·5	53·8	53·8	58·2
£200	60·0	70·7	88·3	86·5	85·9	88·4
£250	81·3	87·2	98·1	95·0	95·7	96·6
Non Manual women						
£100	0·4	0·7	0·9	2·1	1·4	1·6
£150	3·6	7·4	17·7	18·3	20·3	18·6
£200	15·7	26·3	49·1	48·3	52·0	48·9
£250	35·8	47·5	68·2	66·8	69·0	66·8

	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West	North	Scotland	Wales
Manual men					
£100	0·9	0·6	1·0	0·5	0·9
£150	13·6	12·2	12·1	12·7	14·8
£200	42·2	42·3	37·9	42·6	44·0
£250	69·5	68·3	66·2	70·0	69·9
Non Manual men					
£100	0·8	0·5	0·5	0·4	0·7
£150	6·6	5·6	5·5	6·4	6·3
£200	18·8	17·2	15·6	17·1	18·0
£250	32·0	28·0	28·2	29·1	31·2
Manual women					
£100	9·1	9·8	7·2	7·3	8·1
£150	58·3	52·3	53·3	52·7	55·1
£200	87·6	84·6	82·8	84·8	86·3
£250	97·3	95·3	95·3	95·2	96·3
Non Manual women					
£100	1·5	1·3	1·8	1·5	2·4

	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West	North	Scotland	Wales
£150	20·4	17·9	19·9	20·7	20·4
£200	49·9	48·2	51·3	50·1	48·0
£250	67·6	65·7	67·9	66·9	66·6

Full time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence
Proportion with gross hourly earnings excluding overtime below the following amounts: April 1992

	Greater London	South East	East Anglia	South West	West Midlands	East Midlands
Manual men						
£2·50	0·5	0·4	0·6	0·7	0·7	0·9
£3·00	1·7	1·5	2·1	2·8	2·6	3·3
£3·50	3·9	4·5	5·5	7·7	7·8	8·5
£4·00	8·5	10·9	17·3	19·0	16·7	18·4
£4·50	14·9	19·2	28·0	30·3	25·9	29·1
£5·00	23·2	29·2	41·2	42·7	27·0	40·5
£5·50	31·0	39·4	53·3	54·9	49·1	53·6
£6·50	51·3	59·8	72·4	72·2	69·0	71·9
Non Manual men						
£2·50	0·2	0·2	0·6	0·2	0·4	0·4
£3·00	0·4	0·5	1·3	0·9	1·1	0·9
£3·50	0·9	1·4	3·2	2·9	3·1	3·2
£4·00	1·8	3·1	6·6	6·0	6·2	6·3
£4·50	3·4	5·5	10·4	10·1	9·7	10·5
£5·00	5·6	8·4	15·1	15·0	14·8	15·3
£5·50	8·5	11·7	21·2	20·6	20·5	21·0
£6·50	15·5	19·4	31·1	28·5	31·0	32·0
Manual women						
£2·50	2·9	3·2	3·3	2·4	4·4	3·2
£3·00	6·8	8·5	15·0	15·2	16·4	16·4
£3·50	17·2	21·9	37·0	36·6	35·5	39·5
£4·00	27·1	39·0	57·3	55·1	54·9	61·2
£4·50	42·0	54·1	72·8	69·8	68·9	75·1
£5·00	56·8	67·1	85·8	81·8	80·9	84·4
£5·50	69·6	76·7	89·0	89·1	88·5	90·6
£6·50	82·3	88·3	97·2	94·5	95·9	96·2
Non Manual men						
£2·50	0·3	0·3	0·3	0·7	0·5	0·6
£3·00	0·5	0·8	1·5	2·5	2·6	2·4
£3·50	1·4	3·1	8·6	8·7	9·0	8·8
£4·00	3·3	6·8	16·5	16·4	18·7	17·5
£4·50	6·1	12·3	27·1	25·7	29·8	28·0
£5·00	10·3	19·1	40·8	38·8	43·5	40·0
£5·50	15·4	26·8	52·9	49·2	54·2	50·5
£6·50	29·3	42·3	67·6	63·5	67·1	64·6

	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West	North	Scotland	Wales
Manual men					
£2·50	0·8	0·4	0·9	0·7	0·7
£3·00	2·6	2·6	2·8	2·3	2·7
£3·50	7·3	7·3	7·7	7·5	8·3
£4·00	17·2	16·0	14·9	17·0	17·3
£4·50	27·9	27·0	23·6	28·4	28·1
£5·00	39·6	38·4	34·0	39·9	40·7
£5·50	52·4	50·1	46·1	52·5	52·9
£6·50	70·7	68·4	66·3	70·8	69·1
Non manual men					
£2·50	0·5	0·3	0·4	0·2	0·5
£3·00	1·2	1·0	1·1	1·0	1·4
£3·50	4·0	3·0	3·5	3·5	3·8
£4·00	7·5	5·8	7·0	7·1	7·4
£4·50	11·3	9·7	10·0	10·5	11·9
£5·00	16·8	14·6	14·1	15·1	15·8
£5·50	22·0	19·3	19·0	20·3	21·5
£6·50	32·1	27·8	27·7	29·9	31·6

	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West	North	Scotland	Wales
Manual women					
£2·50	3·2	5·2	4·4	3·5	3·3
£3·00	17·5	17·3	17·5	16·6	14·6
£3·50	41·0	35·1	37·7	37·6	34·1
£4·00	59·3	52·9	56·7	54·4	56·9
£4·50	72·1	68·0	69·5	69·9	70·2
£5·00	82·5	79·8	79·3	81·0	81·0
£5·50	90·2	87·0	86·2	89·9	87·5
£6·50	97·1	94·8	95·6	94·9	95·7
Non manual women					
£2·50	0·8	0·5	1·2	0·6	0·8
£3·00	3·0	2·7	3·5	2·3	3·6
£3·50	10·7	7·9	10·2	10·1	9·6
£4·00	19·3	15·3	19·9	18·3	17·4
£4·50	30·3	25·4	30·9	28·6	28·9
£5·00	40·8	36·6	43·2	38·9	39·0
£5·50	51·1	47·9	55·1	50·9	48·5
£6·50	65·9	62·7	69·1	63·9	64·2

Part time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence
Proportion with gross hourly earnings excluding overtime below the following amounts: April 1992

	Greater London	South East	East Anglia	South West	West Midlands	East Midlands
Manual men						
£2·50	—	—	—	12·1	—	20·0
£3·00	—	—	—	29·0	—	36·7
£3·50	—	—	—	53·2	—	64·4
£4·00	—	—	—	70·2	—	75·6
£4·50	—	—	—	77·4	—	86·7
£5·00	—	—	—	80·6	—	88·9
£5·50	—	—	—	89·5	—	94·4
£6·50	—	—	—	91·9	—	97·8
Non manual men						
£2·50	—	—	—	—	—	—
£3·00	—	—	—	—	—	—
£3·50	—	—	—	—	—	—
£4·00	—	—	—	—	—	—
£4·50	—	—	—	—	—	—
£5·00	—	—	—	—	—	—
£5·50	—	—	—	—	—	—
£6·50	—	—	—	—	—	—
Manual women						
£2·50	3·2	6·1	5·0	7·7	7·1	8·2
£3·00	9·2	14·9	18·6	26·6	26·9	26·5
£3·50	18·9	37·6	47·3	59·6	58·9	60·6
£4·00	32·8	57·4	63·2	76·2	80·9	74·7
£4·50	60·7	75·9	70·9	84·9	87·4	82·7
£5·00	77·6	85·9	79·5	91·7	92·8	90·4
£5·50	86·2	91·5	82·9	95·7	95·8	93·1
£6·50	93·3	96·2	89·1	97·8	98·2	96·5
Non manual women						
£2·50	1·6	1·7	1·9	1·5	2·7	1·6
£3·00	3·0	4·0	6·7	6·4	8·4	6·1
£3·50	8·2	16·2	22·7	29·8	31·1	29·5
£4·00	15·9	28·7	37·9	43·9	44·6	46·6
£4·50	28·7	42·3	54·5	56·7	57·0	58·3
£5·00	41·0	54·2	67·1	66·9	66·5	70·6
£5·50	48·9	62·6	74·0	73·6	73·1	77·5
£6·50	64·0	74·3	83·5	82·7	81·6	85·3

	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West	North	Scotland	Wales
Manual men					
£2·50	11·1	9·8	—	—	—
£3·00	34·3	30·3	—	—	—
£3·50	58·6	47·5	—	—	—
£4·00	69·7	63·1	—	—	—
£4·50	75·8	72·1	—	—	—
£5·00	85·9	79·5	—	—	—
£5·50	89·9	85·2	—	—	—
£6·50	94·9	91·8	—	—	—
Non manual men					
£2·50	—	—	—	—	—
£3·00	—	—	—	—	—
£3·50	—	—	—	—	—
£4·00	—	—	—	—	—
£4·50	—	—	—	—	—
£5·00	—	—	—	—	—
£5·50	—	—	—	—	—
£6·50	—	—	—	—	—
Manual women					
£2·50	5·5	6·5	5·8	6·5	—
£3·00	23·9	20·7	27·1	25·2	—
£3·50	49·8	51·8	65·1	58·1	—
£4·00	74·7	73·1	81·4	77·6	—
£4·50	84·6	83·6	87·3	87·7	—
£5·00	91·7	90·0	92·8	93·6	—
£5·50	95·0	94·0	94·6	95·3	—
£6·50	97·5	96·9	96·2	97·4	—
Non manual women					
£2·50	2·5	1·7	2·2	2·9	3·7
£3·00	7·6	6·1	7·7	7·2	8·6
£3·50	28·7	28·1	32·1	29·3	33·3
£4·00	45·1	40·7	44·7	38·4	47·4
£4·50	58·4	55·4	54·6	51·1	58·2
£5·00	68·7	64·9	66·1	59·3	67·0
£5·50	76·2	72·6	75·4	67·4	73·9
£6·50	84·7	81·5	85·3	77·6	82·4

Full time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence
Proportion with gross hourly earnings including overtime below the following amounts: April 1992

	Greater London	South East	East Anglia	South West	West Midlands	East Midlands
Manual men						
£2·50	0·4	0·4	0·4	0·7	0·6	0·7
£3·00	1·6	1·5	1·9	2·6	2·4	2·8
£3·50	3·7	4·0	4·5	6·8	6·6	6·9
£4·00	7·6	9·2	12·8	15·7	14·1	14·7
£4·50	13·2	16·7	24·0	27·1	23·2	25·5
£5·00	21·2	26·5	37·5	39·2	33·8	36·6
£5·50	29·4	36·5	49·1	51·5	46·4	49·8
£6·50	49·9	57·3	69·6	70·0	66·5	69·1
Non Manual men						
£2·50	0·2	0·2	0·6	0·2	0·4	0·4
£3·00	0·4	0·4	1·2	0·9	1·1	0·9
£3·50	0·9	1·3	3·0	2·8	2·9	2·8
£4·00	1·7	2·9	6·2	5·6	5·9	5·9
£4·50	3·2	5·2	9·8	9·7	9·2	10·1
£5·00	5·3	8·0	14·7	14·1	14·2	14·8
£5·50	8·3	11·3	20·3	19·9	19·6	20·1
£6·50	14·8	18·7	29·5	27·9	30·0	30·8
Manual women						
£2·50	2·7	2·9	2·8	2·4	4·2	3·0
£3·00	6·5	8·1	12·6	14·4	15·9	15·8
£3·50	15·8	20·5	35·4	34·8	34·2	37·6
£4·00	25·8	36·8	54·5	53·8	53·4	59·5
£4·50	41·1	52·5	71·1	67·4	67·6	73·5
£5·00	56·1	66·1	82·9	80·6	79·9	83·6
£5·50	68·3	75·4	88·6	88·1	88·1	89·9
£6·00	81·7	87·6	95·9	94·5	95·6	95·8
Non Manual women						
£2·50	0·2	0·3	0·3	0·7	0·4	0·5
£3·00	0·5	0·8	1·5	2·3	2·5	2·3
£3·50	1·4	3·1	8·5	8·5	8·6	8·7

	Greater London	South East	East Anglia	South West	West Midlands	East Midlands
£4·00	3·2	6·6	16·6	16·0	18·3	17·1
£4·50	6·0	12·0	26·6	25·3	29·4	27·6
£5·00	10·2	18·8	40·4	38·1	42·9	39·4
£5·50	15·4	26·5	52·5	48·7	53·4	49·9
£6·50	28·8	41·8	66·9	62·7	66·4	64·2

	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West	North	Scotland	Wales
Manual men					
£2·50	0·6	0·4	0·8	0·6	0·5
£3·00	2·3	2·2	2·6	1·9	2·3
£3·50	6·1	6·3	6·5	6·4	7·2
£4·00	13·8	13·2	13·0	13·5	14·6
£4·50	24·1	23·3	21·6	24·2	25·2
£5·00	36·0	34·7	31·5	36·1	36·9
£5·50	48·2	46·9	43·9	49·6	49·9
£6·50	67·6	66·1	64·1	67·6	66·9
Non manual men					
£2·50	0·5	0·3	0·4	0·2	0·4
£3·00	1·0	0·9	1·1	1·0	1·1
£3·50	3·6	2·9	3·1	3·3	3·5
£4·00	6·9	5·4	6·9	6·5	7·1
£4·50	10·6	9·1	9·5	9·8	11·3
£5·00	16·0	14·0	13·6	14·3	15·3
£5·50	21·3	18·7	17·8	19·5	20·7
£6·50	31·2	26·9	26·7	29·0	30·9
Manual women					
£2·50	3·0	5·0	4·2	3·2	3·3
£3·00	16·6	16·2	17·5	16·0	14·4
£3·50	39·5	33·9	37·2	35·8	31·7
£4·00	57·5	51·2	55·2	52·6	53·7
£4·50	69·6	67·0	68·2	68·2	68·6
£5·00	80·9	78·7	78·8	79·6	79·7
£5·50	89·3	85·8	85·2	88·9	87·3
£6·50	96·2	94·4	95·6	94·7	95·7
Non manual women					
£2·50	0·8	0·5	1·2	0·5	0·7
£3·00	2·9	2·5	3·4	2·3	3·6
£3·50	10·3	7·6	10·0	9·4	9·2
£4·00	19·1	14·8	19·4	17·8	17·3
£4·50	30·1	25·2	30·3	28·1	28·2
£5·00	40·3	35·9	42·0	38·4	38·4
£5·50	50·6	47·0	53·6	49·8	48·1
£6·50	65·3	62·1	68·6	63·6	63·9

Part time employees on adult rates—pay unaffected by absence
Proportion with gross hourly earnings including overtime below the following amounts: April 1992

	Greater London	South East	East Anglia	South West	West Midlands	East Midlands
Manual men						
£2·50	—	—	—	11·3	—	20·0
£3·00	—	—	—	28·2	—	36·7
£3·50	—	—	—	54·0	—	64·4
£4·00	—	—	—	70·2	—	75·6
£4·50	—	—	—	77·4	—	85·6
£5·00	—	—	—	80·6	—	88·9
£5·50	—	—	—	89·5	—	94·4
£6·50	—	—	—	91·1	—	98·9
Non Manual men						
£2·50	—	—	—	—	—	—
£3·00	—	—	—	—	—	—
£3·50	—	—	—	—	—	—
£4·00	—	—	—	—	—	—
£4·50	—	—	—	—	—	—
£5·00	—	—	—	—	—	—
£5·50	—	—	—	—	—	—
£6·50	—	—	—	—	—	—

	Greater London	South East	East Anglia	South West	West Midlands	East Midlands
Manual women						
£2·50	3·4	6·0	5·0	7·5	7·0	8·2
£3·00	9·2	14·7	17·8	26·0	26·6	26·3
£3·50	18·6	37·1	46·5	59·8	58·8	59·6
£4·00	32·1	56·7	62·4	75·6	80·3	74·2
£4·50	60·6	75·9	70·9	85·6	87·3	82·4
£5·00	76·8	85·9	79·5	92·6	92·5	90·6
£5·50	86·2	91·7	83·3	95·5	95·8	93·1
£6·50	93·3	96·4	89·5	97·7	98·2	96·5
Non Manual women						
£2·50	1·6	1·7	1·7	1·5	2·7	1·5
£3·00	3·0	4·0	6·5	6·2	8·3	5·9
£3·50	8·1	16·0	21·9	29·8	30·9	28·1
£4·00	15·5	28·4	37·2	43·7	45·0	46·0
£4·50	28·8	42·1	54·8	56·7	56·8	58·0
£5·00	41·0	54·1	67·3	66·9	66·5	70·4
£5·50	48·7	62·6	74·0	73·9	73·2	77·7
£6·50	63·9	74·4	83·3	82·6	81·7	85·4

	Yorkshire/ Humberside	North West	North	Scotland	Wales
Manual men					
£2·50	11·1	9·0	—	—	—
£3·00	34·3	29·5	—	—	—
£3·50	58·6	48·4	—	—	—
£4·00	69·7	61·5	—	—	—
£4·50	76·8	73·0	—	—	—
£5·00	85·9	80·3	—	—	—
£5·50	89·9	86·1	—	—	—
£6·50	96·0	91·8	—	—	—
Non manual men					
£2·50	—	—	—	—	—
£3·00	—	—	—	—	—
£3·50	—	—	—	—	—
£4·00	—	—	—	—	—
£4·50	—	—	—	—	—
£5·00	—	—	—	—	—
£5·50	—	—	—	—	—
£6·50	—	—	—	—	—
Manual women					
£2·50	5·5	6·5	5·6	6·6	—
£3·00	23·2	20·5	26·9	25·3	—
£3·50	49·6	51·4	64·9	58·0	—
£4·00	74·5	71·8	81·2	76·9	—
£4·50	84·6	83·0	87·5	87·6	—
£5·00	92·2	90·2	92·4	93·4	—
£5·50	95·5	93·3	94·2	95·3	—
£6·50	97·7	97·1	96·4	97·4	—
Non manual women					
£2·50	2·5	1·6	2·2	2·9	3·7
£3·00	7·3	5·8	7·5	7·4	8·6
£3·50	28·5	27·3	31·0	28·1	32·7
£4·00	44·5	40·5	44·4	37·7	47·7
£4·50	58·2	55·5	54·9	50·5	58·4
£5·50	76·2	72·8	75·6	67·3	74·5
£6·50	84·7	81·5	85·2	77·7	82·4

Maternity Rights

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment when his Department intends to implement the maternity rights provisions of the Trade Union and Employment Rights Acts 1993.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The provisions will be commenced by October 1994, as the EC pregnant workers directive requiries.

Unemployment, East Midlands

Mr. Heppell: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many people in the east midlands have been unemployed for a year or longer.

Miss Widdecombe: In April 1993 and on the unadjusted basis, 65,699 claimants had been unemployed for over a year in the east midlands region.

In winter 1992-93, also on the unadjusted basis, the number unemployed over a year according to the International Labour Organisation definition stood at 73,000.

Training and Enterprise Councils

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what percentage of people in Rochdale who have completed TEC-run training courses entered full-time employment in each of the last two years.

Miss Widdecombe: The information is given in the table:

Youth training/employment training—percentage of those completing their training entering full-time employment
Rochdale training and enterprise council April 1990 to September 1992

	Youth training[1] *Per cent.*	*Employment training Per cent.*
April 1990 to March 1991	76	41
April 1991 to March 1992	74	n/a
April 1992 to September 1992	61	n/a

Source: YT follow-up survey, ET follow-up survey.
Notes:
[1] Includes Youth Training and Youth Credits, April 1991 to September 1992 information is provisional.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what has been the total gross public expenditure on training and enterprise councils for each year since 1989-90, and projected expenditure for the years up to 1995-96, in 1991-92 prices.

Miss Widdecombe: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library.

Employment Statistics

Mr. Roy Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what assessment he has made of the methods used in the compiling of employment statistics.

Miss Widdecombe: A thorough review of the methods used in compiling employment statistics was conducted by the Department in 1988. As a result, my predecessors authorised a number of initiatives to improve the quality of the statistics. These included the introduction of a quarterly labour force survey in 1992; the first full census of employers for 12 years, in September this year; and the co-development with the Central Statistical Office of a new register of businesses which will be fully operational in 1995.

Pit Closures

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will make a statement on the level of unemployment in the travel-to-work areas where collieries have closed; and what initiatives the Government are currently taking to provide jobs in those areas.

Miss Widdecombe: Between January and June 1993, claimant unemployment fell in all those travel-to-work areas containing collieries where British Coal has ceased operations since October 1992.

The Government have made available £75 million to training and enterprise councils and the Employment Service to provide a range of training, job search and other measures to help the unemployed people affected. This £75 million forms part of a larger £200 million package of assistance involving the Employment Department, the Department of Trade and Industry, British Coal Enterprise, English Estates and other Government agencies.

Social Chapter

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what discussions he has had with his European counterparts on the social chapter.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The social chapter has not been a major topic in discussions with European Ministers. The interpretation, the extent and the use of the agreement of 11 on social policy are essentially matters for those member states who signed it.

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list the publication, including details of price and availability, containing the text of *(a)* the social chapter, *(b)* the social charter signed by 11 Heads of State or Government at Strasbourg in 1979, *(c)* the social protocol and attached agreement and *(d)* documents referred to in texts *(a)* to *(c)* above or necessary for construing them; and if he will state for each document its publication date and the authority for its publication.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library.

Social Charter

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment, pursuant to his answer of 22 July, at column *295*, if he will now publish the text of the social charter signed in Strasbourg on 9 December 1989 by 11 member states of the European Community, together with a schedule of the consequential draft on effective regulations and directives with accompanying information concerning relevant security reports, debates and implementation.

Miss Widdecombe: The text of the social charter was annexed to the unnumbered explanatory memorandum submitted to the parliamentary scrutiny Committees by the Employment Department on 24 November 1989. The text of each Commission proposal under the social action programme has been deposited in Parliament and explanatory memoranda in each case have been prepared for the scrutiny Committees. All the information requested by the hon. Member is therefore already in the public domain.

Unemployment, South-east Essex

Dr. Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what intiatives he is taking to assist the long-term unemployed in south-east Essex.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Long-term unemployed people in south-east Essex have access to a range of opportunities specifically aimed to give them the help they need to get back to work. These include Restart, job clubs, the job interview guarantee, training for work, and job plan workshops.

We have also recently introduced learning for work, community action and an expanded business start-up scheme for long-term unemployed people which are just a part of the 1·6 million opportunities available nationally this year through the Employment Service and training and enterprise councils to help unemployed people find the best route back to employment. This is an increase of about 600,000 opportunities on last year.

Sickness Certification

Mr. Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what assessment he has made of the extent to which staff of the Employment Service have encouraged fit, unemployed persons to seek sickness certification from their general practitioners as an alternative to registering for employment; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The chief executive of the Employment Service has assured me that Employment Service staff do not encourage fit, unemployed persons to seek sickness certification from their GPs. Only where clients raise doubts about their fitness and capability for work, and are willing to seek further advice from their GP will advisers suggest that they do so. If the Employment Service has doubts about their capability for work, but the client does not wish to seek further medical advice their claim will be taken and referred to the independent adjudicating authority for a decision on entitlement to an unemployment benefit.

Accident Victims (Retraining)

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what research has been undertaken by his Department into effective methods of retraining accident victims.

Miss Widdecombe: The Department has undertaken no national research specifically relating to retraining accident victims.

People with disabilities, including those whose disabilities arise from accidents, have priority under a wide range of employment and training programmes including training for work and, where eligible, learning for work and community action.

People with disabilities retain their priority status throughout their period of unemployment, or until they have entered each one of our main programmes.

Labour Market

Dr. Liam Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what measures he intends to take to improve the workings of the British labour market.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The aim of the Department is to support economic growth by promoting a competitive, efficient and flexible labour market. We have already taken steps to achieve this through step-by-step reforms of industrial relations and trade union law, through deregulation to reduce burdens on business and increase choice and opportunities for individuals, by encouraging training and enterprise, and by helping and requiring unemployed people actively to seek work. We need to maintain these policies if United Kingdom business is to remain competitive.

Health and Safety at Work

Mr. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will consolidate the current statutory instruments on health and safety at work.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 18 May 1993, *Official Report*, column *129*.

Young People

Mr. Bill Michie: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what proportion of 16 and 17-year-olds are in full-time employment.

Miss Widdecombe: The latest available estimates, not seasonally adjusted, from winter 1992-93 labour force survey shows that 12 per cent. of 16 and 17-year-olds in Great Britain were in full-time employment. Seventy per cent. of this age group were in full-time education.

Miss Lestor: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what number of 16 and 17-year-olds are currently without a job, a place in higher education or a place on a training scheme.

Miss Widdecombe: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment, pursuant to the oral answer of 16 February, *Official Report*, column 116, what information is available from the labour force survey about the number of those aged 16 and 17-year-olds unemployed according to the International Labour Organisation definition in autumn 1992 and winter 1992-93; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: The available information appeared in a feature article in the July 1993 *Employment Gazette* —"Economic Activity of 16 and 17 year olds", table 1, page 308.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what plans he has to increase training provision and other employment measures for young people in Hartlepool.

Miss Widdecombe: Teesside training and enterprise council has a wide range of measures in place to help young people in Hartlepool, including the guarantee of a place on youth training.

Dr. Twinn: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what initiatives his Department is taking to improve career opportunities for young people in London.

Miss Widdecombe: Youth training and training credits are available to young people through training and enterprise councils in London, as elsewhere. These offer a

wide range of training opportunities which will enhance and improve the career opportunities of those young people participating.

Training and enterprise councils will also continue to work in collaboration with the careers service to further develop new and innovative training opportunities for young people.

Mr. Eric Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what number of 16 and 17-year-olds are currently without a job, a place in higher education or a place on a training scheme.

Miss Widdecombe: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library.

Women in Management

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what initiatives he has encouraged to improve opportunities for women to progress into senior management positions.

Miss Widdecombe: I am convinced that every woman with the necessary inclination, ambition and ability should be allowed a fair and equal opportunity to progress to the highest level possible of her chosen profession. I wholly endorse the aims of the employer-led Opportunity 2000 initiatives, which seeks to enhance the quality and quantity of women's participation in the work force and the Department seeks to be one of the truly exemplary employers in the campaign.

The "New Horizons for Women" initiative promotes a whole range of opportunities for women and publications such as "The Best of Both Worlds" and "Rising to the Challenge" encourage employers to adopt flexible working practices, which can be of benefit to many women with responsibilities beyond the workplace, and to consider the valuable contribution which women have to make to the world of work.

Horse Racing

Mr. Harry Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many people are estimated to be employed in jobs relating to the horse racing industry; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe: The information is not available. Employment relating to the horse racing industry cannot be distinguished from other leisure industries within activity reading 9791—sport and other recreational services—of the Standard Industrial Classification 1980.

Manufacturing Employment

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will make a statement on manufacturing employment in the west midlands.

Miss Widdecombe: In March 1993, there were 547,000 employees in manufacturing industries in the west midlands.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what proportion of manufacturing employment has been lost since January 1990.

Miss Widdecombe: Between January 1990 and May 1993, the number of employees in manufacturing in Great Britain fell by 18 per cent. However, the fall in manufacturing employment is not new; its peak was as far back as 1966. In addition since March 1983, reductions in manufacturing employment have been more than offset by increases in other parts of the economy.

Working Population

Mr. Thomason: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many people in the United Kingdom are in work as a percentage of the total population of working age; and what is the average figure in the European Community.

Miss Widdecombe: The United Kingdom percentage in spring 1991 was 70·2 per cent. compared with an EC average of 61·6 per cent. based upon the latest published EC labour force survey report. The most recent available estimate for the United Kingdom is for winter 1992-93 when the percentage was 70 per cent.

Home Workers

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is his Department's assessment of the number of home workers in Leeds, West.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: It is estimated that in West Yorkshire some 19,000 people work at home as their main job, including those who are self-employed. Estimates of the numbers of homeworkers are not available for Leeds, West or other local areas.

Business Start-up Scheme

Mr. Bates: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what proportion of those enterprises started under the business start-up scheme are still trading after three years.

Miss Widdecombe: The business start-up scheme has not been operational long enough to give the information asked for. The business start-up scheme replaced the enterprise allowance scheme and only came into operation in April 1991. The full results of a survey of those starting the scheme in May 1991 is to be published later this year. This shows that 71 per cent. were still operating the same business 18 months after starting.

Nuclear Safety

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he wil make a statement on the work of the Health and Safety Executive in relation to Sellafield.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The Health and Safety Executive's nuclear installations inspectorate and field operations divisions carry out regular inspections of BNFL's operations at Sellafield under the Health and Safety at Work etc, Act 1974; the relevant statutory provisions of the Nuclear Installations Act 1965, as amended and other relevant legislation.

Redundancy Legislation

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what plans he has to review the redundancy legislation.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Minor changes to the statutory notification and consultation procedures were made in the

Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act. These provisions will come into force on 30 August. We have no plans to change the arrangements for statutory redundancy payments.

Careers Service

Ms Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how much expenditure *(a)* has already been incurred and *(b)* will be incurred in implementing those provisions of the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993 relating to the careers service.

Miss Widdecombe: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave her on 26 July 1993.

Labour Statistics

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many women in (i) Scotland, (ii) Wales and (iii) England were economically active whose youngest child was aged *(a)* 0-four years, *(b)* five to 10 years, *(c)* 11 to 15 years, or had no children, for the latest year for which figures are available.

Miss Widdecombe: The latest available estimates from the winter 1992-93 labour force survey are given in the table:

Number of economically active women by age of youngest dependent child. Winter 1992-93 (not seasonally adjusted)
Women aged 16 and over — *Thousands*

	All economically active women	*Age of youngest dependent child* 0-4	5-10	11-15	*No dependent children under 16*
Great Britain	12,034	1,666	1,435	1,125	7,808
England	10,409	1,432	1,237	968	6,772
Wales	562	86	70	51	356
Scotland	1,063	148	129	106	680

Source: Labour Force Survey.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will publish figures for the projected labour force in Scotland for each year until 2001 *(a)* for males and *(b)* for females.

Miss Widdecombe: The figures were published in the June 1992 issue of the *Employment Gazette*—table 1, pages 294-5—and more detailed analyses are available from the NOMIS database in the Library.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list the annual labour activity rate for *(a)* males and *(b)* females in Scotland between the current year and his Department's published figure for 2000.

Miss Widdecombe: The figures were published in the June 1992 issue of the *Employment Gazette*—table 4, pages 300-1—and more detailed analyses are available from the NOMIS database in the Library.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment if he will list how many *(a)* males, full time, *(b)* females, full time and *(c)* females, part time in Scotland were covered by collective agreements at work both in 1979 and for the latest full year for which such figures are available.

Miss Widdecombe: The information is not available in the form requested. However, information on the proportion of employees covered by collective agreements in the groups specified, as at April 1992, is shown in the table. Comparable figures for 1979 are available only at disproportionate cost.

Proportion of employees covered by a collective agreement in Scotland, April 1992

Category of employee	*Proportion covered per cent.*
(a) Full-time males	35
(b) Full-time females	42
(c) Part-time females[1]	50

[1] The survey does not cover all part-time female employees, only those that are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.
Source: New Earnings Survey

EC Social Policy

Ms Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what plans he has to consult *(a)* employers or their representatives and *(b)* employees and trade unions over the European Community green paper on social policy.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The European Commissioner for Social Affairs has already sought the views of all interested parties on his proposal to publish a green paper on the future of European social policy. After the green paper has been published the Commissioner will initiate a further extensive round of consultation. I am sure that employers and trades unions will want to play a full part in that debate.

Child Care

Ms Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what response he has received to the document, "Good Childcare, Good Business", produced by Employers for Childcare, a copy of which has been sent to him.

Miss Widdecombe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State will be meeting the organisers of Employers for Childcare in the near future, when they will discuss the issues raised in their document.

Social and Labour Affairs Council

Ms Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what matters he expects to be discussed at the next meeting of the EC Social and Labour Affairs Council.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The agenda for the next meeting of the EC Labour and Social Affairs Council on 12 October has not yet been fixed.

However, the Belgian presidency has indicated that it expects the agenda to include some or all of the following items:

Directive on Atypical Work
Directive on Posted Workers
Directive on European Works Councils
Directive on the Protection of Young Workers
Directive on Biological Agents (final adoption)
Directive on Parental Leave
Directive on the Reversal of the Burden of Proof in Sex Discrimination Cases
Initiative on Employment
The Commission's Green Paper on Social Policy

Disability

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what steps his Department have taken against training and enterprise councils who have been found to be not making available suitable high quality training for people assessed to have a disability.

Miss Widdecombe: Each training and enterprise council sets out in its business plan its proposals for the year ahead including the help it can give to people with disabilities. Regional directors regularly review the performance of each TEC to ensure that it delivers the agreed plan. There are a range off sanctions which the Department can bring to bear.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many disabled directors there are on each training and enterprise council board; and what percentage of the TEC boards this represents.

Miss Widdecombe: The information is not available.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many disabled people in the United Kingdom of working age are neither in work nor in training; and what percentage of the disabled population in this age group this represents.

Miss Widdecombe: The labour force survey—LFS—asks people of working age if they currently have any health problem or disability which limits the kind of paid work they can do. Estimates based on answers to this question will include people with short-term health problems and disabilities as well as those registered as disabled.

The latest estimates show that of people in the United Kingdom with such health problems or disabilities, 523,000—10·4 per cent.—were unemployed on the ILO definition.

These figures are based on estimates for Great Britain in winter 1992-93 and those for Northern Ireland in spring 1992 and are not seasonally adjusted.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what percentage of training and enterprise council public meetings were fully accessible for disabled people in *(a)* 1990-91, *(b)* 1991-92 and *(c)* 1992-93.

Miss Widdecombe: The information requested is not available. It is a matter for each training and enterprise council to ensure proper access to their annual public meetings.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is meant by the term "suitable high quality training" as used in the 1993-94 training and enterprise council operating agreement in relation to the availability of training for people assessed to have a disability.

Miss Widdecombe: Suitable high-quality training means training that meets the requirements placed on training and enterprise councils' providers to achieve the standards of approved training organisation status or agreed alternative.

From April 1994, new revised arrangements will come into effect covering all TEC products and services. These build on the existing arrangements and the considerable development work undertaken by TECs.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many disabled employees there are within each training and enterprise council; and what percentage of the work force this represents.

Miss Widdecombe: The information requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. As an employer, every training and enterprise council is required to satisfy the statutory obligations of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what steps are being taken by his Department to measure and compare high quality training for disabled people within and between training and enterprise council areas.

Miss Widdecombe: Training and enterprise councils' business plans are examined before approval to ensure that they have included objectives and targets for helping people with disabilities. TECs are required by their contract to provide regular performance statistics relating to the training, and placing, of people with disabilities. The Department's regional contracts managers review TECs' achievements against objectives at regular intervals.

Performance reports produced as part of this monitoring process are used to ensure that appropriate action is being taken and that TECs are delivering the agreed plan within the terms of their contract.

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what percentage of training and enterprise council resources are spent on disabled people in each TEC.

Miss Widdecombe: This information is not available in the form requested.

Astra Training

Mr. Blunkett: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what action he intends to take to secure training programmes undertaken by, and the future employment of, staff employed by Astra Training in Sheffield.

Miss Widdecombe: The Department contracts with training and enterprise councils for the delivery of training programmes in their areas. It places a contractual obligation on the TECs, where a training provider closes, to find the trainees concerned suitable alternative training. This provision will come into effect in the event that Astra's receivers close any skillcentres. We understand that skillcentres are continuing to offer services to customers while the trading position is reviewed.

Where redundancies take place among Astra's staff, whether in Sheffield or elsewhere, the full facilities of the Employment Service are available to help the people concerned find alternative work. The redundancy payments service is already in touch with the receiver to ensure that where redundancies do occur, statutory payments are made as soon as possible.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what residual obligation his Department has to the staff and trainees currently employed by the collapsed firm Astra.

Miss Widdecombe: As was made clear from the outset, the sale of the Skills Training Agency in 1990 was conducted on a clean-break basis. At the time of the sale, the Government ensured that the staff who transferred to Astra were covered by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations and that Astra and other purchasers provided pension and redundancy rights in line with ministerial undertakings. The Department has no continuing obligation to Astra staff who were civil servants. The Department's contract with training and enterprise councils requires suitable alternative training to be found for trainees whose training is affected by any closure of a training centre.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what action he intends to take to provide training facilities to replace those lost by the collapse of Astra.

Miss Widdecombe: The Department contracts with training and enterprise councils for the delivery of training programmes in their areas. It places a contractual obligation on the TECs, where a training provider closes, to find the trainees concerned suitable alternative training. This provision will come into effect in the event that Astra's receivers close any skillcentres. We understand that skillcentres are continuing to offer services to customers while the trading position is reviewed.

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what protection for the staff employed in the training centres were negotiated with Astra plc when the sale was made.

Miss Widdecombe: The sale of skillcentres to Astra—and other purchasers—in 1990 was governed by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations—TUPE. This meant that those terms and conditions to which staff were entitled and which were covered by TUPE transferred with staff to their new employment. In addition the Government required purchasers to provide pensions broadly comparable to those applying to the civil service, and redundancy rights at least equivalent to the civil service terms in force at the date of sale. These measures prevented changes being made to terms and conditions for reasons due to the transfer itself, but were not agreed in perpetuity.

North Norfolk Action Scheme

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the average amount paid per year for each person involved in the north Norfolk action scheme to each of the providers and the average amount paid to providers nationally in similar schemes.

Miss Widdecombe: Responsibility for the subject in question has been delegated to the Employment Service Agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Sir Ralph Howell, dated 27 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the average amount paid per year for each person involved in North Norfolk Action to each of the providers and the average amount paid to providers nationally in similar schemes. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

North Norfolk Action was set up on 10 May to pilot a combination of work experience and intensive case load support to people unemployed over six months. The work experience is full-time on projects of benefit to the community which would not otherwise be done. Whilst participating, people also receive help in looking for permanent jobs.

There are currently three providers of North Norfolk Action, North Norfolk County Council, Community Rural Aid, NACRO. They are paid an average of £2,840 per year for each person involved in the programme. This is to cover the cost of:

—supervisors wages;
—tools and equipment;
—Health and Safety;
—Jobskills training;
—First Aid training;
—transport; and
—administration costs.

The only programme similar to North Norfolk Action will be Community Action. This was announced in the Budget in March and will allow unemployed people to do work of community benefit. Providers of Community Action which is about to start on 27 July as paid an average of £2,080 per year per person. However Community Action providers work on a part-time basis for up to 21 hours each week. As with North Norfolk Action participants will receive an allowance equivalent to their weekly benefit rate plus £10.

I hope that this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Youth Training

Mr. Leighton: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what was the total number of young people who entered youth training in each of the last five years in the London East training and enterprise council area; and what were the qualifications they received in each year.

Miss Widdecombe: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library.

Unlawful Industrial Action

Mr. Congdon: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how he intends to fund the Commissioner for Protection Against Unlawful Industrial Action.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: The new Commissioner for Protection Against Unlawful Industrial Action is established under section 22 of the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993, which received Royal Assent on 1 July.

The new Commissioner for Protection Against Unlawful Industrial Action will be independent of

Government and free from ministerial direction. The commissioner has been established as a non-departmental public body to ensure this independence, while ensuring proper accountability and financial propriety.

The commissioner can provide material assistance, on application, to those individuals contemplating or taking proceedings against trade unions under the new "citizen's right" provision of the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993. This provision allows individuals to bring court proceedings to halt the unlawful organisation of industrial action which deprive them of goods or services.

Parliamentary approval for expenditure on the expenses of the new commissioner will be sought in a supplementary estimate for the Department of Employment's programmes and central services vote—class V. vote 1. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £80,000 will be met by a repayable advance from the Contingencies Fund:

Commissioner for the Protection Against Unlawful Industrial Action (Class V, Vote 1)—£120,000.

Job Clubs

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many job clubs were operational for each region and for Great Britain as a whole at the latest available date; and how many of them in each region catered for groups with special needs.

Mr. Michael Forsyth: Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Ms Clare Short, dated 26 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about the number of Jobclubs operational for each region and for Great Britain as a whole, and how many of them cater for people with special needs. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

The information is given in the attached table. It shows the number of standard and specialist Jobclubs by region and for Great Britain as a whole at the end of June 1993.

My colleague John Cooper wrote to you in December last year on the subject of Jobclubs for people with special needs. As he said then, all Jobclubs accept members who either have some degree of literacy or language problem, have a disability or have been in prison. Similarly, all Jobclubs are open to people seeking executive or managerial work.

Since he wrote to you the evaluation of the supportive Jobclub network has been carried out. As you know supportive Jobclubs provide additional help to people with more severe problems who cannot cope in a standard Jobclub, such as people with literacy or language problems, or those with a severe lack of confidence. The evaluation, which was completed in March 1993, identified a number of good practices within the network and found that supportive Jobclubs are successful in placing unemployed people directly into work. On the strength of these findings further places will be available this year to help people with special needs in supportive Jobclubs.

I hope this is helpful.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamentary Questions will now be published in the Official Report. I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

	Standard	*Supportive*	*Executive*	*People with disabilities*	*Ex-offenders*	*Total*
Northern	83	3	9	1	1	97
Yorkshire and Humberside	93	13	7	0	1	114
East Midlands	89	7	16	1	1	114
London and South East	288	42	43	4	4	381
South West	90	5	14	1	2	112
Wales	77	0	8	0	0	85
West Midlands	119	9	13	0	1	142
North West	166	6	13	1	3	189
Scotland	116	10	9	0	0	135
National	1,121	95	132	8	13	1,369

Inward Investment

Mr. Riddick: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what specific measures his Department takes to encourage the creation of jobs by inward investment in the United Kingdom.

Miss Widdecombe: In addition to the specific activities of the Department of Trade and Industry's Invest in Britain Bureau, one of the lowest rates of corporation tax in the developed world, and a Government who support the enterprise culture, overseas investors are attracted by the United Kingdom's labour market. Fewer days are now lost to industrial action since records began more than 100 years ago, the regulatory burden on employers is light and the labour market is the most flexible in Europe. That is why the United Kingdom attracts nearly 41 per cent. of the stock of Japanese investment and over 36 per cent. of the stock of United States investment into the EC. This continuing investment, which has created or safeguarded more than 275,000 jobs over the last five years, would be put at risk by adopting the added costs and restrictions of the social chapter, which the United Kingdom will continue to resist.

Disabled People

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what assessment he has made of the effect of the recession on the willingness of employers to find extra money to employ disabled people.

Miss Widdecombe *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* We are pleased that employment of people with disabilities has held up well during the recession; the Employment Service placed more than 40,000 unemployed people with disabilities into jobs during 1992-93, well ahead of its target. However, we recognise the difficulties encountered by disabled people in the employment market. It is for reasons such as these that we have special employment

provision for disabled people and give disabled people priority for a place on our main employment and training schemes.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what plans he has to improve the employment prospects for people with disabilities in Yorkshire and Humberside; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* We will continue to encourage employers to provide opportunities for disabled people through programmes of education and persuasion, backed by practical help, in Yorkshire and Humberside as elsewhere throughout the country. Through jobcentres, people with disabilities have access to local placing assessment and counselling teams to provide advice to people with disabilities and their employers.

Three examples of innovative initiatives in Yorkshire and Humberside are a pioneering programme run by Bradford training and enterprise council to help graduates with a disability to pursue a career in management; worklink, a specialist advisory and counselling service for people with disabilities run by Barnsley and Doncaster TEC; and in Shipley and Keighley the Cellar project, supported by the Employment Service, provides disabled people with advice, guidance and support to help them obtain work placements and workshop places. From 1 April 1994 the new access to work initiative will be introduced to meet the employment needs of people with disabilities nationally.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment for what proportion of its activities Thames Water Utilities Ltd. is exempt from the requirements of the regulations governing the employment of disabled persons; what are the terms of exemption permit held; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* Responsibility for the subject of the question has been delegated to the Employment Service agency under its chief executive. I have asked him to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from M. E. G. Fogden to Mr. Harry Cohen, dated 27 July 1993:

As the Employment Service is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to write to you direct to respond to your Parliamentary Question to him about what proportion of the activities of Thames Water Utilities is exempt from the requirements of the regulations governing the employment of disabled persons; and what are the terms of exemption permit held. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

Thames Water Utilities Limited is, like other employers with twenty or more workers, subject to the Quota provisions of the Disabled (Persons) Employment Act 1944. It may help if I explain those provisions.

The Quota Scheme was established by the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944. Under the scheme, employers who have 20 or more workers have a duty to employ a quota of registered disabled people. The standard quota is currently set at 3 per cent. of an employer's total workforce. It is not an offence to be below quota. However, when in this situation an employer has a further duty to engage suitable registered disabled people, if any are available, when vacancies arise. A below-quota employer must not engage anyone other than a registered disabled person without first obtaining a permit to do so from the Employment Service.

The issue of a permit does not provide employers with exemption from their duties and obligations under the 1944 Act. A permit allows an employer to engage a person who is not registered as disabled. The 1944 Act sets out the criteria under which a permit can be issued, which include regard to the nature of the work, and the availability and suitability of registered disabled people.

Employers who are below quota can apply for "bulk" permits in advance to authorise a specified number of engagements over a limited period, based on the employer's estimated requirements. Bulk permits were introduced in order to keep a minimum the administrative burden for employers and the Department, whilst protecting the interests of people with disabilities. These are issued by the Jobcentre and will consider sympathetically and suitable registered disabled people who may become available.

Information about the quota or permit position of individual employers is not disclosed without their prior consent. This has been the policy of successive governments. I cannot, therefore provide the specific information you request about Thames Water Utilities. I am sorry that I cannot be of more help on this occasion.

As decided by the Administration Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Executive replies to written Parliamenatry Questions will be published in the *Official Report*, I will also place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Executive Staff (Scotland)

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment how many executive staff in the Department of Employment in *(a)* Dundee and *(b)* Scotland who have been declared as surplus to requirements; and if he will make a statement.

Miss Widdecombe *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The Employment Department group currently has five executive staff in Scotland who have been declared as surplus to requirements. None of them is in Dundee.

Departmental Budget

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Employment what is the budget for the current year for his Department in *(a)* Scotland and *(b)* the United Kingdom; and if he will list the budgets for the previous five years expressed in 1993 prices.

Mr. Michael Forsyth *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The Department's current budget relates in the main to England for training programmes and to Great Britain for other programmes and activities. The responsibility for delivery of the main training programmes in Scotland was transferred to the Scottish Office in 1991-92. Detailed information prior to 1991-92 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Northern Ireland expenditure information can be obtained from my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

DEFENCE

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and Agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Aitken: The table lists services or functions contracted out as a result of market testing in the Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 or, in the case of BAOR, equivalent German regulations based on the European acquired rights directive, were not applied. Similar information covering services or functions contracted out other than as a result of market testing could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Catering at Royal Naval Air Station, Yeovilton and HMS DRAKE, Devonport.
Ground radio/radar maintenance, Royal Naval Air Station, Portland.
Helicopter maintenance and engineering, Royal Naval Air Stations Yeovilton, Culdrose and Portland.
Aircraft maintenance, Royal Naval Air Station, Yeovilton.
RN simulator helicopter control operations, Royal Naval Air Station, Portland.
Works services management, Royal Naval Air Station, Culdrose.
Engineering support, No. 60 Squadron RAF.
Parachute servicing.
Andover aircraft maintenance.
Wessex helicopter maintenance, RAF Shawbury.
Air Weapon Range, RAF Holbeach.
Engineering and supply multi-activity, RAF Scampton.
Recruiting exhibition production, RAF Henlow.
Elementary Flying Training School, RAF Topcliffe.
Flight checking, No. 115 Squadron, RAF Benson.
Guarding at Abbey Wood site, Bristol.
Reconnaissance visits to Bristol new site.
Catering, A & AEE Boscombe Down.
Support Services, Northern Ireland.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Aitken: Since November 1991, my Department has placed 509 contracts worth a total of £23 million for consultancies related to administrative computer work. In addition, a number of divisions within my Department are empowered to place local orders for computer consultancy up to a maximum value of £25,000 per order; there were approximately 4,000 orders totalling some £1·2 million in this category.

I regret that it is not possible to provide more details without incurring disproportionate costs.

RFA Refits

Mr. Trotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he will list the RFA refits carried out in each of the last five years showing the yard at which each was carried out and in each case whether the work was allocated or won in competition.

Mr. Aitken: Information on those RFA refits finishing in the last five complete financial years, is as follows:

Vessel	*Yard were work was carried out*	*Allocated/ Competed*
1988-89		
RFA OAKLEAF	Falmouth Shiprepair Ltd.	Competed
RFA BAYLEAF	Falmouth Shiprepair Ltd.	Competed
RFA REGENT	Tyne Shiprepair Ltd.	Competed
RFA GREY ROVER	Smiths Shiprepair Ltd, North Shields	Competed
RFA FORT AUSTIN	Smiths Shiprepair Ltd, North Shields	Competed
RFA BLUE ROVER	Smiths Shiprepair Ltd, North Shields	Competed
RFA SIR LANCELOT	Smiths Shiprepair Ltd, North Shields	Competed
RFA SIR GALAHAD	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA SIR PERCIVALE	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA SIR GERAINT	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA TIDESPRING	Humber Shiprepair Ltd.	Competed
RFA BRAMBLELEAF	BTL, Rosyth Dockyard	Competed
RFA SIR GERAINT	BTL, Rosyth Dockyard	Allocated
RFA SIR BEDIVERE	DML, Devonport Dockyard	Allocated
1989-90		
RFA OLMEDA	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA RESOURCE	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA REGENT	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA SIR TRISTRAM	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA SIR BEDIVERE	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA DILIGENCE	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA GOLD ROVER	A&P Appledore (Falmouth) Ltd.	Competed
RFA OAKLEAF	A&P Appledore (Falmouth) Ltd.	Competed
RFA ORANGELEAF	Humber Shiprepair Ltd.	Competed
RFA SIR GERAINT	Tees Dockyard Ltd.	Competed
RFA FORT GRANGE	Swan Hunter Shipbuilders	Competed
RFA OLNA	Thew Engineering, Southampton	Competed
RFA BLACK ROVER	BTL, Rosyth Dockyard	Competed
1990-91		
RFA BAYLEAF	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA BLUE ROVER	Tees Dockyard Ltd.	Competed
RFA GREY ROVER	DML, Devonport Dockyard	Competed
RFA FORT AUSTIN	DML, Devonport Dockyard	Allocated
1991-92		
RFA ARGUS	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA SIR BEDIVERE	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA SIR PERCIVALE	Tees, Dockyard Ltd.	Competed

Vessel	Yard were work was carried out	Allocated/ Competed
RFA BLACK ROVER	DML, Devonport Dockyard	Competed
RFA ORANGELEAF	BTL, Rosyth Dockyard	Competed
RFA OLWEN	BTL, Rosyth Dockyard	Allocated
RFA GOLD ROVER	BTL, Rosyth Dockyard	Allocated
RFA BRAMBLELEAF	BTL, Rosyth Dockyard	Allocated
1992-93		
RFA FORT GRANGE	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA SIR GERAINT	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA SIR GALAHAD	A&P Appledore (Tyne) Ltd.	Competed
RFA OAKLEAF	A&P Appledore (Falmouth) Ltd.	Competed
RFA DILIGENCE	Tees Dockyard Ltd.	Competed
RFA OLMEDA	DML, Devonport Dockyard	Competed
RFA SIR TRISTRAM	BTL, Rosyth Dockyard	Allocated

Exports

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what disaggregated information he can give by country of the defence equipment listed for export under table I.11 of "UK Defence Statistics 1993" under the line listing total value of exports to the middle east and north Africa.

Mr. Aitken: I refer the hon. Member to the United Kingdom return to the United Nations arms register, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape;

(2) what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Aitken: With the exception of recruitment literature and application forms, the information produced by my Department is not available in alternative media for public use, although it would be possible to provide this if it were cost effective to do so. Internal information, however, can usually be made available to staff in alternative media where there is a demand.

US Bases

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those bases and facilities operated or leased by United States armed forces that have been returned to his Department's control since June 1992.

Mr. Hanley: The list of bases and facilities made available to the United States visiting forces at the following locations and which have been returned to Ministry of Defence control since June 1992 is as follows:

Base		Facilities	
Broughton Moor	Cumbria	NATO Armaments Depot	June 1992
Holy Loch	Strathclyde	Storage/Support	June 1992
RAF Kemble	Gloucestershire	Storage/Support	June 1992
Martlesham Heath	Suffolk	Communications Site	July 1992
RAF Greenham Common	Berkshire	Standby Deployment Base	September 1992
Cairnmore Hilloch	Highlands	Communications Site	October 1992
RAF Inverbervie	Grampian	Communications Site	October 1992
Latheron	Highlands	Communications Site	October 1992
RAF Locking	Avon	Contingency Hospital	October 1992
RAF Sculthorpe	Norfolk	Standby Deployment Base	October 1992
West Murkle	Highlands	Communications Site	October 1992
Aberdeen	Grampian	Communications Site	November 1992
Kinnaber	Grampian	Communications Site	January 1993
Mormond Hill	Grampian	Communications Site	January 1993
RAF Machrihanish	Strathclyde	Storage/Support	April 1993
Glen Douglas	Strathclyde	Storage/Support	June 1993
RAF St. Mawgan	Cornwall	Storage/Support	June 1993

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those bases and facilities operated or leased by United States armed forces that are to be returned to his Department's control.

Mr. Hanley: The list of bases and facilities made available to the United States visiting forces at the following locations and which are due to be returned or partially returned to Ministry of Defence control is as follows:

Bases	Locations	Facilities
RAF Welford	Berkshire	Storage/Support
RAF Burntwood	Cheshire	Storage/Support
RAF Bentwaters	Suffolk	Main Operating Base
RAF Woodbridge	Suffolk	Main Operating Base
RAF Caerwent	Gwent	Storage/Support
Chilwell	Nottinghamshire	Storage/Support
RAF Bicester	Oxfordshire	Contingency Hospital
RAF Little Rissington	Gloucestershire	Contingency Hospital
RAF Upper Heyford	Oxfordshire	Main Operating Base
RAF Upwood	Cambridgeshire	Contingency Hospital

Bases	Locations	Facilities
RAF Alconbury	Cambridgeshire	Main Operating Base
RAF Brawdy	Dyfed	Storage/Support

RAF Northolt

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the specialist qualifications of Dr. Pocock in *(a)* air transport, *(b)* the operation of aircraft or *(c)* otherwise to conduct the study commissioned by his Department into RAF communications flying from RAF Northolt.

Mr. Hanley: Dr. Pocock is a senior official with long experience of the Ministry of Defence. It is not expected that a scrutineer will have specialist qualifications in the area of his study: his job is to bring a fresh and independent perspective for Ministers and management to consider. He can of course draw on specialist advice as necessary.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the terms of reference of Dr. Pocock's study for his Department into RAF communications flying from RAF Northolt; and when and to whom he will report his conclusions.

Mr. Hanley: The study is part of the Government's programme of efficiency scrutinies under the supervision of the Cabinet Office efficiency unit. Its aim is to establish the scope for greater effectiveness and efficiency in RAF communications flying which involves a number of RAF stations. The study requires examinations of existing patterns of demand, procedures and costs; the identification of trends; and the consideration of new arrangements. The recommendations go to Ministers and the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Defence, as well as to the Government's efficiency adviser. The report was completed on 13 July 1993 and its conclusions are now being assessed.

Radioactive Shells

Mr. Campbell-Savours: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in what year the V J battery for the testing of radioactive shells were first constructed in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Aitken: The current VJ battery was constructed between 1979 and 1980.

Mr. Campbell-Savours: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those sites within the United Kingdom where radioactive shells have been tested in the last 30 years.

Mr. Aitken: I assume that the hon. Member is referring to anti-armour kinetic energy penetrator rounds containing depleted uranium. I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Pembroke (Mr. Ainger) on 14 June, *Official Report*, columns *474-75*.

Mr. Campbell-Savours: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in what year the testing of radioactive shells was first undertaken within the United Kingdom.

Mr. Aitken: I assume the hon. Member is referring to anti-armour kinetic energy penetrator rounds containing depleted uranium, DU. DU firings in the United Kingdom began with a small research programme at Eskmeals starting in 1963.

Military Equipment Exports

Mr. Campbell-Savours: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the United Kingdom's 20 principal military equipment customers in terms of descending money volume of purchases.

Mr. Aitken: It has been the policy of successive Governments not to reveal details of arms sales to individual countries. However, table 1.11 of "UK Defence Statistics 1993" gives information on the value of sales broken down by region.

Radiation-related Illness

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will provide a breakdown of the 126 claims for compensation from radiation-related illnesses, as outlined in A5, pages 39 to 40 of the Twelfth report of the Defence Committee, HC479, Session 1989-90, by establishment as well as by year and nature; and if he will provide comparable information for periods since 1990.

Mr. Aitken: The tables give details of claims made—not necessarily followed up by the claimant or accepted—over the periods referred to in the Defence Committee report HC479, Session 1989-90 and the period from 1990.

Breakdown of claims by establishment for the period January 1979 to December 1989

	Claims
AWE	101
ROF Radway Green	1
RNAY Fleetlands	1
RAF Whitney	1
RRE Malvern	2
RNAD Coulport	3
HNB Faslane	1
HNB Chatham	3
Devonport Dockyard	4
Rosyth Dockyard	2
Vickers—Barrow in Furness	1
HNB Portsmouth	1
Vulcan NRTE	1
HMS Dreadnought	1
HMS Battleaxe	1
Radar Site—Cyprus	1
British Rail Depot—Derby	1

For the period from January 1990 to July 1993, there have been 25 claims received so far.

Breakdown of claims by year and nature for the period January 1990 to July 1993

Illness	1990	1991	1992	1993	Total
Leukaemia	—	—	—	—	3
Acute Myeloid	—	—	—	1	—
Acute Lymphoblastic	1	—	—	—	—
Chronic Myeloid	—	1	—	—	—
Cancer	—	—	—	—	10
(Unspecified)	1	1	1	3	—
Lung	1	1	—	—	—
Bladder	—	—	1	—	—
Testicular	—	—	1	—	—
Others					
(Specified)	—	—	—	—	12

Illness	1990	1991	1992	1993	Total
Hodgkins Disease (Lymphoma)	—	1	—	1	—
Malignant Melanoma	1	—	—	—	—
Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma	—	—	1	—	—
Subarachnoid Haemorrhage	—	1	—	—	—
Mental Anxiety	2	2	3	—	—
Sub Totals	6	7	8	4	25

Breakdown of claims by establishment for the period January 1990 to July 1993

	Number
AWE	14
Rosyth	3
HNB Chatham	4
HMS Revenge	1
HMS Courage	1
RCC Amersham	1
RAF Waddington	1

Atomic Weapons Establishments

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list *(a)* all laws, statutes and regulations which AWE Aldermaston could claim Crown immunity prior to 1 April and *(b)* all laws, statutes and regulations which Hunting BRAE, as managing contractors of AWE Aldermaston, can claim Crown immunity from; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: Prior to 1 April 1993, all AWE sites were owned and operated by the Crown. It is a well-established rule that the Crown is not bound by statute unless this is specifically stated, or it is clear that the Crown is to be bound by implication. To list all legislation from which AWE could have claimed Crown immunity prior to 1 April 1993 would therefore involve disproportionate effort and cost. However, even in circumstances where the Crown is not bound by legislation, it is Government policy that it should comply as though such requirements apply to it, wherever this is appropriate and practicable.

Special provisions relating to the operator of the AWE after contractorisation on 1 April 1993 are set out in the schedule to the AWE Act 1991.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions AWE Aldermaston is having with the nuclear installations inspectorate regarding the possibility of providing a site licence for the atomic weapons establishments; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Aitken: In the studies leading up to the contractorisation of the atomic weapons establishment, my Department held discussions with the Health and Safety Executive's nuclear installations inspectorate concerning the possible licensing of appropriate sites of the atomic weapons establishments. These discussions are planned to continue following the HSE review of health and safety at AWEs and in the light of the conclusions of that review.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provisions now govern the liability of contractors of the atomic weapons establishments, to prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive for any breaches of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1976.

Mr. Aitken: The contractor operating the atomic weapons establishment, Hunting BRAE Ltd., is subject to the full range of legal sanctions available to Health and Safety Executive inspectors under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

Defence Commitments

Mr. Matthew Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will list the United Kingdom's overseas defence commitments by country in *(a)* 1980, *(b)* 1985 and *(c)* 1993; and what was the infantry manpower required to meet each of those commitments;

(2) if he will list the United Kingdom's domestic defence commitments in *(a)* 1980, *(b)* 1985 and *(c)* 1993; and what was the amount of infantry manpower required to meet each of those commitments.

Mr. Hanley: The United Kingdom's defence commitments worldwide are set out in the "Statement on the Defence Estimates" for 1980, 1985 and 1993; overall figures for deployments of each of the armed forces are set out in volume II of the "Statement on the Defence Estimates" for 1980 and 1985, and in "United Kingdom Defence Statistics 1993". Figures for infantry personnel stationed in the United Kingdom and overseas for 1980, 1985 and 1993 are as follows;

Country	1980	1985	1993
United Kingdom	29,041	26,147	24,654
Germany	11,152	9,921	5,915
Cyprus	1,181	1,162	904
Gibraltar	581	622	18
Hong Kong	790	801	671
Caribbean	523	574	487
Falkland Islands	—	—	175
Others	541	2,529	1,548

Notes:

1. Separate figures are not available for the Falkland Islands for 1980 and 1985. Figures for those years are included under "Others".
2. Figures for Belize are included under "Caribbean".

Mr. Matthew Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the sufficiency of United Kingdom Army personnel to meet *(a)* its domestic defence commitments and *(b)* its overseas defence commitments; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The size of the British Army matches its commitments at home and overseas.

Staff Numbers

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *87-88*, on the numbers of civilian and service staff in post, if he will publish the comparable figures for 1 January 1990.

Mr. Hanley: The information is as follows:

	1 April 1990
Civilian staff in post	
Grade 3	165
Grade 5	1373
Service staff in post	
Major Generals (and equivalents)	149
Brigadiers (and equivalents)	393

[1] Civilian data for 1 January 1990 are not available.

Mr. Matthew Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the Army's manpower in thousands in *(a)* 1980, *(b)* 1992, *(c)* 1993 and *(d)* 1994; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The strength of the Regular Army, excluding Gurkhas, as at 1 April of the years in question is as follows:
(a) 1980—159,000, *(b)* 1992—145,000, *(c)* 1993—135,000 and *(d)* 1994—120,000 (current forecast).

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what has been the percentage reduction, since the "Options for Change" announcements in *(a)* first division civil servants and *(b)* executive officers employed by the Ministry of Defence; and what are the corresponding reductions in armed forces' uniformed manpower.

Mr. Hanley: The information is as follows:

	1 April 1990	*1 April 1993*	*Percentage change*
First division civil servants	4,071	3,825	−4·78
Colonels and equivalents and above	2,074	1,914	−7·71
Executive officers	42,467	39,877	−6·10
2nd Lieutenants–Lt Colonels and equivalents	38,456	37,380	−2·80

Note:
First Division civil servants are taken to be Grades 1-7. Executive officers are taken to be those in the executive band in the Grades of Senior Executive Officer, Higher Executive Officer and Executive Officer Grades.

Northern Ireland

Mr. Matthew Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much infantry manpower was deployed in Northern Ireland in *(a)* 1980, *(b)* 1990, *(c)* 1991 and *(d)* 1992; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: I will write to my hon. Friend.

Gurkha Pensioners

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for how many years it has been the practice of Her Majesty's Government to provide free medical services to Gurkha pensioners in Nepal; whether this has included provision of free medicines; and what steps are proposed to maintain such provision.

Mr. Hanley: Although the Government have no obligation to provide medical services, free or otherwise, to Gurkha pensioners in Nepal the Ministry of Defence has since 1969 provided funding, in the form of grant in aid, to the Gurkha Welfare Trust—GWT—a charity whose operating arm, the Gurkha Welfare Scheme, runs a welfare service in Nepal for Gurkha ex-service men. Although at its introduction the grant was intended to cover administrative costs and medicines, in 1973 the GWT requested that the grant be used solely for administrative costs; the salaries of the field and support staff and the rent of offices. This request was granted on the basis that the cost of providing drugs and medical care would be met from the trust's charitable funds. There are no plans to change this arrangement.

In addition, Gurkha pensioners were also able to receive free treatment at the British military hospital in Dharan in eastern Nepal which provided medical care including medicines to serving British Gurkhas and their dependants on a no-cost basis from its opening in 1960 until it was handed over to the Nepalese Government in 1990.

Helicopters

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the EH101 utility support helicopter for the Royal Air Force meets his detailed specification justification.

Mr. Aitken: We have made good progress in defining our support helicopter requirement, and we hope to be in a position to announce our procurement strategy soon.

Property Disposals

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will give the book value of the land and buildings disposed of by his Ministry in each region of the United Kingdom, for each year from 1988-89 until 1992-93; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Hanley: The Ministry of Defence does not maintain a comprehensive set of book values of its land and buildings.

Danger Money

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) which regiments currently receive extra payments in respect of dangerous postings; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what is the amount per month for a United Kingdom service person on top of their basic salary when extra payments are made in respect of a dangerous posting.

Mr. Hanley: No United Kingdom service personnel receive extra payments in respect of dangerous postings.

Equal Opportunities

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the agreed code of practice to eliminate racial discrimination and promote equal opportunities in the Army will be made public.

Mr. Hanley: We intend to publish a code of practice on race relations in the armed forces in the autumn. The code will be disseminated throughout the three services and I will arrange for a copy to be placed in the Library of the House.

Surplus Land

Mr. Martlew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is his Department's policy on maximising the financial return from the sale of surplus land.

Mr. Hanley: It is my Department's policy to seek to maximise the return for the taxpayer when disposing of

surplus sites. This is normally best achieved through open market competitive sale once the full planning potential of the property has been explored.

HEALTH

Information Technology

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the companies to which the information management group of the national health service management executive has awarded any contracts and the total sums of money paid to these companies.

Mr. Sackville: The information will be placed in the Library.

Tranquilliser Addiction

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assistance her Department gives to patients who have become addicted to tranquillisers and are seeking legal redress against those who marketed these drugs; what is the estimated level of tranquilliser drug addiction in the United Kingdom; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: Our "Health of the Nation" strategy addresses the problems of prescribing benzodiazepines and the need to review their use, and health authorities are responsible for purchasing any treatment required. Matters of compensation, however, are for individuals to pursue with the companies concerned, if necessary through the courts, as in other areas of health care. Information about tranquilliser drug addiction is not available centrally.

Herbal Products

Mr. Cash: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what action she will take to ensure that the Committee for Proprietary Medical Products of the EC consults appropriate professional and consumer bodies at European level in respect of the continuous sale of herbal products;

(2) what representations she has received from the National Institute of Medical Herbalists regarding the recommendations of the Committee for Proprietary Medical Products of the EC that certain herbs should be removed from supply;

(3) if she will consult the National Institute of Medical Herbalists and other bodies representing consumer interests about the work of the Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products of the EC;

(4) what information she has about the recommendations of the Committee for Proprietary Medicines of the EC in respect of the continued sale of herbal products; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: The European Community Committee for Proprietary Medicines—CPMP—does consult member states, industry representative bodies and other interested parties on all draft guidelines.

Representations were received from the National Institute of Medical Herbalists—NIMH—that it had not been consulted about a list of herbs withdrawn for safety reasons compiled by the CPMP. The NIMH was advised that the list was simply a factual record of those herbs which had already been withdrawn nationally from medicinal products by one or more member states and that the list had been sent to the European Scientific Co-operative for Phytotherapy—ESCOP—in response to ESCOP's proposals for monographs on certain herbal ingredients. The list was published in the recent annual report of the CPMP.

Authorisations relating to particular medicinal products are the responsibility of the regulatory body of the member state concerned.

NHS Trusts

Dr. Goodson-Wickes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list by region the NHS trusts in existence or for which applications are in progress, and the direct managed units.

Mr. Sackville: This information will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 20 July, *Official Report*, column *114*, if she will provide a list of trusts which received grants, by wave and district health authority.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

NHS Computer Procurement

Mr. Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidelines her Department issues to regional health authorities on tendering procedures for supplies information system contracts;

(2) what advice her Department has issued to regional health authorities on the purchase of products related to hospital information support systems.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

Prescriptions

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish tables showing for each family health services authority—FHSA—area *(a)* the general practitioner indicative prescribing budgets and the general practitioner fund holders prescription budgets for 1990-91, 1991-92, 1992-93 and 1993-94 and *(b)* the out-turn expenditures so far as available, with the percentage over-or under-spend together with indexes for the combined general practitioner and fund holder spend in each area in cash and standard NHS prices.

Mr. Sackville: We do not hold prescribing information in index form, the available information will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners were requested to supply further information about their prescribing practices in the North Tyneside and Newcastle FHSA areas in 1991-92 and 1992-93; and what action was taken on such information.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Mental Health

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints by or on behalf of children and young people aged under 18 years have been investigated by the Mental Health Act Commission in each year since 1985.

Mr. Bowis: This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will seek to extend the remit of the Mental Health Act Commission to cover informal patients.

Mr. Bowis: We have no current plans to do so.

Zoplicone

Mr. Radice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what evidence she holds on the dependence risk of zoplicone in clinical usage;

(2) what representations have been made by her Department since 1989 to the manufacturers of Zimovane, in respect of their claims that there is no evidence of dependence in clinical use; and what was the outcome;

(3) what action she proposes to take against the manufacturers of Zimovane in respect of their claims that there is no evidence of dependence in clinical use.

Mr. Sackville: When zopiclone—Zimovane—was first marketed in 1989, there was no evidence from clincial studies that the drug could cause dependence. The safety data obtained post-marketing suggest that the drug has some dependence potential. These data indicate that the risk of dependence increases with dose and duration of treatment and is great in patients with a history of alcohol and drug abuse. There is little evidence of dependence if the drug is used at the licensed doses for no more than four weeks.

The manufacturers changed the prescribing information in 1990 and 1992 at the request of the Medicines Control Agency—MCA—to reflect post-marketing experience. The promotional material for zopiclone now states that the drug has minimal dependence potential when used in the short term; this claim is consistent with the available scientific evidence. The European Community Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products is reviewing the dependence potential of all short-acting hypnotic drugs, including zopiclone. The prescribing information on dependence for all hypnotics may be amended by the MCA as a result of this review.

Drugs (Misleading Advertising)

Mr. Radice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions in each of the last five years her Department prosecuted a drug product licence holder for false or misleading advertising within the meaning of section 92 of the Medicines Act 1968.

Mr. Sackville: No medicines product licence holders have been prosecuted for offences relating to misleading advertising during the last five years.

Young People (Complaints)

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints have been received from children and young people at each youth treatment centre since the introduction of formal compliants procedures.

Mr. Bowis: Formal complaints procedures were voluntarily introduced in the Glenthorne and St. Charles centres in 1989 and 1991 respectively. The number of complaints recorded by each centre over these periods is shown in the table.

	Glenthorne	*St. Charles*
April 1989-March 1990	36	—
April 1990-March 1991	44	—
April 1992-March 1993	54	12

Figures for 1991-92 were not collated as the service was under review prior to establishment as an executive unit of the Department from 1 April 1992.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many complaints have been made by or on behalf of children aged under 18 years concerning *(a)* hospital care, *(b)* clinical judgments and *(c)* health care in the community in each year since 1985;

(2) how many complaints by or on behalf of children and young people aged under 18 years have been made to the health service Commissioner in each year since 1985; and how many of those complaints concerned *(a)* health authorities, *(b)* the Mental Health Act Commission and *(c)* the Public Health Service Laboratory board.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health is she will list the date, incident, and local authority involved on each occasion when she has had reason to intervene under section 84 of the Children Act 1989.

Mr. Bowis: The power has not to date been exercised.

Complaint Procedures (Schools)

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what efforts are currently being made by her Department to monitor the implementation of her Department's guidelines on the establishment of complaints procedures within independent schools.

Mr. Bowis: Independent schools which are children's homes are required by the Representations Procedure (Children) Regulations 1991 to set up a representations procedure with an independent element to consider complaints and other representations made by or on behalf of children accommodated by them but not looked after by local authorities.

Other independent schools with boarding pupils are expected, in fulfilling their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children accommodated by them, to have a procedure to enable the children to raise concerns which cannot be dealt with informally and to raise these with an independent person if necessary.

The social services inspectorate reviews local authorities' inspections of these schools.

Rights of the Child

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the reservations entered by her Department on the United Nations convention on the rights of the child; and what was the reason behind each reservation.

Mr. Sackville: The Government entered the following two reservations in respect of matters for which the Department of Health has responsibility. These are set out in "Treaty Series No. 44 (1992), Convention on the Rights of the Child", presented to Parliament in July 1992.

a. The United Kingdom interprets the Convention as applicable only following a live birth.
b. The United Kingdom interprets the references in the Convention to "parents" to mean only those persons who, as a matter of national law, are treated as parents. This includes cases where the law regards a child as having only one parent, for example where a child has been adopted by one person only and in certain cases where a child is conceived other than as a result of sexual intercourse by the woman who gives birth to it and she is treated as the only parent.

The reservations reflect the existing position under United Kingdom law in the fields abortion, adoption and assisted conception.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement outlining the timetable envisaged by her Department for the preparation of the report scheduled to be submitted by the United Kingdom to the United Nations committee on the rights of the child; and if she will list the organisations to be consulted in the preparation of the report.

Mr. Bowis: The United Kingdom will submit its first report to the Convention on the rights of the child, on the measures adopted by the United Kingdom to give effect to the rights recognised in the convention, by 14 January 1994, as required by article 44 of the United Nations convention.

Accident and Emergency Departments

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to her answer of 20 July, *Official Report*, column *116*, if she will give the number of accidents and emergency departments in England in each year since 1979.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of the appointments made to public bodies by her since April 1992 have been advertised; and if she will list them.

Mr. Sackville: Information is not available centrally in respect of national health service authorities and trusts.

The posts of the director of the Health Advisory Service, who was appointed in April 1992, and the chairman of the Dental Practice Board, who was appointed in January 1993, were advertised.

The Department's aim is to appoint people from a wide range of different backgrounds and where advertising does not take place, many professional and voluntary bodies are consulted when appointments are made to public bodies.

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of the public bodies for which she is responsible hold meetings in public; and if she will list them.

Mr. Sackville: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Knowsley, North (Mr. Howarth) on 20 July at column *121* for a list of the public bodies. All 249 health authorities and 292 national health service trusts are required to hold at least one public meeting a year.

The other public bodies which hold public meetings are as follows:

The Health Education Authority
The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work
The English National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting
The United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting
The European Year of Older People and Solidarity Between Generations

Community Child Health Services

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reason it was decided to prepare a good practice guide on community child health services including school health services.

Mr. Bowis: The guide will assist purchasers to set quality standards in contracts for child health services in the community, and providers to deliver services to meet these standards.

Fluoridation

Mr. Sykes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence she has received concerning the addition of fluoride to drinking water supplies and its danger to health.

Mr. Sackville: There is no evidence to show that adjusting the level of fluoride in drinking water to the optimal concentration of one milligram per litre has any adverse effect upon health.

Heart Treatments

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what facilities exist for pacemaker implantations and cardiac catheterisation in the Waltham Forest area; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

Care Homes

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether religious orders, or proprietors of unregistered residential care homes of fewer than four beds established prior to 1 April, are required to register within the terms of the Registered Homes (Amendment) Act 1991; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Bowis: The Registered Homes (Amendment) Act 1991, which came into force on 1 April 1993, removed the exemption from the requirement to register with the local authority previously enjoyed by those running homes with fewer than four residents. This requirement applies to homes operating before 1 April 1993 as well as those opening after that date.

Religious communities are not exempt from the provisions of the Act, although registration is not required where all those being cared for have been resident with the person running the home for not less than five years.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many former in-patients of NHS psychiatric and mental handicap hospitals have been discharged to private commercial nursing homes, pursuant to arrangements made between their respective district health authority and the home's proprietor, where such arrangements include an agreement by the health authority to contribute towards the costs of the residents' treatment and care;

(2) how many residents of private commercial nursing homes registered under the Registered Homes Act 1984, currently receiving income support, were formerly in-patients of NHS psychiatric or mental handicap hospitals and were discharged into such homes by their respective district health authorities or NHS trusts; and how many of such nursing homes' residents are regarded as residing in a hospital or similar institution and receiving their in-patient treatment, pursuant to arrangements made by their local district health authority or NHS trust.

Mr. Bowis: This information is not available centrally.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she has taken to assure nursing home residents, their relatives, and nursing home proprietors that claimants refused income support payments as a result of the Court of Appeal's judgment in the case of Percival White *v.* Chief Adjudicating Officer, or whose payments are discontinued following review, will be regarded as in-patients of the national health service.

Mr. Bowis: On the information so far available, we do not believe that it has significant new implications for the care of people in nursing homes where support is provided from public funds but we will study the transcript of the judgment carefully when it is available.

Community Care

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the cost estimated during 1991 by the NHS management executive on the basis of returns received from regional health authorities of requiring strict compliance by district health authorities with the departmental guidance given in EL(90)MB/45; what steps her Department has taken to identify those district health authorities which have not complied with such guidance and that contained in EL(91)108; and what is the current estimated capital and revenue costs to those health authorities of complying with such guidance.

Mr. Bowis: The purpose of EL(90)MB/45 and EL(91)108 was to clarify the then legal position on arrangements between health authorities and voluntary and private nursing and residential homes and to advise authorities that they should take legal advice when entering into such arrangements. Authorities were not required to submit returns in response to the letters and individual arrangements are not subject to audit by the Department.

Mr. Alfred Morris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the Health Select Committee recommendation in paragraph 15 of its sixth report of Session 1992-93, "Community Care", HC 482, that the Government take further action in relation to local authorities making cash payments to disabled people to make their own personal assistance arrangements.

Mr. Bowis: We will consider all the Committee's recommendations and publish our response in due course.

Organ Donations

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress she has made with plans to identify and reimburse hospitals for costs incurred in organ donation.

Mr. Sackville: Since April 1992, national health service hospitals have been able to obtain reimbursement from central funds for the costs of maintaining potential organ donors in their intensive therapy units.

Child Birth

Mrs. Wise: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what are the costs of having a baby in an NHS hospital for ante-natal care, delivery costs and post-natal care.

Mr. Sackville: I shall write to the hon. Member.

Ethnic Minority Patients and Staff

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the initiatives being undertaken by the NHS management executive in respect of meeting the needs of black and ethnic minority patients and staff; and what equivalent initiatives she is taking for personal social services.

Mr. Sackville: Our goal for the health and personal social services is that there should be equal opportunities for both users and employees. To achieve this, we aim that the Department—including the national health service management executive—should harness current major policies so that black and ethnic groups derive full benefit from them; and should support those national and local organisations which represent the health and social care needs of black and ethnic groups, and may also assist in meeting them.

To carry forward these aims in respect of health and health care, my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary established a task force which examined how to spread more widely the good practice which already exists in improving services for ethnic people. We hope to announce our response shortly.

In respect of employment, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has set up an informal working group to advise her on the best way forward. She is currently awaiting the group's recommendations and will consider possible action in the autumn.

To carry forward the same broad strategic aims in the provision by local authorities and others of personal social services for black and ethnic minorities, the Department funds the race equality unit which offers a consultancy service to local authority social services departments on good practice in delivering services to ethnic minorities.

In addition, the Department's social services inspectorate has adopted a policy statement on race equality which commits it to

"promoting the delivery of accessible and cost-effective personal social services which are appropriate to the needs of a multi-racial and multi-cultural society, giving full regard to different needs and expectations of people from a variety of races and cultures".

It is carrying this out in various ways, including, for example, the preparation of practice guidance concerning community care in response to the inspectorate's report "Black communities—who cares?".

NHS Boards

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if board members of *(a)* district health authorities, *(b)* family health services authorities and *(c)* NHS trusts are required to declare interests; whether a register of such interests is maintained and available for public inspection;

and to which provisions of the citizens charter or to specific charters relating to their own duties they are subject.

Mr. Sackville: Chairmen and members of health authorities and chairmen and non-executive directors of national health service trusts are required to declare pecuniary interests that could influence, or be thought to influence, their judgment of any decisions to be taken by the authority or trust of which they are a member. There is no requirement to maintain a register of interests. There are no provisions in the citizens charter or specific charters which relate explicitly to board members.

Child Migration

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will establish a public inquiry into successive Governments' responsibility for child migration to Australia until the 1960s through the assisted passage scheme set up in the Empire Settlement Acts of 1922 and 1937 and the regulations that were introduced to monitor the local authorities making use of these schemes to send children to Australia to ensure the departure of only those children who would benefit from those schemes as required by section 17(2) of the Children Act 1948.

Mr. Bowis: We have no plans to do so.

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) for what reasons the files *(a)* MH 102 1954 "Emigration" of 15 children-correspondence with the Home Office, *(b)* MH 102 1889 report on the "Swan Home and Coogee Home, Perth", and *(c)* MH 102 1882 "Correspondence about Roman Catholic Child Migrants", relating to child migrants are closed under the 75-year rule; and whether the information contained within them can be made available to British child migrants for use in tracing relatives and counselling purposes;

(2) for what reasons the files *(a)* MH 102 1879 "Emigration of children to Christian Brothers Schools in Australia", *(b)* MH 102 1880 "Correspondence concerning the emigration of children to Christian Brothers Schools in Australia" and *(c)* MH 102 2022 "Emigration of young people to Australia" and a report on the Riverview Salvation Army training farm, Queensland, relating to child migrants are closed under the 75-year rule; and whether the information contained within them can be made available to British child migrants for use in tracing relatives and counselling purposes.

Mr. Bowis: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 19 July at column *5*.

Refugees

Mr. Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate has been made of the number of refugees who have not got access to a general practitioner; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Sackville: No such estimate has been made.

Trauma Operations

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* orthopaedic trauma operations and *(b)* trauma operations were performed in England in each year since 1990.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many major trauma units are in operation in England; and what is the projected budget for trauma in *(a)* 1994, *(b)* 1995 and *(c)* 1996.

Mr. Sackville: The Department of Health has been funding a pilot trauma centre at the North Staffordshire hospital centre national health service trust since 1990. The project is being evaluated by the medical care research unit in the university of Sheffield. Its report is expected before the end of 1994. Decisions on the future strategy for dealing with patients with major injuries will be taken in the light of this work.

Projected budgets for trauma are not available centrally. Individual health authorities are funded on the basis of their resident populations and it is a matter for them to determine the level of funding needed to secure a comprehensive range of health services, including the treatment of trauma, for their residents.

NHS Trust Directors (Political Affiliation)

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the regional health authorities which ask for a declaration of local political party affiliation in applications for non-executive and executive directors of NHS trusts.

Mr. Sackville: Information of this type is not available centrally. People are appointed to health authorities and trusts for their personal qualities and skills. Political affiliation is not a factor in these appointments.

Orthopaedic Surgeons

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the number of orthopaedic surgeons in England and Wales in each year since 1989.

Mr. Sackville: The available information is shown in the table.

Data on medical staff in trauma and orthopaedic surgery in England at 30 September

	1989	*1990*	*1991*
Consultant	717	755	776
Associate Specialist	53	63	72
Staff Grade	3	19	32
Senior Registrar	141	157	149
Registrar	387	387	385
Total	1,301	1,381	1,414

Notes:
1. Consultant, associate specialist and staff grade are career grades.
2. Information on senior registrar and registrar grades is included because they are doctors in higher specialist training.

Orthopaedic Consultants

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list her estimates for orthopaedic consultant posts that will be required in England in 1994, 1995 and 1996.

Mr. Sackville: This information is not available centrally. The Government encourage expansion of consultant numbers, but the Department of Health does

not plan consultant numbers. Consultant expansion is a matter for local employing authorities who should have regard to the health care needs of their local population and competing priorities in planning their medical staffing.

Executive Agencies

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she has identified within her Department any other candidates for agency status under the next steps initiative.

Mr. Sackville: I have decided that the medical devices directorate should be launched as an agency at the beginning of the next financial year.

The new agency will be responsible for ensuring that medical devices for sale or use in the United Kingdom meet appropriate standards of safety, quality and effectiveness and that these standards comply with the statutory scheme controlling medical devices throughout the European Community.

The agency will have more freedom to manage its affairs and clearer responsibilities within a framework of objectives, performance targets and resources agreed with Ministers.

I am confident that the move to agency status will enable the directorate to control, monitor and advise on the safety of medical devices more effectively and more efficiently, to the greater benefit of patients and users alike.

This will bring the agencies in the Department to four. The identification of other candidates is a continuing objective.

Maternity Hospitals

Mrs. Wise: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list for each NHS region and for special health authorities for each financial year from 1989-90 onwards *(a)* the total number of maternities, *(b)* the total number of birth episodes in the maternity hospital episode system and *(c)* the total number of birth episodes in the maternity hospital episode system which had a maternity tail.

Mr. Sackville: I will write to the hon. Member.

NHS Staff

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior managers in the national health service there were on each spinal point 1 to 30; what was the flat salary on each point; and what was the annual cost of employment per whole-time equivalent on each point in each year since the introduction of these grades;

(2) what was the number of unit general managers in groups 1, 2, 3, and 4, the salary range in each group and the annual cost of employment per whole-time equivalent in each group in each year since the introduction of these grades;

(3) what was the number of district general managers in groups 1, 2 and 3, the salary range in each group and the annual cost of employment per whole-time equivalent in each group, in each year since the introduction of these grades.

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* The information available is shown in the tables. Details of the annual cost of employment per whole-time equivalent in each senior manager, unit or district general manager group are not available centrally.

(a) increases in the management numbers reflect the planned and progressive introduction of general and senior management posts into the health service. This increase was not at the expense of direct patient services, as new money was secured for strengthening management which would not otherwise have been available to the national health service.

(b) Many staff who would previously have been classified in their professional capacity are now appearing under management headings. This includes a number of senior nurses along with other professional, executive and administrative staff.

Table 1
Number of National Health Service managers (whole-time equivalents) 1988-90

Spine point	1988	1989	1990
1	10	20	20
2	10	10	10
3	40	50	60
4	60	60	80
5	60	80	100
6	80	110	130
7	80	100	130
8	60	110	160
9	40	70	130
10	20	70	160
11	20	130	260
12	30	150	280
13	20	160	400
14	10	170	430
15	10	200	450
16	0	240	490
17	—	220	500
18	—	220	650
19	—	260	610
20	—	260	650
21	—	230	590
22	—	260	580
23	—	140	350
24	—	150	350
25	—	100	300
26	—	90	180
27	—	80	180
28	—	40	110
29	—	50	110
30	—	40	100
Other	80	10	410

Source: Non-medical workforce census for the years 1986-1990.
Notes:
(i) All figures quoted are for England, in whole-time equivalents (WTEs) and are as of 30 September.
(ii) Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 WTEs.
(iii) Where a zero is recorded, there were less than 5 WTEs.
(iv) 'Other' are staff on senior manager arrangements whose pay spine point is not recorded.
(v) Data for 1991-92 is not available centrally.

Table 2
Number of unit and district general managers (whole-time equivalents) 1986-90

	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
DGM1	10	35	30	40	45
DGM2	20	75	85	85	85
DGM3	10	35	35	35	30
UGM1	10	30	30	35	40
UGM2	40	130	140	175	180
UGM3	25	100	100	105	100
UGM4	35	145	135	120	95
UGM5	0	10	5	5	0

Source: Non-Medical Workforce Census for the years 1986-90.
Notes:
1. All figures quoted are for England, in whole-time equivalents (WTEs) and are as of 30 September.

2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 WTEs.
3. Where a zero is recorded, there were less than 2·5 WTEs.
4. Data for 1991-92 is not available centrally.

Table 3
Basic salaries of NHS senior managers 1987-92

Spine point	1987 (Dec.)	1988	1989 (Jan.)	1989 (Sept.)	1990	1991	1992
1	34,850	36,770	36,770	39,170	42,290	44,850	46,600
2	33,510	35,350	35,350	37,660	40,660	43,120	44,800
3	32,220	34,000	34,000	36,220	39,100	41,460	43,080
4	30,980	32,680	32,680	34,820	37,600	39,870	41,420
5	29,790	31,430	31,430	33,480	36,150	38,330	39,820
6	28,640	30,220	30,220	32,200	34,760	36,860	38,300
7	27,540	29,050	29,050	30,960	33,420	35,440	36,820
8	26,480	27,940	27,940	29,770	32,140	34,080	35,410
9	25,460	26,860	26,860	28,620	30,900	32,770	34,050
10	24,480	25,830	25,830	27,520	29,710	31,510	32,740
11	23,540	24,830	24,830	26,460	28,570	30,300	31,480
12	22,640	23,890	23,890	25,440	27,470	29,130	30,270
13	21,760	22,960	22,960	24,470	26,410	28,010	29,100
14	20,930	22,080	22,080	23,520	25,400	26,930	27,980
15	20,120	21,230	21,230	22,620	24,420	25,900	26,910
16	19,350	20,410	20,410	21,750	23,480	24,900	25,870
17	—	—	19,630	20,910	22,580	23,940	24,870
18	—	—	18,870	20,110	21,710	23,020	23,920
19	—	—	18,150	19,340	20,870	22,140	23,000
20	—	—	17,450	18,590	20,070	21,290	22,120
21	—	—	16,780	17,880	19,300	20,470	21,270
22	—	—	16,130	17,190	18,560	19,680	20,450
23	—	—	15,510	16,530	17,840	18,920	19,660
24	—	—	14,920	15,890	17,160	18,200	18,910
25	—	—	14,340	15,280	16,500	17,500	18,180
26	—	—	13,790	14,690	15,860	16,820	17,480
27	—	—	13,260	14,130	15,250	16,180	16,810
28	—	—	12,750	13,580	14,670	15,550	16,160
29	—	—	12,260	13,060	14,100	14,960	15,540
30	—	—	11,790	12,560	13,560	14,380	14,940

Notes:
1. In 1987 pay arrangements for senior managers included 16 spine points. In 1989 the spine was lengthened to 30 points when senior manager arrangements were extended to lower tiers of management.
2. Except where otherwise stated, all salary rates effective from 1 September.
3. Senior managers' salaries may be enhanced by performance-related pay nationally and geographical allowances in the south-east of England.

Table 4
Salary Range for Unit and District General Managers 1986-92

	1986 (May)	1986 (September)	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
DGM1	31,600	33,500	35,175	37,110	39,520	43,940-63,470	46,580-67,280	48,400-69,900
DGM2	30,200	32,000	33,600	35,450	37,750	41,500-59,950	43,990-63,550	45,710-66,030
DGM3	28,800	30,500	32,025	33,790	35,990	37,980-55,060	40,260-58,370	41,830-60,650
UGM1	26,400	28,000	29,400	31,020	33,040	37,980-55,060	40,260-58,370	41,830-60,650
UGM2	24,100	25,500	26,775	28,250	30,090	33,360-48,280	35,370-51,180	36,750-53,180
UGM3	21,700	23,000	25,150	25,480	27,140	30,110-43,670	31,920-46,300	33,160-48,110
UGM4	18,900	20,000	21,000	22,160	23,600	26,040-37,700	27,610-39,970	28,690-41,530
UGM5	15,600	16,500	17,325	18,280	19,470	—	—	—

Notes:
(i) Except where otherwise stated, all salary rates effective from 1 September.
(ii) Salary ranges were introduced in 1990 following a restructure of general manager pay arrangements.
(iii) Until 1990 the basic salaries for general managers could be enhanced by supplements (up to 15 per cent. and 10 per cent. for UGM and DGM posts respectively) and by performance-related pay (up to 20 per cent.). London Weighting was payable to general managers working in the London zones. From 1990 a maximum salary for each general manager post was set within the appropriate pay range. Managers are usually appointed below these maxima and move towards them according to performance. Non-superannuable, non-recurring annual bonuses of up to 8 per cent. depending on performance may be paid to managers on the maxima for their posts.
Geographical allowances may be paid in the south-east of England.
(iv) The UGM5 grade was assimilated into UGM4 with the restructuring in 1990.

Folic Acid

Mr. Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what further research she intends to initiate into links between the use of folic acid and reduction in birth defects and heart disease.

Mr. Sackville *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* The Department is currently exploring ways in which the mechanisms being set up to monitor the prevalence of neural tube defects following the issue of advice about folic acid in pregnancy, can be enhanced to include the prevalence of other common and major defects. Copies of the advice PL/CMO(92)18 and PL/CNO(92)12 are available in the Library.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Training Courses

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what is the latest information he has available on the number of people participating in *(a)* action for community employment, *(b)* the youth training programme, *(c)* the job training programme, *(d)* the enterprise allowance scheme, *(e)* job clubs and *(f)* Restart courses; how many participants are expected to participate in each programme in 1993-94; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: There are no Restart courses run in Northern Ireland. Under a Restart programme people who have been unemployed for 26 weeks or more are interviewed every 26 weeks when training needs and employment opportunities are discussed with a view to helping them find work. Otherwise the information is as follows:

Scheme	*Number of participants at 30 June 1993*	*Number expected to participate in 1993-94*
ACE	9,561	9,500
YTP	9,806	12,500
JTP	4,155	4,450
Jobskills[1]	1,611	2,000
Business Start Programme[2]	816	1,200
Job clubs	1,776	4,080

[1] Jobskills is a single integrated scheme which is being piloted in 2 areas in Northern Ireland and which may eventually replace both YTP and JTP.

[2] This scheme has replaced the Enterprise Allowance scheme.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print;

(2) what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape.

Sir John Wheeler: The Northern Ireland Office is currently working on its policy regarding employment of people with disabilities. A code of practice on the "Employment of People with Disabilities in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS)" was issued in August 1992 by the equal opportunities unit—EOU—to all Northern Ireland Departments. The code sets out the policy on the employment of people with disabilities, provides practical guidance on ways in which staff at all levels can help people with disabilities to participate fully in the work of the NICS and describes the special arrangements for the employment of staff who are registered disabled. The code lists the range of equipment which is available to assist people with a visual impairment: computer and Braille printer, computer and voice synthesiser, Braille jotter, computer enlarged text, tape recorder and personal reader service. In addition, a document brailling service is operated for those visually impaired civil servants who find it convenient to have documents in Braille for reference. While there is no overall policy in the Northern Ireland Office and the Northern Ireland Departments for the publication of information in alternative media or on the access to information where it has not been published in alternative media, the following procedures are in place throughout the Northern Ireland Departments.

Department of Health and Social Services

When publishing any information, the choice of media used, including Braille, large print or tape, is made in relation to the nature of the message and the audience to be reached.

Department of Economic Development

Through the Training and Employment Agency's disablement advisory service, there is a wide range of services available. Contact with clients is on a personal one to one basis. All relevant information is also available either in Braille, on tape or large print. When a client requires information which is not already available in the medium most acceptable, it is provided within three to six days.

A tape on consumer rights has been produced by the General Consumer Council for NI in conjunction with the Blind Centre which has distributed it by way of the talking newspaper network.

The Local Enterprise Development Unit is in the process of producing a range of audio tapes which provide advice on key areas of business development which are accessible for the blind or partially sighted.

Department of the Environment

The roads service operates the 'orange badge' scheme which provides on-street parking concessions for registered blind people and those with severe mobility handicaps. In this connection, the roads service has arranged for the production of an audio tape which outlines details of the orange badge scheme for those who have difficulty in reading the explanatory leaflet. This tape is available on request from Disability Action and the Blind Centre for Northern Ireland.

The road safety education branch makes use of TV, radio and large posters in road safety campaigns. The Jordanstown schools for children with the auditory or visual handicaps are supplied with road safety teaching materials and are visited by the Department's road safety education officers, who liaise with teachers on the teaching of road safety to blind or partially sighted people.

Other areas of the Department, while not having a defined policy relating to the production of information in alternative media, give assistance as required to blind or partially sighted people. For examples, ratepayers/housing

benefit claimants with impaired vision are given every assistance in understanding correspondence and completing forms. Where, appropriate, staff visit such persons in their own homes to assist them.

The water executive is currently in discussions with the Royal National Institute for the Blind to identify relevant information which could be produced in alternative media and stored centrally for access by registered sighted or blind persons.

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Sir John Wheeler: As of 1 July 1993, the following numbers of staff are employed as IT specialists to serve in the central business development service, the information systems units of each of the six Northern Ireland departments, the Northern Ireland Office, and the Police Authority for Northern Ireland:

2 Grade 6
13 Grade 7/Superintending Systems Analysts
71 Senior Systems Analysts
154 Systems Analysts
147 Programmer Analysts
144 Programmers

Additionally, there are a number of staff employed in the operation and support of mainframe computers in DHSS:

1 Staff Officer
6 EO1s
4 EO11s
9 AOs

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Sir John Wheeler: The information is as follows:

Department of Economic Development

Consultant	*Task for which engaged*
Logicom	Feasibility Study into Facilities Management
Logicom	Software Support
Logicom	Software Tailoring
Oracle	Software Support
Quadratron	Software Installation Review
Hoskyns	Systems Administration Support
Oracle	Database Development Support
Oracle	Consultancy
CSC Index	Corporate Information Management
Total cost	£79,855

Department of Agriculture

Consultant	*Task for which engaged*
Unisys Ltd.	Sizing capacity of the Animal Health System for contingency purposes
Hedley Computer Consultants	To check the Animal Health System to identify potential problem areas before the Spring business peak.
Stonehenge Consultancy Services Ltd.	Study to advise on strategic, operational and data management issues as part of a Client Database investigation.
Stonehenge Consultancy Services Ltd.	Advise on a Request for Information to the Trade for potential Data Dictionary suppliers and evaluation of responses.
Capita Management Consultants Ltd.	Delivery and Quality Assurance of a Framework Report for a Geographical Information System.
Hewlett-Packard Ltd.	Linking of equipment to the Laboratory Information Management System at the Veterinary Sciences Division.
Portfolio Systems	Advice on software development and hardware procurement for the Grants and Subsidies System.
CCTA	To appraise the way forward for the implementation of a computerised accounting system within DANI in the context of NICS policy on convergence.
Systar Ltd.	A capacity Management Study to consider the efficiency of and identify any problem areas in the Animal Health System.
Systar Ltd.	To assist in completing acceptance tests of a contingency Animal Health System, by a comparative analysis with the existing system of the capacity and performance of both systems.
CFM Group Ltd.	Consultation on Oracle Financials for the Common Accounting System
Total cost	£64,353

Department of Education

Consultant	*Subject of consultancy assignment*
Touche Ross and Co.	Information Systems Strategy Study in the Education Service
DIGITAL	Development of IT Contingency Plan Procedures Manual
DIGITAL	Networking Review of Digital Equipment in DENI
McDonnell Douglas	Consultancy on Civil Service payroll Interface with CAFIS
CCTA	Quality Assurance of IT Strategy
DIGITAL Equipment Company	Pathworks (Lan) Software
CCTA	IS Strategy Definition
Total Cost	£169,130

Department of Finance and Personnel

Consultant	*Task for which engaged*
Oracle Corp UK Ltd.	Consultancy on UNIX systems
Oracle Corp UK Ltd.	Consultancy on Oracle language
Class Ltd.	Consultancy on SSADM

Consultant	Task for which engaged
Digital	Consultancy on Project Management
CCTA	Scoping study for the IS Strategy definition
CCTA	Implementation of NICS Telecommunications Project
ITAT Associates Ltd.	Scoping study for NICS Datacoms network
CCTA	Market-Testing of the VLO computer operations
CFM	Assistance in the development plan re: IT operations
Belmin	Development of Purchasing System
P. Wells	Development of Purchasing System
J. Struthers	Development of Purchasing System
A. Farrell	European Satellite Information System
Purchasing Index (UK) Ltd.	Development of Purchasing Index
CFM	Feasibility study on the use of Electronic Data Interchange project
CCTA	Strategy Scoping study DOE Planning Service
CCTA	Common Accounting Project
CCTA	Miscellaneous Consultancy Support
Coopers and Lybrand	IT Market Testing Workshop
Computer Associate	CA Superproject Consultancy
Oracle Corp	Oracle Project for DOE
Inst. Software Engineering	Preparation and running of CASE seminar
ICS Computing	Open Systems Standards Project
Info Strategies	Open Systems Standards Project
CSC Index	Open Systems Standards Project
CCTA	Customer Services Agreement
NCC Ltd.	Open Systems Standards Project
Synaptics	Estimating and Project Management
Lorien Group	Report on use of Oracle with SSADM
Computer Search and Selection	Identification of Programming Language for PRO
Software Ireland	Open Systems Standards Project
Lucas Management Systems	Artemis 7000 VMS Project
Elite Consultancy	Introduction to Lotus—training course
University of Ulster	Introduction to Personal Applications
Total cost	£286,491

Department of Health and Social Services

Consultant	Task for which engaged
Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte	Examination of Child Support IT Strategy
Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte	Review of Senior Management FAMIS System
Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte	Replacement Mental Health Record System
Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte	Quality Review and Strategic Planning of Non-Operational Strategy on Single Terminal Access Point
Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte	Options Analysis and Recommendations to support Business Care for Interim Community Care Systems (NHSSB)
Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte	Options Analysis and Recommendations to support evaluation of Mental Health Systems
Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte	Options Analysis and Recommendations to support HPSS Maternity Systems
Coopers and Lybrand Deloitte	Options Analysis and Strategy Study to support IT Systems in Antrim Area Hospital
Touche Ross	Review of Child Support Management Information System Requirements
Touche Ross	Integrated Complementing System Model
Touche Ross	Options Analysis and Recommendations to support HPSS Laboratory Systems
Synaptics	Date Communications X400 Network Project
BIC Systems	Introduction of Network Guides
BIC Systems	Specialised Assistance for Prescription Pricing System
Elite Consultancy	Amendment to Project Cost Monitoring Software
Park Applications	Social Security Agency—Salaries Module
Park Applications	Specialised Assistance and Recommendations for Review of HPSS Finance Supplies Computer Systems
Sybex Consultancy	Document Imagining Process
Insight Consultancy	Security of DHSS Network
Insight Consultancy	Options Analysis and Recommendations for IT Security related to HPSS Patient Administration Systems
Insight Consultancy	Specialised Assistance in the formulation of generalised IT Security Guidelines for the HPSS
BIS	Options Analysis and Recommendations to support Review of HPSS Data Communications Strategy
CAMS	Implementation Support for READ CODES for Clinical Systems
Ernst and Young	Options Analysis and Recommendations to support Business Case for Regional Contracting System

Consultant	Task for which engaged
Capita	Options Analysis and Recommendations to support HPSS Accident and Emergency and Radiology Systems
McDonnell Douglas	Capacity Planning Review of Existing HPSS MDIS Machines
Intersystems	Specialised Assistance in Interfacing of Mumps Based Standards
Total cost	£400,272·00

Department of the Environment

Consultant		Task for which consultant engaged
Oracle UK Ltd.	Vehicle Inspection and Driving Test Branch Water Service	Quality Assurance System Development
CSL (NI) Ltd.	Rate Collection Agency	System Development
DBI Associates Ltd.	Roads Service	IS Strategy Study
Coopers, Lybrand, Deloitte	Water Service Rate Collection Agency Land Registry	IS Strategy Study (ongoing) IS Strategy Study NIGIS Topographical Database System
Helm Corporation Ltd.	Rate Collection Agency	Quality Assurance
CFM Northern Ireland Facilities Management	Driver Vehicle Testing Agency	System Development Data Capture to start System
ICS Computing Ltd.	Driver Vehicle Testing Agency Information Systems Unit	Interim Review of DVTA Project Assistance with preparation of a Technical Specification for the Unix Processor
Oracle UK Ltd.	Driver Vehicle Testing Agency	Quality Assurance
DBI Associates Ltd.	Information Systems Unit Roads Service	Telecoms Strategy Study Roads Service Routes
Aims Ireland Ltd.	Information Systems Unit Roads Service	Assets Management System Computerisation of Road Traffic Accidents
Digital Equipment Co. Ltd.	Information Systems Unit (for Driver Vehicle Testing Agency)	IT Project Management Consultancy (ongoing)
Helm Corporation Ltd.	Rate Collection Agency Driver Vehicle Testing Agency	Replacement Computer System System on Accrual Accounting
Coopers and Lybrand	Driver Vehicle Testing Agency Water Privatisation Information Systems Unit	Programme for Productivity Models and Reports Study of Water Charging Regime Rate Collection Agency—IS Strategy Study; Land Registry—NIGIS Topographical Database System
Wellington Computer Systems Ltd.	Roads Service	Street Lighting System
Lorien Computers Recruitment Ltd.	Roads Service	Feasibility Study into Bridge Management and Maintenance Project

TOTAL COST £636,000·00

Note: Information on the use of consultants in the Department of the Environment is collected and maintained for each financial year. Accordingly, the list for this Department shows computer consultants employed in the period 1 April 1991 to 31 March 1993.

Northern Ireland Office

Firm A—Consultancy work in connection with the setting up of a Financial Cost Management and Accounting Information System.

Firm B—Production of an Information System Strategy for the Authority and the RUC.

TOTAL COST £298,849·00

Health and Social Services

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he will carry out a review of the implementation of the Department of Health and Social Service's regional strategy for 1992 to 1997; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Ancram: Implementation of the regional strategy is kept continuously under review by the health and personal social services management executive on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Services.

The management executive's annual management plan sets a number of interim objectives and targets for boards which are based on those in the regional strategy. The new management executive corporate monitoring information system is being used to track progress in achieving these.

Belfast Harbour

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will agree to meet the leaders of the stevedores working in the Belfast harbour to discuss the future of the Belfast harbour; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: I have no plans at present to meet the leaders of the stevedores working in the Belfast harbour.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he intends to meet the chairman and chief executive of the Belfast Harbour Commission to discuss industrial relations areas of the port; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: I have no plans at present to meet the chairman and chief executive of the Belfast Harbour Commission.

Mr. William O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will ensure that the terms and conditions of the draft Ports (Northern Ireland) Order should include a clause giving working conditions for those people employed at the Belfast port equivalent to those at other United Kingdom ports; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: Provision has been made in the schedule to the draft Ports (Northern Ireland) Order relating to the transfer of employment rights and liabilities similar to that in the Ports Act 1991, which applies in the rest of the United Kingdom.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will hold urgent discussions with the chief executive of Belfast Harbour Commissioners and Scruttons Ltd. (Stevedores), to examine the terms and conditions being imposed on the Transport and General Workers Union dock labour force at Belfast harbour; and if he will make a statement on his findings.

Mr. Atkins: Terms and conditions for the dock labour force in Belfast are at present being discussed by representatives of the employers and their prospective employees. It would not be appropriate for me to intervene in these matters.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Sir John Wheeler: The following public bodies hold public meetings:—

Belfast Education and Library Board.
North-Eastern Education and Library Board.
South-Eastern Education and Library Board.
Southern Education and Library Board.
Western Education and Library Board.
The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.
Fire Authority for Northern Ireland.
Planning Appeals Commission.
Water Appeals Commission.
Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland.
Probation Board for Northern Ireland.
Northern Ireland Health Promotion Agency.
Eastern Health and Social Services Board.
Southern Health and Social Services Board.
Western Health and Social Services Board.
Northern Health and Social Services Board.
Eastern Health and Social Services Council.
Southern Health and Social Services Council.
Western Health and Social Services Council.
Northern Health and Social Services Council.
Royal Group of Hospitals and Dental Hospital HSS Trust.
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust.
Green Park HSS Trust.
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust.
Ulster, North Down and Ards Hospitals HSS Trust.
Eastern Ambulance Services HSS Trust.
The Registered Homes Tribunals.
Social Security Appeal Tribunals.
Medical Appeal Tribunals.
Disability Appeal Tribunals.
Northern Ireland Economic Council.

Rural Poverty

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action he will take in order to combat the levels of rural poverty in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement.

Sir John Wheeler: The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is tackling the problem of rural housing unfitness highlighted in the recently published 1991 house condition survey primarily through the housing grants scheme which is geared to direct most assistance to those in greatest need. The scheme includes provision for replacement grant and more generous financial assistance towards the installation of first-time services to meet the specific needs of rural dwellers.

The Department of Health and Social Services has provided a grant towards the administrative costs of the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network since its establishment in 1991.

Social security in Northern Ireland maintains parity with the rest of the United Kingdom. There are no specific provisions for rural areas, but income-related benefits provide assistance to those in greatest need regardless of their location.

In addition, the rural development programme in Northern Ireland is encouraging the economic and social regeneration of the most disadvantaged rural areas. It aims to assist those who, as part of a broadly based community group, are seeking to develop plans for the regeneration of their areas. I am confident that the long-term benefits that will accrue from the programme will help to alleviate rural poverty through increased employment opportunities—direct jobs, both full time and part time, and the indirect spin-offs to the general locality that will follow—for example, increased visitors to an area through local tourism development; helping to stem the migration from rural to urban areas; building of self-confidence to remote communities through the community development process; improved access to training and development for both individuals and groups; improvement in local infrastructure and services.

The Rural Development Council is a key element of the programme and is playing an important role in promoting and supporting local community development and advising Government on issues affecting rural communities.

While the programme is at an early stage of implementation, I have been greatly encouraged by the progress made to date by the Department of Agriculture, RDC, and community groups across Northern Ireland.

Five multi-sectoral projects have been launched, representing substantial national, European Community, International Fund for Ireland and private funding commitment to rural areas of greatest need. A number of other projects are at the development stage.

Creggan to Glassdrummond Road, Armagh

Mr. Mallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the accident history of the Creggan and Glassdrummond road, County Armagh; and if he will take steps to improve traffic safety on this road.

Mr. Atkins: Since 1986, three personal injury accidents have been reported. The Department proposes to improve traffic safety on the road by erecting signs and providing road markings at the Murray's road junction.

EC Assistance

Mr. Mallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will give details of all the successful and unsuccessful applications under the EC Leader and interregional co-operation—Interreg—programmes.

Sir John Wheeler: The information requested has been placed in the Library of the House. A total of 572 applications have been received under the Northern Ireland/Ireland Interreg programme. Of these, 265 have been successful, 281 unsuccessful and the remainder are still under consideration. Of the 61 applications considered under the Leader programme, four have been successful, 31 unsuccessful and the remainder are still under consideration.

Housing (Grants)

Mr. Mallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many grant applications have been received by each office of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive under the Housing Order 1992; and how many are *(a)* approved, *(b)* rejected and *(c)* incomplete.

Mr. Atkins: This is a matter for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, but the chief executive has advised me that the information requested is as follows:

Grants Office	*Number of Applications*			
	Received	*Approved*	*Rejected*	*Incomplete*
North-East Region				
Ballyclare	1,120	10	420	625
Ballymena	851	4	65	757
Coleraine	535	6	136	306
West Region				
Derry	1,916	—	346	1,410
Fermanagh	1,070	23	142	896
Omagh	1,282	54	109	913
South Region				
Craigavon	1,265	18	122	1,085
Newry	1,368	9	40	1,300
South-East Region				
Lisburn	1,225	25	143	1,041
Newtownards	1,456	29	392	963
Belfast Region				
Belfast District 1	1,162	24	428	618
Belfast District 2	1,509	67	358	854
Belfast District 3	1,539	49	114	1,268
Total	16,298	318	2,815	12,036

Note: 1,129 grant applications under the Order were subsequently withdrawn.

Camlough Lake, Armagh

Mr. Mallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proposals there are to develop Camlough lake, in County Armagh, for *(a)* recreation or tourism, *(b)* electricity generation and *(c)* mains water supply.

Mr. Atkins: The recreation and tourism potential of Camlough lake has been considered as part of the South Armagh tourism study which will be published in the near future.

The use of Camlough lake in the generation and supply of electricity is primarily a matter for Northern Ireland Electricity plc. I am not, however, aware of any proposals.

The Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland has a proposed programme of works with the aim of increasing abstraction from Camlough lake to supply future demands for the Newry area.

Mr. Mallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which bodies or organisations currently have responsibility for the land, waters and development of the Camlough lake area of County Armagh.

Mr. Atkins: The Camlough Waterworks Trustees and Northern Ireland Electricity plc own land around Camlough lake. Under the Water Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, the Department of the Environment has a duty to promote the conservation and cleanliness of water. Proposals for development are subject to the planning process.

Belfast International Airport

Mr. Stott: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what reports have been commissioned by the Northern Ireland Office concerning the viability of privatising Belfast international airport; if he will make them public; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: A feasibility study on the privatisation of Belfast International Airport was commissioned from Hambros Bank Ltd in 1991; its final report is confidential to Government and is not available publicly.

Mr. Stott: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he intends to take to ensure the full protection of current contractual agreements and working conditions for all employees at Belfast international airport on its transfer to private ownership; what changes there will be to contractual agreements or working conditions; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 will apply to the process of transferring Northern Ireland Airports Limited —NIAL—into private ownership. The employees of NIAL will therefore transfer to the successor company with the benefit of their terms and conditions of employment. On the sale of the shares of the successor company to private ownership employment contracts will be unaffected.

Mr. Stott: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many firefighters are employed at Belfast international airport; under whose specific control they currently operate; under whose specific control the airport fire service will operate after privatisation; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: Fifty-six airport firefighters are employed at Belfast International Airport. They operate under the control of the airport company and that arrangement will continue after privatisation.

Selective Financial Assistance

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which industrial enterprises benefited from allocation of selective financial assistance in South Down from 1 April 1981 to 31 March 1992.

Mr. Atkins: I shall write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as possible.

Electricity

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what reports he has received from the Director General of OFFER concerning his assessment of the imlementation of Northern Ireland Electricity in terms of prices, energy efficiency and standards of service.

Mr. Atkins: I shall write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as possible.

Rural Planning Strategy

Mr. Coe: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he intends to publish the new rural planning strategy and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Atkins: The new strategy will be published in September. This follows a major consultation exercise commenced in August 1991 involving the publication of the leaflet "What Kind of Countryside Do We Want?", and a series of public meetings or "rural clinics" organised by the Rural Development Council, the Rural Community Network and Community Technical Aid at which the issues raised in the leaflet were discussed. The strategy document will outline the overall planning strategy and regional policies for the rural area, and will collate within one document planning guidance to all those interested in development in the rural area.

Post Office Robberies

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *38*, why the robbery which occurred at Toome street post office, Belfast, on 17 June was not included in his answer;

(2) if he will make a statement on a robbery which occurred at Toome street post office, Belfast, on 17 June; and if he will state the value of cash and other items stolen.

Sir John Wheeler *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* There is no post office at Toome street, Belfast. The hon. Member may have in mind the Royal Mail's main postal sorting office. This is located at Royal Mail house, Donegall quay, Belfast, but is known locally as Tomb street, where it has a service entrance. I understand that there was an incident involving the unauthorised removal of a number of registered packages from these premises on 17 June, but it is inappropriate for me to comment further as the matter is sub-judice.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Police Computers (Misuse)

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have been disciplined for misusing personal information from police computers in the last year; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is intending in relation to paragraph 3.6 of the Police Complaints Authority report 1992 concerning the continued misuse of the police national computer; whether the procedures, recommended by a report to Parliament and published by the authority in 1986—HC 425—have been implemented; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: The arrangements for the protection of police national computer data against misuse by police officers are the responsibility of individual chief officers. The Association of Chief Police Officers published a code of practice for police computer systems in December 1987, in which the recommendations of the Police Complaints Authority report of 1986 were taken into account. The procedures for auditing use of the PNC are being considered further by ACPO in conjunction with the Home Office.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have been prosecuted for misusing personal information from police computers in the last year; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: Court proceedings information held centrally under the Data Protection Act 1984 and Computer Misuse Act 1990 does not distinguish as to the employment or professional status of the offender.

Deer

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the behavioural pattern of roe deer in their formation of family groups between May and August; and what protection is afforded to families of roe deer during that period;

(2) what plans he has to review schedule 1 to the Deer Act 1991;

(3) what assessment he has made of the impact of the Deer Act 1991 on population figures for roe deer;

(4) what protection is afforded to *(a)* doe and *(b)* buck roe deer during the rutting season; and what assessment he has made as to whether the provisions are compatible with each other.

Mr. Charles Wardle: I have received no evidence to suggest that the Act is not working effectively, nor that the close seasons set out in schedule 1 are in need of revision. I understand that the population of deer of all species is

rising. Protection for doe roe deer runs from 1 March to 31 October, which thus includes the rutting season. No similar protection is afforded to bucks, for which the close season runs from 1 November to 31 March.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Howard: Three. These are as follows: Parliamentary Boundary Commission for England; Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Wales; Community Development Foundation.

Young Detainees

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information he has on the number of children and young people originating in Wales detained under section 53 sentences and kept in prison departments.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Elfyn Llwyd, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to write to you directly in reply to your Parliamentary Question about the number of children and young people originating in Wales detained under Section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and kept in prison establishments.

The available information is for those detained under section 53 after sentencing by courts in Wales. The latest information is for 31 May 1993. On that date, there were 7 detainees aged between 15 and 17 and 4 detainees aged between 18 and 20 who were recorded as having received Section 53 sentences from courts in Wales.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children and young people were detained under section 53 sentences in Wales in each of the last five years.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The available information is for those received into Prison Service establishments after sentences under Section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 from courts in Wales during the years 1989 to 1991. Figures for 1992 are not yet available. The details for those recorded as being received from Welsh courts are given in the table for the age bands 14 to 16 and 17 to 20. These figures do not cover those received into local authority care.

Year	Age at reception 14-16	17-20	Total
1989	5	1	6
1990	4	1	5
1991	2	1	3

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many juveniles and young adults from Wales were remanded in custody in *(a)* 1979, *(b)* 1984, *(c)* 1989 and *(d)* 1990.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Elfyn Llwyd, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to write to you directly in reply to your Parliamentary Question about remands in custody of juveniles and young adults from Wales in *(a)* 1979, *(b)* 1984, *(c)* 1989 and *(d)* 1990.

The available information is for prison receptions of remands into custody from courts in Wales during the years 1989 and 1990. This is given in the attached table, with separate figures for first reception as untried and first reception as convicted unsentenced for each of the age bands 14 to 16 and 17 to 20.

Prison receptions of remands into custody from courts in Wales

	First reception		Total remands
	Untried	Convicted Unsentenced	
Age 14 to 16			
1989	63	5	68
1990	60	8	68
Age 17 to 20			
1989	755	89	844
1990	893	143	1,036

Merseyside Fire and Civil Defence Authority

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking following the recent inspection of the Merseyside fire and civil defence authority in respect of the financial provision for the authority for the remainder of 1993-94, and therefore in subsequent years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Howard: Her Majesty's inspector of fire services is preparing the report of the special inspection of the Merseyside fire brigade which he conducted during the week beginning 5 July. I shall want to consider the implications of the report carefully once it has been completed.

Hypnotics

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice he has recently received from his Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs concerning hypnotics; what conclusions he has reached in the light of any such advice; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has recently considered the misuse of the hypnotic temazepam. In November 1992 the Council recommended in principle that temazepam should be rescheduled from schedule 4 to schedule 3 to the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1985, a stricter regime of control.

The Home Office subsequently carried out a public consultation exercise on this proposal. The advisory council has now considered the responses to this consultation, and we are currently studying its conclusions.

Data Protection

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to remove the right of access under the Data Protection Act 1984 to computerised personnel and immigration records held as personal data; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: None.

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement in relation to progress being made towards agreement on the proposed European Commission directive on data protection; and in which areas there is still disagreement between member states.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to a question from him on 31 March at column *220*. The Council working party has concluded its initial consideration of the revised text of the draft directive. It has started a second reading, on the basis of a text containing amendments proposed by the Belgian presidency.

Racial Equality

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many complaints were received by the Commission for Racial Equality from and on behalf of children and young people aged 18 years or under in each year since 1987; and how many of them related to *(a)* racial harassment, *(b)* school exclusions, *(c)* school admissions and *(d)* transracial fostering adoption.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Life Prisoners

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the average sentence actually served by *(a)* men and *(b)* women sentenced to life imprisonment.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: According to the records held centrally, which are approximate, the average time served under sentence in Prison Service establishments by life sentenced prisoners first released on licence in 1992 was 13·2 years for males and 12·6 years for females. These figures are provisional and may be subject to revision at a later date.

Figures are published annually, but not split by sex, in "Prison Statistics England and Wales", table 8.5 of the volume for 1991, Cm 2157.

Knives

Mr. French: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to increase the sentences for those convicted of carrying a knife in public without good reason; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Maclean: The maximum penalty for the offence of carrying a knife in public without good reason is a level 3 fine—currently £1,000. In appropriate circumstances, a person may be charged with carrying an offensive weapon in public without good reason. This offence carries a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

The penalties for these offences are kept under review, but we have no present plans to invite Parliament to increase them.

Passports

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what considerations govern the number of sub-post offices permitted to handle passport applications.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the chief executive of the Passport Agency, whom I have asked to reply.

Letter from John Hayzelden to Mrs. Anne Campbell, dated 26 July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me, as the chief executive of the Passport Agency, to write to you in reply to your Parliamentary Question about passports.

The UK Passport Agency has a contract with Post Office Counters Ltd (POCL) under which they issue British Visitor's Passports (BVPs) and stock application forms for standard British passports. BVPs are issued only at Crown Post Offices in England, Wales and Scotland and at sub-Post Offices that were previously Crown Post Offices and at certain designated sub-Post Offices at ports and airports. By restricting the issue of BVPs to these offices, we can ensure close control over the issuing arrangements and the security of blank BVPs.

Application forms for standard passports (for issue at one of the Passport Offices located at Belfast, Glasgow, Liverpool, London, Newport and Peterborough) are available at the same Post Offices as those that issue BVPs. This means that the application forms are available at some 1,500 Post Offices in total, as well as at travel agents and Passport Offices. In deciding whether to extend the current range of outlets for passport application forms, we have to balance cost against customer need. Our surveys indicate that at present some 93 per cent. of passport applicants find our forms very easy or fairly easy to obtain, but we shall keep the matter under continuous review.

Murder (Life Sentences)

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison inmates in England and Wales were serving a life sentence for murder as of 16 July.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Responsibility for this matter has been delegated to the Director General of the Prison Service, who has been asked to arrange for a reply to be given.

Letter from Derek Lewis to Mr. Tom Cox, dated July 1993:

The Home Secretary has asked me to write to you directly in reply to your Parliamentary Question about the population of prisoners serving a life sentence for murder.

The latest available information is for 31 May 1993 when there were 2,520 prisoners in Prison Service establishments serving mandatory life sentences for murder.

Juvenile Offenders

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what studies have been considered by his Department concerning any relationship between juvenile offenders and *(a)* employment and qualifications, *(b)* school attendance records, *(c)* statemented pupil status, *(d)* earlier reference to educational support services, consequent on known behaviour and *(e)* any

other pattern of undesirable conduct for which remedies were likely to be available directly of indirectly from public funds.

Mr. Maclean: Home Office research study 96 "Schools, Disruptive Behaviour and Delinquency", published in 1988 is a comprehensive review of research in this area. The Home Office research and planning unit is continuing to monitor relevant research findings.

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the use by the courts of residence requirements when supervision orders are imposed on juvenile offenders.

Mr. Maclean: The Government are committed to ensuring that courts have the powers they need to deal effectively with offenders. The Children Act 1989 conferred upon courts a power to attach a residence requirement to supervision orders. This power came into force in October 1991. The guidance issued under the Children Act made it clear that this requirement is intended to be available for a repeat offender who has committed a serious offence and whose criminal behaviour is attributable to the circumstances in which he is living. No information is yet available on the extent of its use.

Settlement

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those who have been granted exceptional leave have gained settlement in each of the last five years.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Information on persons accepted for settlement under exceptional leave arrangements in the years 1988-92 is given in table 1.1 of Home Office statistical bulletin issue 19/93 "Asylum Statistics, United Kingdom 1992", a copy of which is in the Library. Information on persons previously granted exceptional leave who were subsequently accepted for settlement on another basis is not readily available.

Asylum

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have applied for asylum in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; and of these how many have been granted full asylum and how many have been removed or otherwise left the United Kingdom.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Information on applications for, and grants of, asylum in the United Kingdom in the years 1988-92 is given in table 1.1 of Home Office statistical bulletin issue 19/93 "Asylum Statistics, United Kingdom 1992", a copy of which is in the Library. Available information for 1992 on removals and voluntary departures of asylum seekers is given in table 9.1 of the bulletin. Corresponding information for years prior to 1992 is not available.

Deportation

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in how many cases during the last 12 months a deportation order has been signed by the Home Secretary but removal not affected due to the provisions of EC legislation.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Where it is decided not to effect the removal of someone who is the subject of a deportation order, normal practice is to revoke the order. There have been no revocations in the last 12 months arising from the application of EC law.

Working Holidaymakers

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been granted working holidaymaker status in each of the last five years; if he will give the breakdown by nationality; how many people granted holidaymaker status in each of the last five years did not leave the United Kingdom at the end of their conditions; and on what basis they sought to remain.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Reliable data on admissions of working holidaymakers are available only from 1 May 1990, and were given in the reply to a question from the hon. Member for Nottingham, North (Mr. Allen) on 14 June at columns *449-50*. I will write to my hon. Friend as soon as possible with the available after-entry data on working holidaymakers.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many visitors were admitted to the United Kingdom, during the last full year for which such figures are available as working holidaymakers; and from which countries of origin they came.

Mr. Charles Wardle: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to a question from the hon. Member for Nottingham, North (Mr. Allen) on 14 June at columns *449-50*.

Retired Firefighters

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will meet representatives from the National Association of Retired Firefighters to discuss their participation at the remembrance ceremony at the cenotaph; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what representations he has received regarding ex-fire service personnel taking part in the remembrance ceremony at the cenotaph; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: We have received two letters from the association's national secretary asking whether representatives of the association might take part in the ceremony. The civilian services contingent is made up of serving representatives of the civilian services. My right hon. and learned Friend would consider sympathetically any request from the association for a meeting, but I can hold out no hope of being able to extend membership of the contingent to retired personnel.

EC Work Seekers

Mr. Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what test is applied to European Community national work seekers in receipt of income support for over six months following the amendment to regulation 21(3) of the Income Support (General) Regulations 1977, introduced on 12 April;

(2) what action will be taken by his Department if income support is still in payment after six months to a European Community national considered not to have a genuine chance of finding work by the Employment Service.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Where a European Community national has been seeking work here for over six months and is in receipt of income support, his position is reviewed, taking into account any relevant information including an assessment from the Employment Service, of the person's work seeking activities and chances of finding work. If the European Community national is considered not to have any right, under EC law, to remain here, he is informed that he is no longer lawfully present and that he should leave the United Kingdom. He is then no longer eligible for the payment of income support.

Mr. Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what practical distinction he makes in considering whether nationals of other EC countries in receipt of income support are lawfully present in the United Kingdom between the tests of *(a)* a genuine chance of finding work or *(b)* a reasonable chance or opportunity of finding work.

Mr. Charles Wardle: In deciding whether a European Community national who is in receipt of income support is lawfully present in the United Kingdom, the criteria established by the European Court of Justice judgment of 26 February 1991 in the case of Antonissen—case C 292/89—are applied. These have the effect that the person must show, among other matters, that he has "genuine chances of being engaged".

Police (Encrypted Radios)

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on the provision of encrypted radios for Gloucestershire constabulary; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: We have had discussions with Gloucestershire constabulary regarding the use of encrypted radios by police forces. They were advised of the recommendations by the Association of Chief Police Officers on this matter, which the Home Office endorses.

Asylum and Immigration

Mr. Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers and immigration detainees have committed acts of deliberate self-harm in the last 12 months in United Kingdom prisons and detention centres.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: Between 1 June 1992 and 31 May 1993, four immigration detainees, including asylum seekers, committed acts of self-harm while detained in immigration detention centres. The immigration status of those detained in prison who committed acts of deliberate self-harm is not known.

Terrorists

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners serving sentences in British prisons for terrorist offences have been transferred to prisons in Northern Ireland; how many of them are men and how many are women; and how many cases are pending.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: The information requested is given in the table.

Prisoners transferred from Great Britain to Northern Ireland following conviction for terrorist offences and requests for such transfer outstanding.

	Men	*Women*
1988	0	0
1989	1	0
1990	0	0
1991	2	0
1992	3	0
Requests outstanding	14	2

Mrs. Fiona Jones

Mr. Rendel: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will raise within the Trevi group the question of the sentence on the murderer of the English school teacher, Mrs. Fiona Jones.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Trevi is a forum for intergovernmental police co-operation between the member states of the European Community and does not discuss judicial matters. Sentencing remains a matter for each member state—in this case, France.

Police Radio Service

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the recommendations of the review into the police radio service will be introduced; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Work is now in hand to translate the recommendations of the review of radio communications in the police and fire services into detailed implementation proposals. The present plan is for the new radio systems to be available for use by the police and fire services from 1998.

Merseyside Fire and Civil Defence Authority

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received in respect of the re-inspection of the Merseyside fire and civil defence authority; and if he will now make the report on that re-inspection public; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Charles Wardle: My right hon. and learned Friend has received a letter on behalf of hon. Members seeking a meeting to discuss matters relating to the special inspection of the Merseyside fire brigade which took place during the week beginning 5 July. We shall reply to those representations as soon as possible.

Drugs Education

Mr. Rathbone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish a formal response to the report of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs on drugs education in schools.

Mr. Maclean: We are now studying the report "Drug Education in Schools: the Need for a New Impetus", which was published on 28 June. We shall respond to the chairman of the advisory council with our views on the report in due course.

Secure Accommodation

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on provisions under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 which give powers to the courts to detain under 16-year-olds in secure accommodation and the use to which these powers have been put in the past 15 years.

Mr. Maclean: The Children and Young Persons Act 1933 allows the Crown court, inter alia, to order that 10 to 13-year-olds who have been convicted of murder or manslaughter and 14 to 15-year-olds who have been convicted of murder or manslaughter or other grave crimes which in the case of an adult would carry a sentence of 14 years or more, should be detained in a place to be determined by the Secretary of State for periods not exceeding the maximum period of imprisonment which could be imposed on an adult for those offences.

The Government are currently reviewing the adequacy of these provisions. Offenders in this age group may be detained, if the Secretary of State so decides, in secure accommodation managed either by local authorities, or by the youth treatment service or by the Prison Service. Information, available only for years since 1979, relating to the detention of 10 to 15-year-olds under section 53 after conviction for specific offences is given in the table.

Summary of 10-15 year olds sentenced under Section 53, 1979-91—England and Wales

Year / *Offence*	*1979*	*1980*	*1981*	*1982*	*1983*	*1984*	*1985*	*1986*	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*
Murder	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	3	2	0	2	2	1	0	0	1
Attempted murder	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Manslaughter	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	0	3
Wounding or other act endangering life	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	7	4	1	1	8	7	7	2	6
Endangering railway passenger	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other wounding etc.	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
Total—violence against the person	2	12	10	12	12	7	5	7	12	10	10	2	13
Sexual offences	1	5	7	4	2	6	3	8	6	8	11	10	6
Burglary	3	5	4	2	0	1	12	9	7	11	6	8	4
Robbery	5	5	12	15	11	9	22	22	26	31	15	17	22
Theft and handling stolen goods	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Criminal damage (Arson)	2	6	2	7	7	6	11	4	9	10	9	10	6
Drug offences	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other indictable non-motoring offences	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Total	13	33	35	39	32	29	54	51	60	70	52	48	51

[1] A breakdown of the total number of offences of violence against the person is not known for these years.

Note: Comparisons with prison receptions suggest there may have been under recording during 1989 and 1990, although this is less likely in 1990.

Mandatory Life Sentences

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he intends to implement the House of Lords judgment in R. *v* Secretary of State for the Home Department ex parte Smart, Pegg, Doody and Pierson, given on 24 June.

Mr. Howard: The current procedures governing the release of persons convicted of murder and sentenced to mandatory life imprisonment are described in statements made in 1983 and 1987 by two of my predecessors as Secretary of State, the right hon. Sir Leon Brittan and my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr. Hurd) respectively.

Under those procedures, shortly after a person has received a mandatory life sentence, the Secretary of State invites the judiciary to give its views on the period to be served to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence. The judiciary's views presently comprise the advice of the trial judge and the Lord Chief Justice. Their advice is one factor among others which the Secretary of State considers before he sets the date for the first review by the Parole Board of the case for releasing the prisoner on licence.

This review is timed to take place three years before the expiry of the minimum period which the Secretary of State considers necessary to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence or, where that period is 20 years or more, 17 years after sentence.

At present, a prisoner is not told the contents of the judicial recommendation, nor the length of the period which the Secretary of State has determined to be the minimum necessary to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence. However, where the period so determined is less than 20 years, the prisoner can deduce its length by adding three years to the date which he is given for his first review; and where it is 20 years, he can deduce its length from the terms of the notice informing him that his first review will take place 17 years after sentence. But where the period is more than 20 years, the prisoner is not able to establish its total length.

The House of Lords judgment requires me to inform the prisoner of the recommendations made by the judiciary as to the period necessary to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence and of the substance of any opinions expressed by the judiciary which

are relevant to my decision as to the appropriate minimum period to be served to satisfy those requirements. In addition, I am required to afford the prisoner the opportunity to submit written representations. Although I am not required to adopt the judicial advice, I must give reasons where I or a Minister acting under my authority decides to depart from it.

I propose to give effect to this judgment by informing all persons who are now serving a mandatory life sentence and any persons who may subsequently be so sentenced, as soon as is reasonably practicable, of the substance of the judicial recommendations which were made in their case as to the period to be served by them in order to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence. I am consulting the Lord Chief Justice about the precise way in which this will be done.

In addition, I have decided to disclose to both existing and future mandatory life sentence prisoners the Secretary of State's decision, taken after consideration of the judicial advice, on the appropriate period in question.

In accordance with the judgment, reasons will be given to the prisoner for any departure from the judicial view.

As the judgment makes clear, successive Secretaries of State have been, and I continue to be, willing to consider any written representations by prisoners as to the minimum period to be served by them to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence. In future, prisoners will be afforded the opportunity to submit such written representations at the beginning of the sentence and before I have formed a view as to the minimum period for retribution and deterrence.

I take this opportunity to emphasise that the view which I or a Minister acting under my authority takes, at the beginning of a mandatory life sentence, of the period necessary to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence is an initial view of the minimum period necessary to satisfy those requirements. It therefore remains possible for me, or a future Secretary of State, exceptionally to revise that view of the minimum period, either by reducing it, or by increasing it where I, or a successor in my office, concludes that, putting aside questions of risk, the minimum requirements of retribution and deterrence will not have been satisfied at the expiry of the period which had previously been determined.

Before taking a decision to increase this minimum period, the Secretary of State would inform the prisoner that he was minded to take this action and afford him the opportunity to submit written representations as to why the period should not be increased. Any such representations would then be taken into account before any new decision was made. If it were decided to increase the period in question, the prisoner would be informed of the length of the new period and given the reasons for the increase.

Finally, I wish to state that a mandatory life sentence prisoner should not assume that once the minimum period fixed for retribution and deterrence has been satisfied he will necessarily be released if it is considered that he is no longer a risk. In this respect, the position of a prisoner subject to a mandatory life sentence is to be contrasted with that of a prisoner serving a discretionary life sentence. As the then Minister of State, my right hon. Friend the Member for Mitcham and Morden (Dame A. Rumbold), stated in the House on 16 July 1991 during debates on the Criminal Justice Bill:

"In a discretionary case, the decision on release is based purely on whether the offender continues to be a risk to the public. The presumption is that once the period that is appropriate to punishment has passed, the prisoner should be released if it is safe to do so. The nature of the mandatory sentence is different. The element of risk is not the decisive factor in handing down a life sentence. According to the judicial process, the offender has committed a crime of such gravity that he forfeits his liberty to the State for the rest of his days—if necessary, he can be detained for life without the necessity for subsequent judicial intervention. The presumption is, therefore, that the offender should remain in custody until and unless the Home Secretary concludes that the public interest would be better served by the prisoner's release than by his continued detention. In exercising his continued discretion in that respect, the Home Secretary must take account, not just of the question of risk, but of how society as a whole would view the prisoner's release at that juncture. The Home Secretary take account of the judicial recommendation, but the final decision is his."—[*Official Report*, 16 July 1991; Vol. 193, c. 311-12.]

I wish to make it clear that, in so far as the judgment of the House of Lords considered that there was inconsistency between the practice established by Sir Leon Brittan in 1983 and that statement by my right hon. Friend, I wholly endorse the latter as a desciption of the way in which I currently exercise my discretion to release mandatory life sentence prisoners and intend to do so in future.

Accordingly, before any such prisoner is released on licence, I will consider not only *(a)* whether the period served by the prisoner is adequate to satisfy the requirements of retribution and deterrence and *(b)* whether it is safe to release the prisoner, but also *(c)* the public acceptability of early release. This means that I will exercise my discretion to release only if I am satisfied that to do so will not threaten the maintenance of public confidence in the system of criminal justice.

Everything that I have said about the practice of the Secretary of State in relation to mandatory life sentence prisoners applies equally to persons who are, or will be, detained during Her Majesty's pleasure under section 53(1) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, as well as to persons who have been, or will be, sentenced to custody for life under section 8 of the Criminal Justice Act 1982.

Forensic Science Service

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will lay before Parliament the annual report for the Forensic Science Service; and if he will make a statement about the financial targets this year.

Mr. Howard: I have today laid before Parliament copies of the Forensic Science Service's annual report and accounts for 1992-93.

My right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke) announced on 4 May at column 72 financial and service level targets for the Forensic Science Service for 1993-94 based on a forecast outturn for 1992-93. On the basis of the audited outturn for 1992-93, the unit cost efficiency target has been revised from 1·6 per cent. to 1·8 per cent. The other performance targets remain the same.

Channel Tunnel

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the criminal injuries compensation scheme will apply to the channel tunnel.

Mr. Howard: The British part of the channel tunnel —that is to say, the land comprising the tunnel system as far as the frontier at the mid-point of the tunnel—is part of Great Britain by virtue of section 10 of the Channel Tunnel Act 1987. Subject to certain exceptions explained in this answer, blameless victims of crimes of violence in that part of the tunnel system will accordingly be eligible to apply for compensation under the criminal injuries compensaton scheme in the normal way.

However, article 30(1) of schedule 2 to the Channel Tunnel (International Arrangements) Order 1993 provides that claims for compensation for injury caused by or to officers of the adjoining state in the exercise of their functions in the host state shall be subject to the law and jurisdiction of the adjoining state as if the circumstances giving rise to the claim had occurred in that state. This means that the scheme will cover injuries caused by or to United Kingdom officers anywhere in the tunnel system or control zones, but not injuries caused by or to foreign officers. Claims for injury caused to or by foreign officers must accordingly be made against the officer's country.

In order to ensure that the scheme reflects these provisions I am amending it by the insertion of new paragraphs 4A and 28A, which read as follows:

"4A. The Board will entertain applications under paragraph 4 arising from injury or death caused by or to officers of the United Kingdom—but not of any other state —in the exercise of their functions in the Channel Tunnel or control zones, within the meaning of the Channel Tunnel (International Arrangements) Order 1993."

"28A. Paragraph 4A will take effect from the date the Channel Tunnel (International Arrangements) Order 1993 comes into force."

The order is expected to come into force on 2 August 1993.

Police Complaints Authority

Sir Ivan Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new appointments have been made to the Police Complaints Authority.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Anthony Williams MBE and Mr. Linbert Spencer have accepted my predecessor's invitation to serve as members of the Police Complaints Authority. Mr. Williams has retired from the Army with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and Mr. Spencer is an employment consultant. Mr. Williams and Mr. Spencer will serve for three years, from 24 June 1993 and 26 July 1993 respectively.

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information he has on the number of complaints received by the Police Complaints Authority from and on behalf of children and young people aged under 18 years.

Mr. Charles Wardle: Responsibility for recording complaints against the police rests with the chief officer of the force concerned. Statistics collected centrally do not show the age of complainants but chief officers have been asked to supply this information from this year.

Returning Residents

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people, by nationality, have requested entry to the United Kingdom as returning residents, in each quarter since April 1992; and how many have been *(a)* readmitted as such, *(b)* readmitted for a limited period and *(c)* refused entry to the United Kingdom.

Mr. Charles Wardle *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The available information is given in the tables. Information is not available on persons seeking admission as returning residents who were found not to satisfy the relevant requirements of the immigration rules but who were admitted for a limited period under another category.

Table 1 Persons[1] admitted as returning residents since April 1992[2]

Nationality	*Number of admissions*		
	2nd quarter 1992	*3rd quarter 1992*	*4th quarter 1992*
EUROPE	28,640	39,550	25,440
Austria	2,300	3,050	1,850
Bulgaria **	110	140	110
Cyprus	1,370	2,540	1,100
Czechoslovakia	240	290	160
Finland	1,770	2,450	1,480
Hungary	350	570	310
Malta	1,850	3,100	1,490
Norway	3,150	4,030	2,620
Poland	1,960	3,800	1,920
Romania	130	190	100
Sweden	6,890	7,180	6,170
Switzerland	4,320	4,970	3,810
Turkey	2,460	4,990	2,520
Former USSR	430	890	570
Former Yugoslavia	1,300	1,380	1,220
AMERICAS	50,550	60,380	44,920
Argentina	370	330	310
Barbados	410	570	420
Brazil	780	1,200	650
Canada	8,670	10,410	7,040
Chile	460	660	330
Colombia	660	850	460
Cuba	10	+	+
Guyana	260	380	300
Jamaica	1,590	2,100	1,640
Mexico	370	460	300
Peru	230	190	140
Trinidad and Tobago	830	1,050	620
USA	35,660	41,900	32,510
Uruguay	40	90	40
Venezuela	220	200	170
AFRICA	14,340	20,580	13,980
Algeria	540	890	420
Egypt	790	1,070	780
Ethiopia	100	100	70
Ghana	1,660	2,250	1,900
Kenya	1,180	1,440	960
Libya	150	220	200
Mauritius	1,020	1,420	770
Morocco	1,030	2,870	1,020
Nigeria	3,320	4,410	3,850
Sierra Leone	190	310	200
Somalia	30	60	40
South Africa	2,540	2,720	2,090
Sudan	200	320	120
Tanzania	360	620	400
Tunisia	300	600	270
Uganda	170	230	160
Zambia	240	340	210
Zimbabwe	500	690	530
ASIA	46,600	51,300	35,040
Bangladesh	2,380	3,000	1,410
China	220	220	220
Hong Kong BDTC/BN(O)	1,270	1,400	870
India	14,560	15,300	11,580
Indonesia	190	250	140

Nationality	Number of admissions 2nd quarter 1992	3rd quarter 1992	4th quarter 1992
Iran	3,750	4,910	2,580
Iraq	560	690	460
Israel	1,820	1,900	1,390
Japan	5,680	6,600	4,840
Jordan	430	570	400
Kuwait	150	150	100
Lebanon	1,180	1,410	880
Malaysia	3,340	3,340	2,130
Pakistan	5,680	4,650	4,260
Philippines	1,640	1,860	1,030
Saudia Arabia	290	390	220
Singapore	720	860	630
Sri Lanka	1,490	2,460	1,060
Syria	260	350	130
Thailand	1,000	980	670
AUSTRALASIA	19,260	20,500	15,010
Australia	12,090	13,010	9,660
New Zealand	7,160	7,490	5,350
OTHERS	6,610	8,630	4,940
British Overseas Citizens	1,240	1,270	790
Other countries not elsewhere specified	2,590	3,340	2,040
Stateless	2,790	4,020	2,060
ALL NATIONALITIES	166,000	200,950	139,330

+ 5 or fewer.

[1] Excluding EC nationals to whom the immigration rules on returning residents do not apply.

[2] Data for the first two quarters of 1993 are not yet available.

Table 2

Persons seeking admission as returning residents who have been refused and removed since April 1992[1]

Nationality[2]	2nd quarter 1992	3rd quarter 1992	4th quarter 1992
Poland	—	—	1
Former Yugoslavia	1	—	—
Brazil	—	1	—
Jamaica	—	1	1
Venezuela	—	1	—
Nigeria	1	—	—
Zambia	1	—	—
Zimbabwe	—	1	—
Bangladesh	6	—	4
Hong Kong BDTC/BN(O)	1	—	—
India	3	3	1
Iran	1	—	—
Pakistan	2	—	—
Other countries not elsewhere specified	1	—	—
All nationalities	17	7	7

[1] Data for the first two quarters of 1993 are not yet available.

[2] Nationalities other than those given are zero.

Immigration

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many nationals of *(a)* Jamaica, *(b)* Turkey, *(c)* Morocco, *(d)* the USA, *(e)* Australia, *(f)* Malaysia, *(g)* Hong Kong, *(h)* Guyana, *(i)* Trinidad, *(j)* Colombia and *(k)* Algeria were (i) granted and (ii) refused permission to enter the United Kingdom at ports of entry in each quarter since January 1992, and in total, to the latest available date.

Mr. Charles Wardle *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The information requested for 1992 is given in the table; corresponding data for the first two quarters of 1993 are not available.

Passenger admissions and persons refused leave to enter and removed, for selected nationalities in 1992.

Nationality	1st quarter 1992 Admissions	Refused and removed	2nd quarter 1992 Admissions	Refused and removed	3rd quarter 1992 Admissions	Refused and removed	4th quarter 1992 Admissions	Refused and removed	Year 1992 Admissions	Refused and removed
Jamaica	4,930	100	6,010	98	9,170	104	5,760	107	25,900	409
Turkey	16,300	57	18,400	55	25,300	52	19,600	64	79,500	228
Morocco	3,540	21	4,410	28	6,720	27	3,840	23	18,500	99
USA	521,000	228	823,000	251	903,000	247	559,000	207	2,810,000	933
Australia	77,100	65	133,000	69	156,000	54	98,600	48	465,000	236
Malaysia	14,500	70	25,300	111	31,700	81	22,100	84	93,600	346
Hong Kong (BDTS and BN(O)s)	17,700	34	21,000	39	39,500	35	13,600	23	91,800	131
Guyana	1,000	9	1,580	16	2,200	12	1,240	23	6,030	60
Trinidad and Tobago	3,060	13	4,490	13	7,040	18	3,740	17	18,300	61
Colombia	3,750	102	5,990	93	6,620	80	4,750	122	21,100	397
Algeria	2,690	60	3,840	45	5,560	58	3,260	70	15,300	233

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were detained under Immigration Act powers *(a)* overnight, *(b)* between one night and one month and *(c)* for a period of more than

one month in (i) Harmondsworth detention centre, (ii) the Queen's building in Heathrow, (iii) terminal 4, Heathrow, (iv) the Beehive, Gatwick, (v) HM prison Haslar, (vi) HM prison Pentonville and (vii) any other establishments, by name, during *(a)* 1992 and *(b)* 1993 up to the latest convenient date; and of these people, how many in each category were (1) women, (2) children aged under 18 years and (3) men.

Mr. Charles Wardle *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The available information is given in the table. The other information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Persons detained overnight or longer at certain locations[1]

Location, length of stay, type of detainee	*1992*	*1993 January to June*
Harmondsworth[2]	702	[3]121
Queen's Building, Heathrow	1,644	[3]359
Haslar	348	[3]164
Stansted	[4]211	[3]151
The Beehive, Gatwick:		
Overnight	2,052	1,060
More than one night, less than one month	907	458
One month or more	—	—
Terminal 4, Heathrow:		
Overnight:		
Men	792	422
Women	526	351
Children under 18 years	17	13
	1,335	786
More than one night, less than one month:		
Men	27	3
Women	38	11
Children under 18 years	4	—
	69	14
One month or more	—	—

[1] Unless otherwise stated, the data include persons initially detained elsewhere prior to being detained at the location given.
[2] Data mainly exclude persons detained initially elsewhere, and exclude illegal entrants and deportees detained.
[3] January to March 1993 only.
[4] August, when detention centre opened, to December 1992 only.

Electoral Registration

Mr. Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will review the arrangements for inspecting marked registers after elections so as to allow such inspection to take place in the electoral area in question rather than in London.

Mr. Peter Lloyd: This matter is currently being considered as part of our post-election review.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Sustainable Development

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Lord President of the Council if he will make it his policy to introduce proposals for a Select Committee on Sustainable Development.

Mr. Newton: I have no plans to do so. However, the hon. Member will no doubt welcome the United Kingdom strategy for sustainable development consultation paper which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment launched last week, and may wish to contribute his views.

House Committees

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Lord President of the Council what Committees of the House other than Standing Committees have members of the Government as members; and if he will name the Committees and the hon. Members concerned.

Mr. Newton: The details requested are as follows:

Committees	*Members*
Accommodation and Works Committee:	Mr. David Lightbown
Administration Committee:	Mr. Sydney Chapman
Broadcasting Committee:	Mr. Greg Knight Mr. Tony Newton
Finance and Services Committee:	Mr. Greg Knight Mr. Tony Newton
Procedure Committee:	Mr. Andrew MacKay
Public Accounts Committee:	Mr. Stephen Dorrell

Boundaries

Mr. Cox: To ask the Chairman of the Accommodation and Works Committee if he will list the current boundaries of the precincts of the House; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Ray Powell: A map of the parliamentary estate is contained in section 2 of the Members' handbook. Large-scale drawings delineating the precise boundaries of the precincts of the House are held by the Parliamentary Works Directorate.

Staff Manning Levels

Mr. Cox: To ask the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed, as representing the House of Commons Commission, what discussions are now taking place and with whom as to possible reductions of staff manning levels in any building in which Members of Parliament or their staff have offices; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Beith: Following the decision by the House of Commons Commission on 5 July to implement a revised complement for the office keeper and attendants' staff in the Serjeant at Arms' Department, members of the union branch committee of NUCPS and staff have been briefed on the changes. The staff inspector will review the operation of the new proposals after they have been in force for 12 months. Such a review will enable the Commission to be satisfied that the new grading levels are appropriate, that the wider use of information technology has been achieved without undue difficulty, and that the new staff complements provide a satisfactory level of service to Members and their staff.

The various staff changes will not be implemented until after the House returns in October. I understand that all

the office keeper and attendant staff will be informed of their new locations of work before the House rises and that training is being arranged for any new duties to be undertaken.

Parliamentary Buildings

Mr. Cox: To ask the Chairman of the Accommodation and Works Committee what additional facilities have been requested by hon. Members in each of the parliamentary buildings where hon. Members and staff now have offices; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Ray Powell: Details of facilities available to Members are contained in the leaflet "Accommodation and General Facilities for Members, their Private Secretaries and Research Assistants". That leaflet is reprinted in the Members' handbook and is available from the Serjeant at Arms office and the special leaflet racks.

Requests for additional facilities are received regularly from Members, and those requests that cannot be provided on a routine basis are referred to the relevant domestic Select Committee for further consideration.

If my hon. Friend has any particular issue in mind, he should, in the first instant contact the Serjeant at Arms or relevant head of department.

Amar Appeal

Miss Emma Nicholson: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if he has considered an application for an exhibition relating to the Amar Appeal to be displayed in the Upper Waiting Hall.

Mr. Michael J. Martin: I understand that, under procedures agreed by the Administration Committee, arrangements have been made for the exhibition to be held in the Upper Waiting Hall from 15 to 19 November.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list those countries that have received advice and assistance on privatisation, contracting out and next steps style reforms under the know-how fund and other aid sources, and the cost in each case.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Most of the assistance provided overseas on privatisation has been to countries in east and central Europe and the former Soviet Union. Figures for individual countries since the launch of the know-how funds, including outstanding commitments, are:

	£'000
Poland	5,211
Romania	1,783
Hungary	4,424
Bulgaria	430
Former Czechoslovak Federation	4,800
Czech. Republic.	200
Slovak Republic.	500
Estonia	371
Latvia	200
Lithuania	11
Russia	2,335
Ukraine	355

Consultancy, advisory and twinning assistance has also been provided to developing countries but on a much smaller scale. Recent examples include Tanzania, Zambia, Guyana and Jamaica. Detailed expenditure figures are not readily available.

Advice on contracting out and next steps style reforms is usually part of a broader agenda of civil service and local government reform. The know-how funds are providing or developing assistance to central Government reform in Poland, Hungary, Albania and Ukraine and to local government in Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Bulgaria and Romania. Among developing countries, civil service or local government reforms have been or are of particular importance in the Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Uganda and Zambia while reform of individual institutions forms a part of most significant aid programmes. It is not possible to identify the elements of these programmes which relate specifically to contracting out and next steps style reforms.

World Development Conference

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent world development report, "Investing in Health" and on the visit of the Minister for Overseas Development to the world development conference in Liverpool.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We welcome this comprehensive and stimulating report and agree with its central thesis that a major proportion of the global burden of ill health could be prevented or inexpensively treated through cost-effective health care interventions. We endorse its concern about the huge burden of disease suffered by Africa.

At the Liverpool school of tropical medicine on 23 July, my right hon. and noble Friend the Minister for Overseas Development delivered a speech entitled "The Challenge for Investors in Health: ODA's Perspective". She referred to two important challenges n the report: how can Governments and donors (i) provide more resources for health care and (ii) concentrate resources on cost-effective health care. She explained that ODA's health and population assistance is addressing these challenges by (i) helping to develop and refine health technologies, (ii) helping countries establish the systems needed to deliver health care technologies and (iii) encouraging reallocation of resources for health care, so that investments lead to real health improvements for the greatest number of people. We have placed a copy of her speech in the Libraries of the House.

Malawi

Mr. Gallie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has for restoring financial aid to Malawi.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: Progress on political and economic reform since the referendum has been encouraging. We have told President Banda that we plan to resume balance

of payments aid in September and that we will be reviewing other aspects of our aid programme to Malawi at about that time. We will continue to follow closely the course of political and economic events in Malawi and this will continue to influence our aid programme.

Environmental Consultancies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the names of the environmental consultancies engaged by the Overseas Development Administration for the last five years and provide, in each case, the number of projects for which environmental impact assessments have been prepared and the total value of contracts awarded.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd *[holding answer 13 July 1993]:* A list of the 69 environmental consultancies engaged over the last five years at a total cost of about £9·4 million has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

In line with the environmental appraisal process set out in the ODA manual of environmental appraisal, full environmental impact assessments—EIAs—are undertaken only on projects where earlier examination indicates this is required. EIA is a process rather than a single event. ODA's work in this area can often involve assessing the quality and comprehensiveness of EIAs completed by developing countries or other donors, and strengthening them by additional EIA inputs in line with the manual.

ODA's central financial records show that over the last five years we have contributed to 10 EIA assessments using outside environmental consultancies at a cost of about £2·8 million. These are included in the list referred to earlier in my answer.

ODA central financial records do not, however, cover those environmental assessment and monitoring activities undertaken by in-house advisers and which cover, at the appropriate stage, most of the projects under consideration by ODA.

NATIONAL FINANCE

Bank of England

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the sections of the Banking Act 1987 under which the Bank of England is specifically required to owe a duty of care to the bank depositors.

Mr. Nelson: The Banking Act 1987 does not impose such a duty upon the Bank of England.

VAT

Mr. Thomason: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, further to the oral statement by the Paymaster General in the Standing Committee on the Finance Bill on 8 June on the mitigation of VAT penalties, what are the other factors that must be taken into account for mitigation to be permissible on the basis of the excluded circumstances; how he will ensure that Customs exercise their discretion in mitigating the VAT penalty; whether guidelines will be published for the information of the taxpayer; and what measures he will take to ensure that the policy is being applied consistently between tax offices.

Sir John Cope: From Royal Assent to the Finance Bill, restrictions on customs' existing power of mitigation in cases involving dishonesty will be removed and the discretion to mitigate extended to misdeclaration penalties. The essence of such a discretion is that each case is examined on its merits and customs cannot be prescriptive. All the circumstances leading to a penalty will be considered. The only constraints are the three factors excluded by law, if they are the sole criteria. These constraints are necessary in order to maintain the integrity of the penalty regime.

Customs will issue guidelines in public notices now being prepared. The use of the mitigation will be subject to customs' normal management controls. The mitigation is also subject to review by the independent VAT tribunal.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what changes are proposed to the payments on accounts scheme for VAT.

Sir John Cope: As announced at the time of the Budget in March, my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor now proposes that both the qualifying year for establishing inclusion in the scheme, and the reference year for establishing the level of payments, should be rolled forward to the most recent year for which details are available, 1992-93. This ensures that the scheme remains as fair as possible by using the most up-to-date information on the tax liability of businesses.

A statutory instrument—the VAT (Payments on Accounts) Order 1993—will shortly be laid before the House to give effect to this and other changes from 2 September 1993. In the interest of equity, the order makes provision to bring new businesses and existing businesses immediately into the scheme, where such businesses have an annual VAT liability exceeding £2 million. It provides for increased payments where the VAT liability of a business increases to certain levels. It also allows a business to come out of the scheme where the latest year's liability is less than £1·6 million.

Eco-tax

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to introduce an eco-tax in order to discourage unnecessary packaging.

Sir John Cope: My right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has no such plans.

Tax Returns

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the 10 countries which are most frequently given as the place of ordinary residence by those completing Inland Revenue tax returns 12 FR for the most recent year available, stating in each case the approximate number of taxpayers giving each country as their place of residence.

Mr. Dorrell: No records of this information are available.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the tax districts which deal with completed 11K tax returns.

Mr. Dorrell: Most tax districts issue and deal with 11K tax returns, but especially those offices dealing with the PAYE of foreign workers assigned to the United Kingdom.

Gross National Product

Dr. Marek: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is his latest estimate of the United Kingdom gross national product for each of the next five years.

Mr. Nelson: Projections of gross domestic product growth for the financial years up to and including 1997-98 were published in table 2.2 of the "Financial Statement and Budget Report". A copy is available in the Library.

Single Person Households

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will take steps to ensure that there is effective co-ordination of the impact on single person households of national taxation, local government taxation, and the various systems used for charging for public utilities.

Mr. Portillo: The Government take all relevant factors into account in making decisions on the level and structure of national taxation and on the local authority settlement. Council tax bills are set by local authorities, but legislation provides for a discount of 25 per cent. for single person households and for the payment of council tax benefit to those in need. Systems of charging for utilities are of course a matter for the private companies which now run them, subject to regulation by the appropriate regulatory body.

Economy

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received from the CBI over the state of the economy.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: I regularly receive representations from the CBI and other organisations representing the views of United Kingdom industrialists on the state of the economy.

Disabled People

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy to meet representatives of *(a)* the Disabled Living Foundation, *(b)* the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, *(c)* the Keep Able Foundation and *(d)* Dial UK concerning the removal of VAT exemption from products designed for disabled people.

Sir John Cope: I regret that it has not been possible to provide a substantive answer before the summer recess. I shall write to the hon. Member shortly and place a copy of the letter in the Library.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the types of products designed for disabled people which have been removed from VAT exemptions since April 1992.

Sir John Cope: None.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Portillo: Of the public bodies for which my right hon. and learned Friend is responsible, the Financial Services Tribunal may hold hearings in public if applicants so request. None of the other public bodies for which he is responsible holds meetings in public.

11 Downing Street

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, column *700*, what was the final destination of the carpet that was replaced on the second floor of No. 11 Downing street.

Sir John Cope: The old carpet was relaid elsewhere in 11 Downing street in 1991.

Football

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue is received per year from football and football pools.

Sir John Cope: The amount raised from pool betting duty in 1992-93 was £318 million. It is estimated that VAT on gate receipts and season tickets raises about £30 million each year.

Personal Debt

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the current level of personal debt in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Nelson: The estimated financial liabilities of the personal sector at end-December 1992 were £488·2 billion. Details of the composition of this figure can be found in table 14·8 of the July 1993 edition of "Financial Statistics" or on the Central Statistical Office database; both sources are available in the Library.

Unemployment

Ms Short: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to implement the G7 agreement to give priority to reducing unemployment.

Mr. Nelson: The economic declaration from the Tokyo summit affirmed the implementation of stable macro-economic policies to promote non-inflationary sustainable growth and structural reforms to make markets—especially the labour market—work better. Such policies are the surest way or reducing unemployment over the medium term and are the heart of this Government's economic policy.

Expenditure

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what has been the percentage real-terms increase or decrease in expenditure between 1979-80 outturn and 1993-94 estimated outturn in respect of *(a)* overall public expenditure, *(b)* defence, *(c)* social security, *(d)* health and *(e)* education.

Mr. Portillo: The percentage change in real terms between 1979-80 and 1992-93—the latest year for which detailed figures are available—is 23 per cent. for general Government expenditure, excluding privatisation proceeds, 5 per cent. for defence, 63 per cent. for social security, 53 per cent. for health and 27 per cent. for education.

Commission Disclosure

Mr. Darling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the submissions he has received in respect of the Office of Fair Trading report on commission disclosure in respect of independent financial advisers and direct sale forces in the insurance industry; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Nelson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply that my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Chelmsford (Mr. Burns) on 22 July 1993 at columns *296-300*.

The Treasury has received some 800 written responses from all sectors of the industry, almost all of which have included representations about commission disclosure.

Carbon Emissions

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is Her Majesty's Government's policy on the use of taxation policy to reduce carbon emissions to the levels recommended by the evaluation carried out by the Meteorological Office.

Sir John Cope: The Government's policy to ensure that the United Kingdom meets its commitments in the climate change convention, signed at Rio in June 1992, is set out in the answer that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment gave in reply to a written question from my hon. Friend the Member for Castle Point (Dr. Spink) on 26 July 1993, at columns *709-10*. This refers to the taxation measures announced in the March budget to increase the price of energy in the domestic and transport sectors.

Inland Revenue

Mr. Terry Davis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will make it his policy to make a statement to Parliament where any bids from Inland Revenue staff are not considered in the market testing or privatisation of any work which is currently undertaken by the Inland Revenue; and if he will make a statement on his policy with respect to Inland Revenue bids.

(2) whether he will ensure that no confidential information or tax returns are held in other countries under the arrangements for Inland Revenue work to be undertaken by private companies;

(3) whether there are any restrictions as to the location in *(a)* the Republic of Ireland, *(b)* the United States of America or *(c)* elsewhere of companies allowed to bid under the arrangements for market testing or privatisation for work which is currently undertaken by the Inland Revenue.

Mr. Dorrell: I regret that it has not been possible to provide a substantive answer before the summer recess. I shall write to the hon. Member shortly and place a copy of the letter in the Library.

Tobacco

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimates he has made of the revenue lost to excise evasion on *(a)* hand-rolling tobacco and *(b)* cigarettes since the abolition of European fiscal frontiers; and how much of this revenue has been recovered so far.

Sir John Cope: Total revenue involved for single market excise offence cases involving hand-rolling tobacco to 30 June is £527,900 and for cigarettes £36,874. The amount recovered will depend on court cases, most of which are still pending. No reliable estimates of undetected evasion are available.

Tax Returns

Mr. Terry Davis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any offence involving the unauthorised disclosure of information from tax returns is subject to prosecution under the Finance Act 1989 if the offence is committed in another country; and whether a prosecution would take place in the United Kingdom or the country where the offence is committed.

Mr. Dorrell: I regret that it has not been possible to provide a substantive answer before the summer recess. I shall write to the hon. Member shortly and place a copy of the letter in the Library.

Mr. Mandelson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what was the average gross income from interest, dividends, trust income and annuities entered under section C of Inland Revenue form 12 FR by taxpayers completing these forms in the latest year for which figures are available;

(2) what were the average earnings and benefits for the most recent year available of taxpayers completing Inland Revenue Tax returns 12 FR.

Mr. Dorrell *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* I regret that the information requested is not available.

Bear Products

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what action has been taken by Customs and Excise in respect of the sale of bear bile products by the Sino-Herbalist Centre, 90-92 Shaftesbury avenue, London W1V 7DH.

Sir John Cope: The illegal sale of bear bile products is an offence for which the police, rather than Customs, have enforcement responsibility. Customs has responsibility for the enforcement at importation of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species controls and is very willing to take appropriate action if provided with information about illegal importation.

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will give details of all bear products seized by Customs and Excise during each of the last three years for which records are available.

Sir John Cope: HM Customs has made two seizures of bear products in the last three years: one bearskin imported from Norway and seized at Immingham in January 1990 and one rug—Ursus Americanus—imported from Montreal and seized at Heathrow in July 1993.

Taxation

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the total tax take is represented by the budget of the Department of Social Security.

Mr. Portillo: The proportion of general Government receipts accounted for by the Department of Social Security's budget in 1992-93 is estimated to have been 33·6 per cent.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the information given in chapter 5 of the autumn statement 1992 and annex D of the "Statistical Supplement of the 1992 Autumn Statement".

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: The Treasury is today publishing a booklet containing estimates of the effects of various illustrative tax changes on tax receipts in 1994-95 and 1995-96 and preliminary estimates of the costs of the main tax reliefs in 1993-94. Copies are being placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

VAT (Domestic Fuel)

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the EC directives relevant to the charging of VAT on domestic fuel supplies; what are the current or future requirements of the legislation concerned with Community harmonisation of VAT liability or rate for these supplies; and what communication or indication he has received from the European Commission in respect of the obligations of Her Majesty's Government in respect of these commodities.

Sir John Cope: I regret that it has not been possible to provide a substantive answer before the summer recess. I shall write to the hon. Member shortly and place a copy of the letter in the Library.

Civil Servants (Relocation)

Mr. Burns: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what changes have been made in the rules on interest-free loans advanced to civil servants for house purchase when they are relocated to higher housing cost areas.

Mr. Dorrell: From 4 May 1993, Departments and agencies have had discretion to pay advances of salary of up to 12 months' salary with a repayment period of 20 years, where it is affordable and cost effective to do so. This is an increase over the earlier limit of six months' advance of salary repayable over 10 years. These changes were made as part of a wider delegation to Departments of responsibility for determining the relocation expenses of civil servants.

Tax Fraud

Mr. Battle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many officers have been employed investigating tax fraud; and what amounts have been recovered as a result, in each year since 1979.

Mr. Dorrell *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* It is not possible to isolate resources and yield relating to fraud cases from those relating to other tax investigating work. But I refer the hon. Member to the replies I gave the hon. Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn) on 25 June at columns *327-28*, 29 June at columns *454-55*, and 6 July columns *100-01*.

AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

Regional Assistance

Mr. Morley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will list the amounts received by the United Kingdom in objective 5a grants *(a)* according to region and *(b)* the amount directed towards areas within the county of Humberside.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 16 July 1993]:* The total amount of European Community funding received for agricultural grants under objective 5a of the European agricultural guidance and guarantee fund in the United Kingdom in 1992 was approximately £64 million. This related to total payments within the United Kingdom, including national funding, of around £190 million. The figures include receipts and expenditure in respect of objective 5a schemes paid in objective 1 areas—Northern Ireland—and in objective 5b areas—certain designated rural areas requiring development.

These figures broken down by region are summarised in the table. I regret that a figure for the amount of aid directed towards areas within the county of Humberside could be provided only at disproportionate cost as information on the various schemes is not kept on a county basis.

Region	*Total expenditure £ million*	*EC receipts £ million*
England	61	21
Scotland	62	20
Wales	36	10
Northern Ireland	31	13

Agriculture Expenditure

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the overall cost to the Exchequer of support to United Kingdom agriculture in each year since 1963-64 in actual and 1989-90 prices; and if he will show each figure as a percentage of gross domestic product.

Mr. Jack: The information is as follows:

	(a) United Kingdom expenditure on agriculture (£ million actual prices)	*(b) United Kingdom expenditure on agriculture (£ million 1989-90 prices)*	*(c) United Kingdom expenditure on agriculture as percentage of GDP*
1963-64	294	2,628	0·94
1964-65	264	2,259	0·77
1965-66	238	1,944	0·65
1966-67	229	1,795	0·59
1967-68	262	1,996	0·64
1968-69	257	1,863	0·58
1969-70	268	1,846	0·56
1970-71	259	1,650	0·49
1971-72	323	1,885	0·54
1972-73	267	1,441	0·40
1973-74	392	1,978	0·52
1974-75	495	2,086	0·55
1975-76	512	1,719	0·46
1976-77	378	1,121	0·29
1977-78	460	1,197	0·30
1978-79	537	1,260	0·31
1979-80	677	1,361	0·32

	(a) United Kingdom expenditure on agriculture (£ million actual prices)	(b) United Kingdom expenditure on agriculture (£ million 1989-90 prices)	(c) United Kingdom expenditure on agriculture as percentage of GDP
1980-81	1,012	1,720	0·43
1981-82	972	1,506	0·37
1982-83	1,433	2,073	0·50
1983-84	1,729	2,390	0·56
1984-85	1,712	2,254	0·52
1985-86	2,165	2,702	0·60
1986-87	1,449	1,751	0·37
1987-88	1,630	1,868	0·38
1988-89	1,380	1,473	0·29
1989-90	1,258	1,258	0·24
1990-91	1,910	1,799	0·34
1991-92	1,959	1,729	0·34
1992-93	2,066	1,763	0·34

Sources:
1963-64 to 1985-86 from the UK Annual Reviews of Agriculture
1986-87 to 1992-93 (forecast) from Agriculture in the UK
UK GDP—CSO Economic Trends

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if he will list *(a)* overall EC expenditure as a percentage of EC gross domestic product, *(b)* net EC expenditure on agriculture as a percentage of overall EC gross domestic product and *(c)* net United Kingdom expenditure on agriculture as a proportion of gross domestic product in each year since 1973.

Mr. Jack: The information is as follows:

	(a) EC General Budget expenditure as percentage EC GDP	(b) EC expenditure on agriculture (EAGGF Guarantee) as percentage EC GDP	(c) UK expenditure[1] on agriculture as percentage UK GDP
1973	0·46	0·37	0·52
1974	0·43	0·31	0·55
1975	0·47	0·35	0·46
1976	0·53	0·39	0·29
1977	0·55	0·41	0·30
1978	0·68	0·49	0·31
1979	0·71	0·52	0·32
1980	0·71	0·50	0·43
1981	0·72	0·45	0·37
1982	0·76	0·45	0·50
1983	0·85	0·55	0·56
1984	0·87	0·59	0·52
1985	0·83	0·59	0·60
1986	0·98	0·62	0·37
1987	0·94	0·61	0·38
1988	1·01	0·68	0·29
1989	0·93	0·59	0·24
1990	0·93	0·57	0·34
1991	1·04	0·61	0·34
1992[2]	1·17	0·66	0·34

Sources:
The Community Budget: The Facts in Figures, 1992 Edition
The European Economy 1992
Eurostat Rapid Reports: Economy and Finance, 1993 No. 2
UK Annual Reviews and Agriculture in the UK
Economic Trends, Annual Supplement 1992 and June 1993
[1] UK expenditure reflects UK financial years e.g. 1973 is April 1973-March 1974
[2] 1992 EC budget figures

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what was the overall cost of national and EC agricultural support in the United Kingdom as a cash figure and as a percentage of gross domestic product in 1960, 1970 and each year since 1980-81.

Mr. Jack: The information is as follows:

Year	UK public expenditure on agriculture £ million	Percentage of GDP
1960-61	263	1·00
1970-71	259	0·49
1980-81	1,012	0·43
1981-82	972	0·37
1982-83	1,433	0·50
1983-84	1,729	0·56
1984-85	1,712	0·52
1985-86	2,165	0·60
1986-87	1,449	0·37
1987-88	1,630	0·38
1988-89	1,380	0·29
1989-90	1,258	0·24
1990-91	1,910	0·34
1991-92	1,959	0·34
1992-93	2,066	0·34

Sources:
1960-61, 1970-71, 1980-81 to 1985-86 from the UK Annual Review of Agriculture
1986-87 to 1992-93 (forecast) from Agriculture in the UK
UK GDP—CSO Economic Trends

Sheep

Mr. Jonathan Evans: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what proposals she intends to bring forward for allocation of quota to sheep producers who are new entrants and those whose claims for sheep annual premium in 1991 were reduced by exceptional factors.

Mr. Jack: These two categories of sheep producer were included in the proposed categories of eligibility for the national reserve about which we consulted the industry earlier this year. The details are currently being finalised. The amounts of quota in the reserve will be limited.

Mr. Rendel: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food whether the forms for extra allocations for sheep quotas from the national reserve will be issued before the 6 August cut-off date for quota transfers.

Mr. Jack: The details of the national reserve categories are currently being finalised and the necessary national legislation will be made later in the summer. Applications to the national reserve will not be invited before 6 August. A letter has been sent to all known sheep producers giving guidance about the rules that will operate if they acquire quota by transfer or lease and apply for an allocation from the national reserve.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food how many of the public bodies for which she is responsible hold meetings in public; and if she will list them.

Mr. Jack: Of the public bodies for which my right hon. Friend is responsible, only the eight agricultural land tribunals in England and Wales and the plant varieties and seeds tribunal hold meetings in public.

Fur Farms

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food on how many occasions in each of the last five years officers of ADAS have visited mink and Arctic Fox fur farms.

Mrs. Gillian Shephard: Responsibility for this matter is delegated to ADAS and I have asked the chief executive to write to the hon. Gentleman direct.

Letter from Dr. J. M. Walsh to Mr. Alan Milburn, dated 28 July 1993:

In answer to your question, according to our records in each of the last five years ADAS undertook the following visits on behalf of MAFF.

1988 27
1989 31
1990 26
1991 19
1992 17

Over this period ADAS also undertook a small number (approximately 6) of fee paid consultancy visits to mink farms.

ADAS became an Executive Agency on 1 April 1992. The visits on behalf of MAFF are now carried out under a contract with the MAFF Policy Division. As a contracting organisation, it not our normal practice to disclose information relating to the contracts we undertake. Could I suggest that further enquiries should be directed to the Customer Group within MAFF.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) on how many occasions in the last five years officials of the state veterinary service have advised mink fur farmers to improve the conditions in which the animals are being held in order to avoid prosecution; and if he will give details;

(2) on how many occasions in the last five years officials of the state veterinary service had advised Arctic fox fur farmers to improve the conditions in which the animals are being held in order to avoid prosecution; and if he will give details.

Mr. Soames: In monitoring welfare standards on fur farms, the state veterinary service operates to the guidelines laid down in the relevant recommendations adopted by the Council of Europe. Were conditions to be found which warranted immediate prosecution, we would not hesitate to take such action. Centrally held records on the welfare inspections of fur farms date from 1990 and written advice on improvements was given in one case.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what were the number of mink farms over the past 10 years.

Mr. Soames: Information is only readily available for the last five years. No mink farms have been licensed during this time in Wales. Information with regards to England is as follows:

	Number
As at 31 March 1989	52
As at 20 February 1990	43
As at 20 February 1991	25
As at 12 March 1992	25
As at 20 July 1993	13

Sugar

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1) what was the price in pound per tonne paid to United Kingdom farmers under the common agricultural policy for sugar beet in each month since August 1992;

(2) what was the average price in pound per tonne paid to United Kingdom farmers under the common agricultural policy for sugar beet produced in the 1991-92 sugar beet season and the 1992-93 season.

Mr. Jack: Each year the Council of Ministers sets minimum prices for sugar beet grown to meet the EC's sugar quotas. The actual price per tonne of sugar beet is negotiated between the NFU and British Sugar plc, the United Kingdom's sole beet processor, for the whole crop for that season. An interim price is agreed early in the season and then finalised after the crop is harvested. The final price for contracted sugar beet for 1991-92 harvest was £33·22 and the provisional price for the 1992-93 harvest is £37·32 per tonne.

Mr. Bayley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what is the current *(a)* common agricultural policy A, B and C quota for sugar production, *(b)* domestic consumption of sugar and *(c)* surplus of production over consumption of sugar in each EC member state.

Mr. Jack: The information requested is set out in the table:

EC Sugar quotas and production 1991-92

Member State	*Quota*		*'000 tonnes white sugar equivalent*			
	'A' quota	*'B' quota*	*Non-quota 'C' sugar production 1991-92*[4]	*Total production 1991-92*[3]	*1991-92 consumption*	*Difference between total production and consumption*
France[2]	2,996	806	740	4,387	2,082	2,305
Denmark	328	97	43	468	222	246
Belgium/Luxembourg	680	146	66	892	455	437
Ireland	182	18	13	213	124	89
Netherlands	690	182	174	1,046	582	464
Germany	2,638	811	460	3,909	2,865	1,044
United Kingdom	1,040	104	72	2,346	2,280	66
Italy	1,320	248	—	1,509	1,606	−97
Greece	290	29	—	273	333	−60

Member State	Quota 'A' quota	Quota 'B' quota	'000 tonnes white sugar equivalent Non-quota 'C' sugar production 1991-92[4]	Total production 1991-92[1]	1991-92 consumption	Difference between total production and consumption
Portugal[3]	64	6	—	301	324	−23
Spain	960	40	—	864	1.093	−229
EC	11,188	2,488	1,568	16,208	11,956	4,242

Notes:
[1] This includes non-quota 'C' sugar and for United Kingdom, France and Portugal includes white sugar produced from raw cane sugar.
[2] Figures for France include Overseas Departments.
[3] Figures for Portugal include Azores.
[4] 'C' sugar is grown outside quota. It does not receive price support and must be exported without subsidy, except for a proportion which may be carried forward to count against the following year's quota.
[5] Figures may not add to corresponding totals because of rounding.

Industrial and Marine Bacteria

Mr. Butler: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she intends to continue to provide funding for the national collections of industrial and marine bacteria.

Mr. Jack: MAFF will provide funding for this company to the end of the current financial year. The Office of Science and Technology will take over responsibility for Government sponsorship of the company from 1 April 1994, pending the outcome of their review of the national need for culture collections.

Fishing Vessels

Mr. Butler: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she plans to make any changes in the licensing arrangements for fishing vessels; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Jack: I am pleased to advise that a number of changes are being made with immediate effect to the present licensing arrangements following the consultation papers issued by the Fisheries Departments in April 1992 and January 1993. We hope that these changes will assist the industry and at the same time contribute towards our multi-annual guidance programme—MAGP—targets for reducing the capacity of the United Kingdom fishing fleet by 31 December 1996.

In early 1992, the Government introduced a 20 per cent. capacity penalty for all licence transfers and aggregations. With my colleagues from the other Fisheries Departments, I have considered the operation of the present penalty and in the light of representations from industry we have decided on certain modifications. These take into account concerns over the structure of the industry, the difference between single licence transfers and aggregations and the licensing and replacement of 10m and under vessels. For example, subject to certain conditions, for vessels of over 10m we are reducing the capacity penalties for single licence transfers and aggregations involving minor engine modifications; and waiving that penalty where sunk vessels are being replaced. In addition, for vessels of 10m and under we are removing the capacity penalty for single licence transfers and allowing licence transfers between vessels with inboard and outboard engines. The detail of these and other changes is as follows.

All existing rules on the "transfer" or "aggregation" of licences will remain in force subject to the following. The 20 per cent. capacity penalty for licence aggregations is being retained, but a 10 per cent. penalty will apply to those aggregations involving minor engine modifications to existing vessels provided the engine power of the vessel, as measured in kilowatts, is not increased by more than 15 per cent. in a single aggregation or in a series of smaller aggregations. In addition, a 10 per cent. capacity penalty will apply to single licence transfers involving vessels over 10m in overall length. No penalty will be applied to single licence transfers affecting vessels of 10m overall length and under where there is no increase in the vessel capacity units of the recipient vessel. The capacity penalty may also be waived where we are satisfied that the vessels being replaced have been destroyed or permanently disabled as a result of fire, sinking or other accidental causes, provided the vessel capacity units of the replacement vessel are no greater than those of the replaced vessel and the age difference between the vessels is not more than seven years, the age of any vessel being determined from the date of its first build.

The transfer and aggregation of licences from vessels of 10m overall length or under to vessels over 10m, or vice versa, will not be permitted. The number of vessels between 10 and 17m overall length which may take part in any future licence aggregation will be limited to two. However, for vessels of 10m overall length or under it will be possible to transfer or aggregate licences between vessels with outboard engines and those with inboard engines.

Our MAGP targets are based on the vessels listed on the fishing vessel register maintained by the Registrar of Shipping and Seamen. To ensure that the register is restricted to active fishing vessels, from 1 November 1993 any person applying to transfer or aggregate fishing licences will need to show, before a new licence is issued, that any donnor vessel has been deregistered or that the donor vessel has been relicensed as part of a separate licence transaction.

Any existing claims to licence entitlements must also be notified to the appropriate Fisheries Department by 1 November 1993 and a valid licence application in respect of a named vessel made by 27 July 1995. Entitlements occurring after the date of this announcement must be notified to the appropriate Fisheries Department within three months, and a valid licence application made within two years, of the date on which the entitlement first arose. Those who fail to notify Fisheries Departments of a licence entitlement, or fail to submit a valid licence application within the time limits specified will normally lose any claim to that licence entitlement. However, where the claim to an

entitlement has arisen as a result of the loss of a vessel involving death or serious injury, the time limit for notification may, exceptionally, be extended.

Mr. Beggs To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, (1) how many late applications have been received for fishing vessel licences for 10m and under vessels which were not registered on or before 27 February 1992; and how many of these late applicants have been granted licences;

(2) how many late applications have been received for fishing vessel licences for 10m or under vessels which were not registered on or before 27 February; how many of these late applicants have been granted licences; how many have not been granted licences; and whether these applicants can reclaim the registration fee paid in pursuit of a fishing licence;

(3) how many late applications have been received for fishing vessel licences for 10m and under vessels which were not registered on or before 27 February 1992; and how many of these late applicants have been granted licences.

Mr. Jack: To be eligible for a 10m and under licence, fishermen had to meet one of the following criteria:

(a) own vessels of 10m and under overall length which were on 27 February 1992 registered under part II of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988; and provide evidence of fishing for profit in the reference period 28 February 1991-27 February 1992;
(b) have applied on or before 27 February 1992 to register such a vessel; or
(c) provide evidence of an enforceable financial commitment to obtain such a vessel which was entered into on or before 27 February 1992; or
(d) have replaced a qualifying vessel which was used for commercial fishing during the reference period, provided that the new vessel was no larger in vessel capacity unit terms and the original vessel had been removed from the Register.

More than 6,850 applications for 10m and under licences were received in the United Kingdom—England and Wales about 4,670, Northern Ireland about 245, Scotland about 1,940. By 1 July some 5,330 licences had been issued or approved in principle—England and Wales about 3,550, Northern Ireland about 145, Scotland about 1,635. At the same date some 740 licences had been refused or the applications had been withdrawn—England and Wales about 485, Northern Ireland about 80, Scotland about 175. The remaining applications are being dealt with as quickly as possible.

Licences have been issued to those who were able to meet one of the eligibility criteria set out above. Rejections may have been for a number of reasons, but the main ones relate to applicants being unable to meet the principal criteria because either the vessel was not registered on 27 February 1992 under part II of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988 or the applicant had not fished for profit in the reference period 28 February 1991 to 27 February 1992.

Registration and licensing of fishing vessels are two separate matters. It has long been a requirement that vessels used for fishing for profit have to be registered under the merchant shipping legislation. Anyone who has been fishing for profit when the vessel was not registered has therefore been operating illegally. The question of refunds of registration fees does not therefore arise.

Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if she will make a statement on her policy on the application by British Nuclear Fuels plc to commission THORP; and if she will make a statement.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* BNFL has applied to Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution and the Ministry for permission to use natural and depleted uranium to test the THORP plant at Sellafield. A copy of the announcement that we made on 22 July, together with HMIP, on the granting of variations to BNFL's existing authorisations to discharge liquid and gaseous radioactive waste on or after the 12 August 1993 to test THORP can be found in the Library of the House.

Trade Balance

Sir Ralph Howell: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if he will show the crude balance of imports and exports of *(a)* agriculture overall, *(b)* cereals and *(c)* the rest of the non-oil, non-visible trade for the United Kingdom, the EC, the United States of America, Canada and the Cairns group countries in 1979, 1984 and each year since 1989.

Mr. Needham: I have been asked to reply.

The figures requested are in the table:

Crude trade balances in US $ millions

	1990 Agriculture	1991 Agriculture	1990 Cereals	1991 Cereals	1990 Total visibles excluded oil and agriculture	1991 Total visibles excluded oil and agriculture
United Kingdom	−10,185	−8,925	255	310	−31,068	−17,635
USA	18,143	17,962	11,783	9,897	−104,408	−80,205
Canada	2,081	2,270	3,351	3,816	285	−3,744
EC(12)	−11,722	−13,410	3,415	1,578	16,584	−7,960
Cairns Group	41,726	39,832	6,571	6,008	[1] −41,421	[1] −42,049

[1] The trade balances for the Cairns Group does not exclude oil as no data are readily available.
N.B. The trade balances for the EC and Cairns Group include intra trade.
Source: OECD Foreign Trade by commodities, Series C.
United Nations FAO Handbook.
IMF Direction of Trade.

Northmoor Pumping Station

Mr. Morley: To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food what action she will take to further the conservation of flora and fauna, under section 16 of the Water Resources Act 1991, when considering the eligibility for grant aid of the proposal to replace the pumps at Northmoor pumping station.

Mr. Jack *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* Discussions between MAFF, the National Rivers Authority, English

Nature and the Northmoor internal drainage board are still in progress on the proposed new pumps at Northmoor pumping station. In considering the outcome of these discussions, Ministers will fully take into account the requirements of section 16 of the Water Resources Act 1991 as they relate to the conservation of flora and fauna.

ENVIRONMENT

THORP

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer of 7 June, *Official Report*, column *100*, if he will set out a breakdown of the 83,000 responses to the THORP consultation exercise in a format that is available to his Department.

Mr. Yeo: In their report of the consultation exercise on the draft Sellafield authorisations the inspectorates provide the following breakdown of responses received:

	Number
Total number of letters received	83,731
Illegible names and addresses	12,170
Total for	19,217
Total against	64,514
Proformas	49,041
Petitions for	[1]7
Petitions against	[2]159

[1]18,467 names
[2]28,780 names

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will give permission for the uranium section of THORP to be commissioned; and what criteria he would apply in reaching such a decision.

Mr Yeo: HM inspectorate of pollution and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food announced on 22 July that, subject to the completion of the procedures under the Radioactive Substances Act 1960, they are minded to grant a variation of BNFL's existing authorisations to discharge liquid and gaseous radioactive waste, on or after the 12 August 1993, so that natural and depleted uranium could be used to test THORP.

HM inspectorate of pollution and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food reached this position in the light of several considerations. The radiological impact of the emissions from testing THORP in this way would be very small, less than 0·001 per cent. of the average dose to the United Kingdom population from natural background radiation. The impact would be small in comparison with the impact from THORP in full operation if it is allowed to reprocess spent nuclear fuel and—after considering the representations received during the public consultation —HMIP and MAFF inspectors have concluded that the impact from THORP in full operation would be acceptable. Only natural or depleted uranium would be used—no testing with spent fuel would be allowed under the terms of the proposed variation. There would be no increase to the existing limits on emissions from Sellafield.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what information is still required before THORP is commissioned.

Mr. Yeo: My right hon. Friend announced in his answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Norwich, North (Mr. Thompson) on 28 June, *Official Report*, column *392*, a further round of consultation. A final decision will be taken after this.

Recycling

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what steps the Government have taken in addressing the option of waste reduction in meeting their recycling targets.

Mr. Yeo: The Government have set a target for recycling 25 per cent. of household waste by the end of the decade. This target relates to materials recycling and composting. However, it is clearly better to avoid waste in the first place, where that is a practicable option, and the Government employ a variety of measures to encourage waste minimisation. In addition to providing for the minimisation of the discharge of pollutant substances, the Environmental Protection Act establishes stringent standards for waste disposal. When fully implemented, these standards will increase the costs of disposal and provide an additional incentive to minimise waste. The Government also run programmes to raise awareness in companies of the benefits of waste minimisation; to demonstrate best practice; and to provide advice and information on cleaner technology for industry. A number of major companies have now set themselves waste reduction targets.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what information he has on the achievement by local authorities of their recycling plans.

Mr. Yeo: Most local authorities are starting to implement recycling plans which extend over a number of years and we expect to approve those plans which have been submitted more recently by the end of the summer. It would be premature to attempt to assess how much progress has been made in implementation at this early stage.

Mr. Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what effect the import into the United Kingdom of German waste seeking processing outlets is having on package waste disposal in the United Kingdom; and what plans he has to protect schemes in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Yeo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given today by my right hon. Friend to my hon. Friend the Member for Milton Keynes, North-East (Mr. Butler).

Mr. Butler: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how the Government intend to take forward their proposals for increasing the recycling of packaging and other goods and to deal with the threat posed by schemes in other countries.

Mr. Gummer: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Technology and I have today invited the major organisations involved in the packaging chain to draw up a plan by which industry will take responsibility for ensuring that the majority of used packaging is not simply thrown away but returned to beneficial use. We expect this plan to make a significant contribution to meeting the Government's target of recycling 25 per cent. of household waste by the end of the decade.

Recycling minimises the use which we as individuals make of the earth's limited resources and there is already a great commitment to it in many parts of the community. Voluntary groups, charitable bodies, dedicated individuals, business and local authorities have all done much to establish a basic framework of schemes. But today many of these schemes face a crisis and, if we are to safeguard this potential for growth, we need to adopt comprehensive measures which involve all the relevant business sectors.

I believe that many of those in the packaging chain—retailers, fillers, and manufacturers of packaging materials and packaging accept that they should share responsibility for what happens to packaging once it has served its original purpose. My predecessors and colleagues at the Department of Trade and Industry have been discussing with the industry for the past two years how that responsibility might be put into practice.

We have made useful progress in our discussions. But our long-term goals are being put in danger by the damage being caused to Britain's recycling efforts by measures elsewhere in Europe. Many of our European partners are introducing recycling schemes for packaging, but in some of those schemes there is an alarming imbalance between what is collected and the ability to reprocess it. We need to ensure that we get this balance right and that we sustain the recycling infrastructure which we have painstakingly built up so far.

We have therefore decided that urgent action is necessary and that it is time to spell out what the Government expect of industry. That is why I will be meeting senior representatives of retailers, fillers of packaging and manufacturers of packaging and packaging materials over the next few weeks.

We will invite them to produce a plan which meets the following objectives:

producers—retailers, fillers and manufacturers of packaging and packaging materials—must take a share of responsibility for what happens to packaging once it has served its original purpose, while minimising the packaging deemed essential;

producers would show that they accept that responsibility by delivering targets for the amount of used packaging which they recover. We accept that recovery targets above 75 per cent. are unlikely to be practicable by the end of the decade. So we are asking them to commit themselves to ensuring that between 50 and 75 per cent. of all packaging waste—the precise level to be agreed with Government—is recovered by the year 2000;

producers would bear any extra cost of setting up systems to meet the recovery targets;

we will emphasise to producers the importance of their taking immediate action to ensure that a recycling infrastructure—collectors and processors—continues to be available to them, so that they can meet their recovery targets.

We welcome the initiative already taken by the Institute of Grocery Distribution to finance pilot recycling collection schemes. We would support the idea that recognition should be given to those companies who have contributed to such schemes, when more comprehensive arrangements are established.

We are inviting leading figures in the industry to report back by the end of October on the action which they have taken to help collection and processing operations to continue, especially for waste paper and board and plastics. And we are asking them to present us with an effective plan for meeting the objectives which I have outlined, before Christmas 1993. We will make clear to industry that it should ensure that its plans are compatible with United Kingdom and EC competition law.

If the industries concerned cannot satisfy us by Christmas that they are committed to achieving the objectives, or if they decide that legislative backing is necessary, we will need to move towards a legislative approach to mandating producer responsibility.

We believe that one of the benefits of introducing a scheme of producer responsibility will be that we are better able to demonstrate, in our discussions on a European Community packaging directive, that it is possible to reduce the environmental impact of packaging significantly without placing unreasonable burdens on business. We also wish to ensure that the targets contained in the directive are realistic.

My colleagues and I will also continue our discussions with industries dealing with other waste streams on how they could shoulder responsibility for the wastes which their activities generate. In particular, I will be inviting the newspaper publishers to discuss these issues with me.

The initiative which we are announcing today will form an important part of our recycling strategy. It will allow the public, who would like to see less packaging and who do not want throw away materials which could be used again, to recycle much more than they can at present. It will be another important step in moving towards a society whose daily habits preserve the world for future generations.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment which local authorities have not submitted their waste recycling proposals to his Department for approval.

Mr. Yeo: The following local authorities have yet to submit recycling plans to the Department:

Amber Valley
Bolsover
Brent
Erewash
Great Yarmouth
Sandwell
Walsall
Wolverhampton

We have received an informal draft from Blackburn, but still await the formal submission of their plan.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list each grant made by his Department for recycling projects.

Mr. Yeo: The following grants have been made available for recycling projects under the environmental action fund in 1993-94:

Waste Watch, National	£196,987
Community Recycling Network, National	£30,000
Eureka Museum for Children, Halifax	£21,950
Action Resource Centre, Nottinghamshire	£13,000
Avon Friends of the Earth	£11,200
Cash from Trash, Wakefield	£31,939
Bristol Recycling Consortium	£20,000
Wastestream Systems Ltd., London	£18,780
Wyecycle, Wye	£15,000

The DTI also makes funds available to businesses for innovative recycling projects under the environmental technology innovation scheme—ETIS—EUROENVIRON scheme, and environmental management options scheme —DEMOS.

The following local authorities have also been allocated supplementary credit approvals to support capital expenditure on waste recycling for 1993-94:

Authority	Allocation £'000
London Boroughs	
Barnet	200
Bromley	13·5
Croydon	155
Ealing	1·175
Enfield	50
Hackney	170
Haringey	20
Hillingdon	5
Kingston upon Thames	48
Lambeth	112·25
Merton	97
Newham	100
Redbridge	168
Richmond	70
Southwark	30
Sutton	365
Tower Hamlets	53
Waltham Forest	150
Wandsworth	20
Metropolitan Authorities	
Barnsley	135
Bolton	75
Bury	30
Calderdale	30
Doncaster	16
Dudley	100
Gateshead	35·5
Kirklees	35
Knowsley	110
Leeds	1,410
Liverpool	270
Newcastle upon Tyne	600
Oldham	98
Rochdale	36
Rotherham	19
St. Helens	7·7
Sandwell	820
South Tyneside	7
Stockport	55·575
Wakefield	340
West Yorkshire Waste Management	1,137
Wirral	24
Wolverhampton	53
County Councils	
Cambridgeshire	240
Cornwall	40
Cheshire	20
Cumbria	105
Devon	240
Durham	50
Hampshire	517
Hereford and Worcester	11
Hertfordshire	20
Leicestershire	106
Lincolnshire	175
Northumberland	7
North Yorkshire	76·5
Nottinghamshire	175
Oxfordshire	150
Somerset	78·5
Suffolk	48
Wiltshire	20
District Councils	
Adur	40
Allerdale	75
Alnwick	33
Amber Valley	20
Bassetlaw	8
Bath	20·4
Beverley	20
Blaby	40
Bournemouth	29
Brighton	60
Bristol	248·75
Broxbourne	105
Browtowe	77
Burnley	45
Carlisle	20
Chelmsford	20
Cheltenham	60
Cherwell	15
Chester	200
Chesterfield	28
Chiltern	50
Copeland	48
Craven	50
Darlington	6
Derby	70
Easington	7·8
East Dorset	15
East Hertfordshire	42
Eden	13
Ellesmere Port and Neston	10
Gedling	13
Great Grimsby	70
Guildford	60
Harborough	30
Harlow	17
Hartlepool	150
Hastings	50
Havant	17·5
Hinckley and Bosworth	20
Hull	175
Hyndburn	30
Kerrier	125
Lancaster	20
Lanbaugh on Tees	64
Leicester	90
Melton	40
Mid Bedfordshire	35
Mid Suffolk	60·5
Middlesborough	23
Milton Keynes	1,450
Newark and Sherwood	50
North Dorset	25
North Hertfordshire	12
Norwich	20
Nottingham	71·8
Nuneaton and Bedworth	37
Oswestry	65
Oxford	205
Pendle	15
Peterborough	12·35
Plymouth	160
Poole	37·5
Portsmouth	10
Preston	10
Reading	15
Ribble Valley	7
Rochester upon Medway	145
Rother	40
Rushmoor	70
Scarborough	25
Selby	30
Shrewsbury and Atcham	50
South Derbyshire	50
South Herefordshire	20
South Lakeland	28·75
South Norfolk	50
South Northamptonshire	75
South Somerset	100
St. Albans	70
St. Edmundsbury	26·5
Stockton on Tees	96·5
Surrey Heath	42
Tendring	4
Test Valley	91·5
Tewkesbury	30
Vale of White Horse	20
Watford	30

Authority	Allocation £'000
Waverley	30
Wealdon	100
Welwyn Hatfield	40
West Devon	75
West Dorset	20
West Wiltshire	116
Winchester	26
Woking	33·7
Wokingham	40
Woodspring	10
Wrekin	90
Wychavon	15
Wycombe	20

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has for the disposal of intermediate level decommissioning wastes from United Kingdom nuclear power stations; and what capacity will be available within the proposed Nirex repository to accommodate these wastes.

Mr. Yeo: Intermediate level radioactive waste will be stored until it can be disposed of in Nirex's deep disposal facility. The capacity of the facility has yet to be established.

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what research has been undertaken by his Department into the use of integrated toxicological potential as a basis for determining equivalence between different categories of radioactive waste; and if he will make it his policy to seek the views of THORP's overseas customers concerning such practices.

Mr. Yeo: Consideration of the various aspects of waste substitution is still to be completed. Should substitution be approved it would be for British Nuclear Fuels plc to negotiate appropriate arrangements with its customers within guidelines set by the Government.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what information he has received from British Nuclear Fuels plc in regard to the present projected capacity of the vitrification plant at Sellafield to handle all the high level waste *(a)* stockpiled and *(b)* planned to be created arising from reprocessing contracts currently signed by BNFL.

Mr. Yeo: My right hon. Friend has received no such information.

Rural Sewerage, Yorkshire

Mr. John Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what provision for rural sewerage schemes was included in Yorkshires Water's asset management plan for 1989-90 to 1999-2000; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: I am informed by Yorkshire Water that no specific provision for rural sewerage schemes was made in the company's 1989 asset management plan for the period 1989 to 2000. However, the company will respond to statutory requisitions for first-time sewerage in accordance with legal requirements.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, column *707*, with whom his Department sought agreement prior to the removal of the commercially sensitive information to which he refers; what is the scope of the points that require clarification with the Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee; what timetable he has set for RWMAC to report on the further work; what was the date of the RWMAC press release to which he refers; and if he will place a copy of the press release in the Library.

Mr. Yeo: British Nuclear Fuels agreed the information that was commercially sensitive in RWMAC's report on waste substitution. The further work for RWMAC will relate to the use of the toxic potential index and the waste management implications of waste substitution. I expect to receive further advice from RWMAC later this year. Copies of RWMAC's press release of 28 June have been placed in the Library.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Gummer: I have today arranged for a list of the computer consultancies employed by my Department since November 1991, together with and indication of the tasks for which they were engaged, to be placed in the Library of the House. The total cost to the Department was £5,878,713.

New Towns

Mr. Robert B. Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what steps he intends to take to secure the orderly completion of the new towns initiative in England.

Mr. Gummer: I have been discussing with Sir Neil Shields, the chairman of the Commission for the New Towns, the scale of the task remaining to be completed to enable the commission to dispose of the bulk of its remaining assets and make provision for disengagement from its current liabilities, and we have agreed that this should be achievable within a five-year period. The Government therefore intend to wind up the Commission for the New Towns by no later than 31 March 1998.

We have also agreed that provision will need to be made for the longer-term management and sale of those assets which it would not be prudent to dispose of within this time scale, and for the on-going management of any remaining liabilities. Discussions will continue on the best ways of providing for these.

I should like to place on record the Government's appreciation of the excellent work undertaken by the commission in completing the biggest and most significant exercise in urban planning ever undertaken in this country. From their origins in the garden city movement, the new towns have been highly successful in promoting local economic growth while, at the same time, providing excellent employment opportunities and living conditions

for people of all backgrounds. I have every confidence that the commission's substantive remaining tasks can be brought to a successful conclusion within the next five years.

Water Byelaws

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish details of the number of prosecutions since 1 January 1989 for contraventions of water byelaws made in accordance with his model.

Mr. Yeo: This information is not held centrally. Prosecutions are a matter for individual water companies.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) when national regulations will replace water byelaws; and what the enforcement arrangements will be;

(2) what plans he has to improve the level of enforcement of the water byelaws and regulations replacing them by recognising prescribed persons under section 74(2)(d) of the Water Industry Act 1991;

(3) if the proposed environment agency will enforce national water and waste water regulations suggested in paragraph 9·3 (vi) of the consultative document, "Using Water Wisely";

(4) if it is his intention to retain the requirements for prevention of waste, misuse, contamination and undue consumption embodied in the current water byelaws when regulations are introduced to replace these byelaws;

(5) what plans he has to consult the public and the plumbing industry when regulations are drafted to replace the current water byelaws.

Mr. Yeo: The consultation paper "Using Water Wisely" sought views on matters regarding the replacement of water byelaws by regulations, including the issue of enforcement. We shall shortly be publishing the Government's proposals for taking these matters forward. It is intended that regulations will come into force before the current water byelaws expire in 1997. There will be further wide consultation both before and after the regulations are drafted.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) if he will consider making it illegal under consumer legislation to sell plumbing fittings which would contravene the water byelaws, or their replacement regulations, if fitted to the water supply system in or around buildings;

(2) what representations he has received on the practice of selling plumbing fittings which, when fitted and used, are illegal under water byelaws.

Mr. Yeo: I have received two representations about this matter. The supply of construction products, which includes plumbing fittings, is controlled by the Construction Products Regulations 1991. Only those products which satisfy the requirements of these regulations may be lawfully supplied.

Chemical Industries Association

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer of 16 July, *Official Report*, column *708*, if he will make a statement on the outcome of the meeting with the Chemical Industries Association.

Mr. Yeo: My right hon. Friend met members and officials of the Chemical Industries Association on Tuesday 20 July. They had a useful exchange of views on a wide range of issues affecting the industry.

Fiddlers Ferry Power Station

Mr. Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what specific measures are being introduced at Fiddlers Ferry power station to ensure that sulphur dioxide emissions are reduced in line with the European Community directive requiring large combustion plants to cut sulphur dioxide emission to 50 per cent. of 1980 levels by 2000.

Mr. Yeo: The Council directive on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from large combustion plants is delivered by the United Kingdom's programme and national plan for reducing emissions of sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen from existing large combustion plants.

Under the programme and plan, the operator of Fiddlers Ferry power station, PowerGen, is given a company wide quota for each year for sulphur dioxide emissions for allocation to individual stations. As limits are not set for individual stations, measures to be used to control emissions of sulphur dioxide are not specified.

Limits are set by Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution to secure its wider objectives under part I of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Maritime Housing Association, Liverpool

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what representations he has received from the committee of management of Maritime housing association, Liverpool, concerning a tenants opinion survey undertaken on behalf of the association; and if he will make a statement.

Sir George Young: I have received a letter from the chairman of Maritime housing association on behalf of the committee of management about its tenants opinion survey. The letter outlines the results of the survey relating to the income of tenants, the percentage of tenants in receipt of housing benefit and data on rents.

Before decisions on grant rates for 1994-95 are taken, we will consider all the relevant evidence, including the information provided by Maritime housing association, on rents and the availability of private finance.

Plumbing

Sir Thomas Arnold: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is his policy on the awarding of Government or local authority plumbing contracts to contractors who do not have British Standard Institute BS5750 approval or its European equivalent; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: Within the constraints imposed by public procurement legislation, each Government Department and local authority may set its own criteria for the selection of plumbing contractors provided it is done in a non-discriminatory manner. A contractor that has achieved BS5750 certification will have demonstrated it has a high standard quality control system. That may be a factor of which account is taken in the choice of contractor.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Gummer: The Department of the Environment currently sponsors 29 executive non-departmental public bodies, of which the following regularly hold meetings open to the general public:

Housing Action Trusts
Housing Corporation
Letchworth Garden City Corporation
Local Government Commission
National Rivers Authority
Urban Development Corporations

In addition, the Commons Commission, valuation tribunals and rent assessment panels hold their hearings in public. Other public bodies may hold occasional open meetings or consult the public in other ways as necessary.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) if the chairpersons and board members of executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department are required to declare interests, in a form available for public inspection at his Department or at the main offices of the various bodies;

(2) whether the members of *(a)* urban development corporations—UDCs—*(b)* housing action trusts—HATs —and *(c)* registered housing associations are required to declare interests and to make such interests open to public inspection: what statutory provision is made for public access to information about these bodies; whether they are subject to performance indicators; whether they are required to publish an annual report or to hold meetings in public; what charter provisions apply to their activities; and whether members of registered housing associations are liable to surcharge.

Mr. Gummer: All the executive NDPBs spnsored by my Department, including UDCs and HATs, have in place arrangements for chairmen and other board members to declare any conflicts of interest. It is for the bodies themselves to decide whether and in what form to make information on members' interests available to the public.

Section 64 of the Housing Act 1988 requires HATs to issue statements of proposals for consultation, and schedule 8 requires them to publish annual reports. Schedule 31 to the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 requires UDCs to publish annual reports. Neither HATs nor UDCs are required to hold meetings for the general public, but most have chosen to do so.

As a matter of policy, all NDPBs are required to develop and use performance indicators and to apply the principles of the citizens charter in their dealings with the public.

Registered housing associations, which are not NDPBs, are subject to statutory regulation by the Housing Corporation, which is required to maintain and make available for public inspection a register of such associations. Associations are required to submit regular returns, including information about committee members and their interests. The corporation has a duty to supervise associations and monitor their performance against published criteria, including the tenants guarantee. The concept of surcharge as used in the Local Government Finance Act 1982 applies only to local authorities. I will ask the corporation to write to the hon. Member with further details.

Civil Engineering Projects

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make it his policy to ensure that recycled materials of the appropriate specification will be given priority over quarried aggregate in civil engineering projects.

Mr. Baldry: The choice of materials for use in civil engineering projects is a matter for the market. The Government support an increase in the use of waste and recycled materials in construction and are considering how to achieve this as part of the review of minerals planning guidance note 6 on aggregates.

Rents

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what action he proposes to take on rent levels following the publication of the Association of District Councils/Association of Metropolitan Authorities housing finance survey.

Sir George Young: The joint Association of District Councils and Association of Metropolitan Authorities housing finance survey provides a useful contribution to the information which the Department gathers during the course of the financial year, and I was pleased to have a discussion with the associations about their 1993-94 survey at the meeting of the Housing Consultative Council on 7 July. My Department will, as usual, form a view of the emerging picture on local authority housing finance, and all of this information will be taken carefully into account when we reach decisions on the housing revenue account subsidy determinations for 1994-95 towards the end of the year. The level of actual council rents will remain a matter for each housing authority to decide.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish a table showing the average gross rent before rebate housing benefit for each year since 1978 to date, and with an estimate for 1993, for *(a)* local authority and *(b)* housing association dwellings in current prices, in constant prices, and on an index where 1978 = 100.

Mr. Gummer *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The available information is as follows:

Average weekly unrebated local authority rent at April

	At current prices £pw	*At constant (April 1993) prices* £pw	*Current price index*
1978	5·83	16·89	100
1979	6·41	16·87	110
1980	7·70	16·65	132
1981	11·42	22·03	196
1982	13·48	23·77	229
1983	13·97	23·69	240
1984	14·66	23·64	251
1985	15·54	23·43	267
1986	16·36	23·94	281
1987	17·70	24·85	304
1988	18·82	25·42	323
1989	20·70	25·88	355
1990	23·76	27·14	408

	At current prices £pw	At constant (April 1993) prices £pw	Current price index
1991	27·28	29·29	468
1992	30·57	31·47	524
1993	33·52	33·52	575

Average weekly mean registered housing assocation rent[1][2]

	At current prices £pw	At constant (Q1 1993) prices £pw	Current price index
1978	10·05	27·89	100
1979	10·66	26·08	106
1980	12·48	25·89	124
1981	14·08	26·10	140
1982	15·61	26·65	155
1983	17·20	28·08	171
1984	18·66	29·01	186
1985	19·72	28·85	196
1986	21·40	30·34	213
1987	22·86	31·11	227
1988	24·97	32·39	248
1989	26·75	32·20	266
1990	29·86	32·84	297
1991	32·64	33·91	325
1992	36·38	36·43	362
1993	37·99	37·99	378

[1] Includes service charges.
[2] Excludes shared ownership tenancies.

Social Housing

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what has been the total gross public expenditure on the activities of *(a)* urban development corporations, *(b)* housing action trusts and *(c)* registered housing associations for each year since 1979 and the projected expenditure for the years up to 1995-96 in 1991-92 prices.

Mr. Baldry: Gross public expenditure for urban development corporations, housing action trusts and registered housing associations, in 1991-92 prices, is set out in the table:

£ million (1991-92 prices)

	UDCs[1]	HATs	Housing Associations[2]
1979-80	—	—	984
1980-81	—	—	1,047
1981-82	68	—	999
1982-83	103	—	1,327
1983-84	149	—	1,208
1984-85	133	—	1,074
1985-86	123	—	1,206
1986-87	124	—	1,124
1987-88	187	—	1,138
1988-89	289	—	1,082
1989-90	502	—	1,253
1990-91	591	—	1,306
1991-92	509	10	1,740
1992-93	418	26	2,354
1993-94	292	82	1,807
1994-95	229	80	1,766
1995-96	221	78	1,643

[1] Excludes the Docklands Light Railway. Figures for years up to 1992-93 include receipts from the European Regional Development Fund. Estimates for receipts in forward years are not available.
[2] Excludes Local Authority Housing Association Grant.

Figures up to 1991-92 represent expenditure outturn. Figures for 1992-93 are for provisional outturn; figures for 1993-94 represent public expenditure provision; and figures for 1994-95 and 1995-96 represent planned expenditure as set out in the Department of the Environment's 1993 annual report, Cm 2207.

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish separate tables showing in rank order the number of *(a)* local authority dwellings, *(b)* housing association dwellings and *(c)* former local authority dwellings transferred to housing action trusts or otherwise or by way of large-scale voluntary transfer, for each local housing authority in England; and if he will include totals for each table.

Mr. Gummer: The available information on the transfer of local authority dwellings to housing action trusts and by way of large scale voluntary transfer is given in the tables.

Transfers to Housing Action Trusts

Local Authority	Date of Transfer	Number
Waltham Forest	April 6 1992	2,416
Kingston upon Hull	January 27 1992	2,084
		4,500

(b) Housing association dwellings
Nil
(c) Former local authority dwellings (Right to buy)

Local Authority	Date of Transfer	Number
Waltham Forest	April 6 1992	6

Large Scale Voluntary Transfers
(a) Local Authority dwellings transferred to Housing Associations

Local Authority	Date of Transfer	Number[1]
Bromley	6 April 1992	12,318
Rochester[2]	27 July 1990	8,029
North Bedfordshire	13 June 1990	7,378
Swale	28 March 1990	7,352
Newbury	30 November 1989	7,109
Breckland	30 March 1993	6,712
Tonbridge and Malling	15 January 1991	6,382
Sevenoaks	29 March 1989	6,315
Tunbridge Wells	30 January 1992	5,519
West Dorset	27 May 1993	5,279
Suffolk Coastal	22 May 1991	5,272
Chiltern	15 December 1988	4,650
Mid Sussex	9 November 1990	4,426
Hambleton	29 April 1993	4,268
East Cambridgeshire	31 March 1993	4,223
Broadland	4 April 1990	3,716
Ryedale	28 February 1991	3,321
South Bucks	26 March 1991	3,317
Surrey Heath	15 January 1993	2,885
Medina	27 July 1990	2,813
East Dorset	3 December 1990	2,246
South Wight	30 July 1990	2,056
Christchurch	28 March 1991	1,621
		107,207

[1] Excluding transfers of shared ownership properties.
[2] Local authority dwellings in Rochester were transferred to Medway Housing Society—not a registered Housing Association.
Notes:
(b) *Housing Association dwellings*
Nil
(c) *Former Local authority dwellings*
Nil

Protected Birds

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Croydon, North-East (Mr. Congdon) of 8 July, *Official Report*, columns *233-35*, what is his policy on the proposals put forward by France, Greece and Spain at the EC Environment Council meeting in Luxembourg on 29 June regarding the extension of sport shooting to a number of protected bird species; what progress has been made by COREPER; and when he now expects the revised annexes to the wild birds directive to be adopted.

Mr. Yeo: The United Kingdom did not oppose the proposals for amending annex II of the bird directive—79/409/EEC—considered at the EC Environment Council on 29 June 1993. No agreement was reached and it is for the presidency to determine how to take the matter forward and the timing of future discussions.

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what consultations he had with United Kingdom conservation organisations prior to deciding the United Kingdom position on amendments to annex II of the EC birds directive.

Mr. Yeo: Scientific advice on the proposals was sought from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds was informed of the proposals and made representations.

Housing Rehabilitation

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish the latest figures available to show the extent of the rehabilitation work currently undertaken by housing associations nationally; and if he has any plans to increase the funding available for inner city and rural rehabilitation projects.

Sir George Young: In 1992-93, the Housing Corporation granted approvals for 6,501 rehabilitation units—13·4 per cent. of the programme as a whole. For 1993-94 12·6 per cent of unit allocations were for rehabilitation units.

My objective was to see rehabilitation projects rise to at least 18 per cent. of rented approvals this year. However, I understand that the corporation was unable to achieve this at the same time as taking account of the priorities expressed by local authorities. No target has yet been set for future years.

Waste Management

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Pike) of 6 July, *Official Report*, column *80*, if he will make a statement on the matters discussed and decisions taken in the meetings with the organisation with an interest in waste management licensing to which he refers.

Mr. Yeo: I held meetings with interested parties to enable them to express to me their concerns arising from the delay in implementing waste management licensing; and to discuss the problems that need to be solved before we can implement the licensing system. No decisions were to be expected in such meetings, and none was taken. I repeated my assurance that as soon as I am in a position to give a revised date for waste management licensing, I shall do so.

Housing Grant

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he last met the National Federation of Housing Associations to discuss the implications of the Government's policy on reducing housing association grant.

Sir George Young: I discussed this topic with the National Federation of Housing Associations on 14 July 1993.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what plans he has to introduce a Gro-grant scheme in England based on the Scottish Homes model.

Sir George Young: I am considering various options to encourage the revival of the private rented sector in England.

Institute for the Environment and Health

Mr. Bowden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what conclusion the Government had reached, in regard to their announcement in the White Paper "The Health of the Nation", about the creation of an Institute for the Environment and Health; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Yeo: The Medical Research Council has agreed in principle to establish an institute at its interdisciplinary research centre on mechanisms of human toxicity at the university of Leicester. It will be jointly supported by my Department and by the Department of Health. The institute will act as a focal point on research into the links between environmental quality and health. We expect it will also have a role in supporting Government in international programmes in this field.

The institute will complement, but not impinge on, areas already covered by other Government Departments or other statutory agencies. These include the Health and Safety Executive, which has statutory responsibilities relating to exposures from work activities, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, whose responsibilities include agricultural chemicals and food safety.

Urban Waste Water Treatment

Mr. Bowden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will publish *(a)* the list of candidate eutrophic sensitive areas and *(b)* the list of candidate high natural dispersion areas proposed to him by the National Rivers Authority in connection with the implementation of the EC urban waste water treatment directive.

Mr. Yeo: The NRA has not finalised its proposals for these areas. Data are still being collected and discussions with appropriate bodies are continuing. I have placed a copy of the NRA's current working list in the Library of the House. Some areas may not feature in the final NRA list of candidates proposed to my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for the Environment and for Wales and it is also possible that other candidates may be added to the list as a result of ongoing work. Grid references are

given for the eutrophic sensitive area candidates and general locations are given for high natural dispersion area candidates, but in both cases the information is only indicative and exact boundaries have not yet been fixed.

Works Contracts

Mr. Devlin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he has yet considered the replies from South Tyneside metropolitan borough council and Stockton-on-Tees borough council to the notices served on the authorities on 1 Febraruy and 8 March, respectively, under section 13 of the Local Government Act 1988; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: My right hon. Friend has given careful consideration to the responses made by the two authorities to the notices served on them for anti-competitive behaviour on 1 February and 8 March. He has today given directions to South Tyneside and Stockton-on-Tees under section 14 of the 1988 Act requiring them to retender their ground maintenance work and other cleaning work respectively. If the councils wish their direct service organisations to carry out this work after 1 August 1994 they need to satisfy my right hon. Friend, no later than 30 April 1994, that they have fulfilled the competition requirement as laid down in the legislation.

Government Car Service

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will place the report by Coopers and Lybrand on the running of the Government car service in the Library.

Mr. Baldry: The Coopers and Lybrand report on the Government car service contains commercially sensitive information. I have therefore decided that it should not be made publicly available.

Methyl Bromide

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what controls have been introduced by his Department on the use of methyl bromide within the United Kingdom; and what plans he has to ban methyl bromide imports into the United Kingdom.

Mr. Yeo: Use of methyl bromide as a fumigant is controlled under the Control of Pesticide Regulations 1986. The guidelines for its use as a soil fumigant are being revised. I have no plans at present to ban its import into the United Kingdom, but imports will be controlled under an EC regulation currently under discussion.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what measures he is introducing to reduce dependency on housing benefit among *(a)* housing association tenants, *(b)* council tenants and *(c)* private rented sector tenants; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: I will write to the hon. Member.

Public Inquiries

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when he intends to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Surrey, East dated 1 April on the subject of public inquiries regarding Heathrow terminal 5 and the M25 link roads proposal.

Mr. Baldry: My right hon. Friend will be writing to my hon. Friend shortly.

Environmental Expenditure

Mr. Thomason: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment when the results of research on environmental expenditure in the United Kingdom, commissioned by his Department, will be published.

Mr. Yeo: The report will be published in the last week of August, and I am arranging for copies to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Architects (Warne Report)

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what is his response to the Warne report on the architects' profession; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Minister for Housing, Inner Cities and Construction gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Waterson) on 2 February 1993, *Official Report*, columns *89-90*.

Uniform Business Rate

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will make it his policy to introduce new guidelines to local authorities concerning the implementation of the hardship clause on uniform business rates payments within the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

Mr. Baldry: My right hon. Friend has no plans to alter or replace the existing guidance.

Water Disconnection

Ms Primarolo: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many families had their water supply disconnected in each water authority in each of the past five years.

Mr. Yeo: Information on numbers of households disconnected in the area of each Ofwat customer service committee region is set out in the following table. Although each CSC region relates to the area covered by one of the privatised water and sewerage undertakers, each entry in the table includes figures for the water supply companies operating within that area. For 1988-89 only, the numbers are for total disconnections, that is, domestic and non-domestic.

Region	*[1]1988-89*	*1989-90*	*1990-91*	*1991-92*	*1992-93*
Central	2,906	1,347	462	4,797	3,100
Eastern	3,212	1,256	971	1,885	926
North West	779	756	889	2,074	495

Region	[1]1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Northumbria	1,618	721	662	1,009	754
South West	100	245	210	381	300
Southern	1,524	919	429	3,064	4,800
Thames	2,436	687	966	2,084	3,665
Wales	1,249	1,356	1,305	2,951	2,448
Wessex	314	140	194	492	315
Yorkshire	1,078	999	1,585	2,545	1,833

[1] Domestic and non-domestic.

Air Quality Monitoring

Mr. Spearing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what comprehensive and comparable monitoring of air quality is carried out by statutory authorities in Greater London; at what precise locations any such activity is carried out, by what means individual or aggregated results are published or made available to the public; and if he will make such reports available in the Library.

Mr. Yeo: I shall write to the hon. Member.

Poll Tax Costs

Ms Harman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what was the total cost to central and local government in each financial year since 1989-90 of administering the poll tax, including the costs of collection and enforcement.

Mr. Baldry: The cost to local government in England of collecting and administering the community charge was £448 million in 1990-91, £467 million in 1991-92, and £449 million—estimated—in 1992-93. Local authorities have budgeted for costs of £145 million in 1993-94. Central Government do not have direct responsibility for these functions.

Bathing Water Standards

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to his answer of 21 July, *Official Report*, columns 266-67, on EC bathing waters, what information he has as to the steps the Commission is taking to increase compliance with standards in those countries with more than 100 beaches which failed the mandatory standards.

Mr. Yeo: None, but I understand that the Commission has taken infringement action on the bathing water directive against all member states.

Greenham Common

Mr. Rendel: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) what discussions he has had with Berkshire county council about the exclusion of Greenham common from section 194 of the Law of Property Act 1925;

(2) what is his role in respect of the granting of planning consent for developments on Greenham common *(a)* of a gravel crusher and *(b)* of other structures.

Mr. Baldry: I will write to the hon. Member.

Refugees

Mr. Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what payments have been made for each of the past five years, and to which local authorities, in respect of Kurdish refugees, Bosnian refugees, Somali refugees, Vietnamese refugees, Chilean refugees and others; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Baldry: The following payments were made by my Department in 1989-90 and 1990-91 under a scheme of special financial assistance to local authorities in respect of Turkish asylum seekers:

Local Authority	1989-90 £	1990-91 £
London Borough of Haringey	599,400	—
London Borough of Hackney	141,300	—
London Borough of Islington	—	49,474

The following sums were subsequently recovered from those local authorities, following receipt of audited claims showing expenditure incurred by each authority:

	£
London Borough of Haringey	29,921
London Borough of Hackney	141,300
London Borough of Islington	5,680

During 1992-93, the following payments were made under a scheme of assistance in respect of displaced persons from the former Yugoslavia:

Local Authority	1992-93 £
Aylesbury Vale District Council	23,332
Rochford District Council	3,060
Uttlesford District Council	44,408

Rochford district council subsequently withdrew its claim for assistance and repaid £3,060 to the Department. No other payments of grant in respect of refugees have been made by the Department. However, further amounts in respect of displaced persons from former Yugoslavia will be paid during the current financial year. Also, a new special grant in respect of unaccompanied refugee and asylum-seeking children from various parts of the world will be paid to local authorities this year.

Local Government Reform

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what are his intentions as regards the arrangements to be adopted for handling the transfers of assets and liabilities between authorities necessitated by local government restructuring; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Curry: My officials are discussing with officers of the Association of District Councils and the Association of County Councils the practical implications of any transfers of assets and liabilities between local authorities which might be necessitated by local government restructuring. In the light of these discussions, we intend to consult the local authority associations and local authorities on proposals for the treatment of local authority assets and liabilities in any local government restructuring.

Local Authority Associations

Mr. Olner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how many meetings he has had with representatives of the local authority associations since April 1992.

Mr. Baldry *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* Between April 1992 and 27 May 1993, my right hon. and learned Friend the then Secretary of State had 13 meetings with representatives of the local authority associations. Since his appointment on 27 May, the Secretary of State has had three meetings with representatives of the associations.

Government and Public Bodies (Transferred Functions)

Mr. Straw: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment if he will list the functions transferred to central Government Departments and bodies, or to non-elected bodies, consequent upon *(a)* the abolition of the Greater London council, *(b)* the abolition of the metropolitan counties and *(c)* other legislation enacted since 3 May 1979.

Mr. Gummer: I will deal first with *(a)* and *(b)* of the question. The Local Government Act 1985 provided for most of the functions of the Greater London council—GLC—and the metropolitan county councils—MCCs to be devolved respectively to the London borough councils and the City of London and the metropolitan district councils. The exceptions were responsibility for:

(i) police—which was was transferred to Joint Police Authorities (except in London), many of whose members are elected local authority councillors,

(ii) fire, civil defence and passenger transport—which was transferred respectively to Joint Fire and Civil Defence Authorities and Passenger Transport Authorities all of whose members are elected councillors

(iii) waste disposal—transferred to a mixture of statutory and voluntary joint bodies covering all the areas of the former metropolitan county councils and part of London

(iv) certain arts and museums responsibilities were transferred to the Arts Council, English Heritage and the Office of Arts and Libraries (now Department of National Heritage)

(v) Land Drainage (all areas)—to Regional Water Authorities (now water companies),

(vi) Trunk Roads (London) to the Secretary of State for Transport and,

(vii) Pensions Administration—for the GLC and South Yorkshire MCC, pensions administration was transferred to two pensions fund authorities.

To turn to (c), we have been able to identify the following functions:

the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980 created 12 urban development corporations as development control planning authorities in place of certain local authorities.

the London Regional Transport Act 1984 transferred London Regional Transport from GLC to the Secretary of State for Transport.

the Education (No. 2) Act 1986 removed from local education authorities the responsibility for appointing all, or a majority of, the governors of county and controlled schools. Local management of schools (LMS) means that from April 1994 the governing body of every primary and secondary school will manage the school's budget and be responsible for appointing its staff.

the Education Reform Act 1988 removed from local authorities responsibility ' for the provision of higher education, made possible the introduction of independent City Technology Colleges (CTCs) and removed the power of LEAs to set schools' admission limits.

the Housing Act 1988 established Housing Action Trusts and removed a number of housing units from local authority control.

the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993 transfers the duty to provide a careers service to the Secretary of State.

the Health and Safety (Emissions into the Atmosphere) (Amendment) Regulations 1989 added a number of processes to those subject to control by Her Majesty's Inspection of Pollution.

the Poultry Meat (Hygiene) Amendment Regulations 1992 transferred responsibility for licensing poultry meat slaughterhouses from local government to the Minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Food.

the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 made colleges of further education including sixth form colleges, self-governing with their funding arrangements transferred to the Further Education Funding Councils for England and Wales.

the Education (Schools) Act 1992 provided that from 1993 for secondary schools, and 1994 for all other schools, local authorities will lose their general power of school inspection.

the Local Government Act 1992 transferred certain duties and powers in relation to parish reviews from district councils to the Local Government Commission.

the Leashold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 gives the Secretary of State power to designate an area within which the Urban Regeneration Agency would become the local planning authority and have development control powers within that area.

We have also identified the following functions which have been gained by local government since 3 May 1979:

the Social Security and Housing Benefits Act 1982 transferred the administration of rents and rates rebates and allowances from the (then) DHSS to local authorities.

since the abolition of the GLC and the metropolitan county councils, metropolitan districts have been required to prepare unitary development plans (the Secretary of State was previously responsible for the final stages and adoptions).

the Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1989 transferred certain enforcement responsibilities to local authorities.

as a result of our community care reforms, local authorities have been given lead responsibility for assessing people's needs for community care and purchasing residential and nursing home care (in place of the Department of Social Security).

the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 transferred responsibility for the final stages and adoption of structure plans in shire counties to county councils (the Secretary of State was previously responsible).

the Environmental Protection (Prescribed Processes and Substances) Regs 1991 returned certain processes to local authority control.

the Road Traffic Act 1991 transferred parking regulations from Department of Transport to local authorities.

the Products of Animal Origin (Import and Export) Regulations 1992 transferred responsibility for enforcing animal health controls at ports on products of animal origin from third world countries from MAFF to local authorities.

Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 transferred power to determine exclusions from Right to Buy from the Environment Secretary to local government.

National Health Service Land

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment how much NHS land has been sold with planning permission for commercial development in each of the past five years.

Mr. Sackville: I have been asked to reply.

This information is not available centrally. Health authorities are required to obtain the best price that can reasonably be obtained in disposing of surplus land, and land which has the potential for development should normally be sold with the benefit of planning permission. In the past 10 years, the national health service has disposed of over 5,000 hectares realising £1·1 billion which has been reinvested in health services.

TRANSPORT

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Norris: The Department continues to help small businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance. The Department's aim of a more efficient, safe and environmentally friendly transport system, using the market to offer the widest possible choice to transport users, will assist businesses of all sizes.

My Department is, like others, systematically reviewing the regulations for which it is responsible to ensure that unnecessary or over-burdensome regulation is cut back. When considering new regulations, we will take particular account of the burden those regulations impose on small businesses.

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Norris: The information is as follows:

1. *Procurement and Storage of Protective Clothing*

The service was contracted out from DOT. All the staff involved were to transfer to other duties and the implications of the TUPE regulations did not arise.

2. *Bulk/High Speed Reprographic Service*

The service was contracted out on a split award, a proportion being awarded to HMSO. This service was formerly provided to DOT by the Property Services Agency which withdrew the service. As no DOT staff were involved in the contracted-out service, the TUPE regulations could not be applied within DOT.

Land Compensation

Mr. Deva: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions he has exercised the powers of section 62 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 since the section came into force; what projects these related to; on how many times other promoters of transport schemes have exercised these powers; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: These powers have been exercised by the Secretary of State on 357 occasions since they came into force. They have been used to approve the purchase of property which is, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, likely to be seriously affected by the construction or opening of new or widened trunk roads in England. The exercise of these powers, which are discretionary, is a matter for individual promoters; I regret that the Department has no information on how they are operated by others.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Norris: Board meetings and committee meetings of public bodies for which my right hon. Friend is responsible are not held in public.

Tribunal hearings which hear appeals against the Civil Aviation Authority's decisions on the granting or otherwise of licences or certificates are open to the public on application. The eight traffic commissioners all hold public inquiries in connection with bus and goods vehicle operator licensing. Other bodies may hold consultation meetings in public from time to time as circumstances require.

National Parks

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he last met members from each of the national parks authorities to discuss improvements in access to the national parks for tourists; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: Neither my right hon. Friend nor I have recently met members of the national park authorities to discuss access for tourists; nor have they asked for such a meeting. Tourist access would normally be a matter for the national parks authorities to pursue with local highway authorities who would also need to take into account the interests of local people and others travelling in the area.

Motorways (Scheduled Works)

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the details of each scheduled road works to English motorways for July, August and September.

Mr. Key: The list shows the major motorway roadworks in England which are expected to be taking place during all or part of the months of July, August and September.

Scheme	*Start date*	*Completion date*
A1(M) Bowburn to Carville	March 1993	August 1993
M1 J1–5	August 1993	September 1993
M1 J1	June 1993	May 1994
M1 J9–10 North Bound	March 1993	December 1993
M1 J14	September 1993	October 1993
M1 J34–35	June 1993	August 1993
M1 Woodall to Wales	September 1993	December 1993
M3 J8–9	June 1993	August 1993
M4 J4b–5	March 1993	September 1993
M4 J15–16	August 1993	August 1993
M5 J6–6	July 1991	August 1993
M5 Eastern Arms to M6–J8	April 1993	October 1993
M5 J13–14	September 1993	October 1993

Scheme	Start date	Completion date
M5 J18 and Avonmouth Ring road	June 1993	March 1995
M5 J26–27	September 1993	December 1993
M6 J1–2	August 1993	October 1993
M6 J12–13	September 1993	November 1993
M6 J15–16	September 1993	October 1993
M6 J20–21a	November 1993	May 1996
M6 J23–25	April 1993	July 1993
M6 J30–32	March 1993	March 1995
M6 J38–40	June 1993	September 1993
M18 J5–6	July 1993	November 1993
M20 J1–3	April 1993	July 1993
M20 J5–8	July 1991	September 1993
M25 J2–3	September 1993	February 1994
M25 J8–10	May 1993	August 1993
M25 J8–15	June 1993	June 1994
M25 J15–16	January 1993	December 1993
M27 J7–8	September 1993	November 1993
M56 J4–6	April 1993	July 1994
M56 J11–12	September 1993	December 1993
M56 J12–14	March 1993	August 1993
M57 Between Junctions with A59 and A580	April 1993	September 1993
M61 J5–6	July 1993	Unknown
M62 J11–12	July 1993	July 1993
M62 J14–17	May 1993	April 1994
M62 Irwell Valley	July 1993	October 1993
M63 J8	May 1993	July 1993
M62 J34 Pollington	August 1993	November 1993
M62 J30–31	June 1993	October 1993
M66 Denton—Middleton	June 1993	August 1995
A621 Rurral	July 1993	September 1993

In addition to these schemes, some minor roadworks and routine maintenance on motorways may be necessary. These will be carried out at night whenever possible.

Driving Licences

Sir Keith Speed: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to carry out the timetable for the full legislative implementation of the second European directive on driving licences.

Mr. Key: The legislation necessary to implement the second EC directive on the driving licence has to be in place before 1 July 1994. Public consultation on the changes will begin shortly. Draft regulations under the European Communities Act 1972 will be put forward in the next parliamentary Session.

Motorways (Tourism)

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consultation he has had with the English tourist board regarding access to tourist destinations from or via English motorways during the summer.

Mr. Key: My right hon. Friend has held no consultations with the English tourist board on this matter; nor has the board made an approach for such a meeting.

Operator Licences

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many applications there were in each traffic area for *(a)* operator licence applications and *(b)* renewal of operator licences; how many were refused in each area; and what was the reason in each case for refusal of operator licence applications.

Mr. Key: The figures requested for the year 1992-93, are as follows:

		Number of applications			*Number of refusals*		
Traffic area	*Type of licence*	*New*	*Number*	*Renewal*	*New*	*Number*	*Renewal*
North Eastern	Goods	2,127		2,267	34		11
	Passenger		342			0	
North Western	Goods	2,141		2,359	25		4
	Passenger		410			1	
West Midland	Goods	1,386		1,798	42		5
	Passenger		132			1	
Eastern	Goods	2,254		2,287	17		7
	Passenger		311			2	
South Wales	Goods	624		817	30		4
	Passenger		156			1	
Western	Goods	1,738		2,011	105		18
	Passenger		263			3	
South Eastern and Metropolitan	Goods	1,616		1,838	179		34
	Passenger		202			7	
Scottish	Goods	1,060		1,056	28		7
	Passenger		246			0	
TOTAL:	Goods	12,946		14,433	460		90
	Passenger		[1]2,062			[1]15	

[1] New and renewal.

Separate figures for new and renewal applications for passenger vehicle operator licences, and the reason for refusal in each case, are not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what changes he intends to introduce relating to the deregulation of the operating licensing regime for heavy goods vehicles and buses.

Mr. Key: The views of consultees on the proposals contained in the consultation document "Passengers and Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing" circulated on 27 May 1993, are being considered and a statement will be made in due course.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of the joint report by the traffic commissioners against continuous operators licensing.

Mr. Key: The traffic commissioners did not submit a formal report in response to the consultation document on operator licensing and it is not our normal practice to publish individual responses to consultations of this nature. The views of consultees on the proposals contained in the document of 27 May 1993, "Passenger and Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing"—a copy of which was placed in the Library—are being considered and a statement will be made in due course.

Lorries

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has had regarding the proposal to increase lorry axle weights to 44 tonnes, with particular reference to pressing for such vehicles to be confined to the motorway network only; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The proposal on which we issued a consultation document in March was an increase in the maximum gross weight to 44 tonnes for six-axle articulated lorries and drawbar trailer combinations carrying containers and swap-bodies to and from railheads in combined road/rail operations. No change was proposed to the maximum axle weight. We received a number of representations that careful consideration should be given to the routeing of 44-tonne vehicles, particularly in urban areas, but none that they should be confined to the motorway network, which would be impractical. In fact, the 44-tonne, six-axle vehicle would be no larger and cause no more road wear than present vehicles. We hope to be able to announce our conclusions on the consultation soon.

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is his estimate of the amounts planned to be spent on strengthening road bridges to take heavier lorries, in each of the years in the current public spending round; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Robert Key: In 1988-89, the Department of Transport started a 15-year programme for the rehabilitation of bridges on national roads in England. The programme involves assessing the condition of bridges, and strengthening them where necessary. This year the Department plans to spend £150 million.

The Department also provides support to English local authorities for the maintenance of their bridges by way of transport supplementary grant and credit approvals. This year, this support will total £137 million. The exact amount spent will depend on local authorities' priorities.

The national and local bridge programmes are intended to cater for the increasing volume of traffic as well as to provide for heavier lorries.

Expenditure in the next three years will depend on the need for strengthening identified by the assessment programme and the outcome of the current public spending round.

Buses

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what discussions he has had with bus operators regarding possible improvements in bus design to increase passenger safety;

(2) what discussions he has had with organisations representing bus passenger users regarding possible improvements in bus design to increase passenger safety; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Key: The prospect of an EC directive concerning bus and coach construction is currently under discussion within the European Commission. All future proposals to change the constructional requirements of these vehicles will have to be agreed by member states.

As part of our continuing aim to improve the safety of passengers using these vehicles, we maintain contact with representative organisations of both users and operators.

Environmental Assessments

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when his Department intends to issue an updated and expanded environmental assessment manual for scheme assessment.

Mr. Key: Volume 11 of the "Design Manual for Roads and Bridges—Environmental Assessment" has been published today. A copy will be placed in the Library.

Traffic Calming

Mr. Mans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when traffic-calming regulations are to be introduced.

Mr. Key: I am pleased to announce that the Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations 1993 have now been made, and laid in Parliament. They give highway authorities clear legal powers to use a range of engineering measures as part of traffic-calming schemes. The regulations will come into effect on 27 August 1993. Traffic calming can have very worthwhile effects in improving local environments and in assisting road safety. Measures to keep speeds to appropriate levels and alter the way drivers behave are as relevant to small towns and villages as they are to large urban locations. I want to see the use of traffic calming spread as rapidly and widely as possible. My Department will assist this process by assessing good practice, and generating technical guidance on techniques that can be used.

Civil Aircraft

Mr. Dunn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if the Civil Aviation Authority has made a final response to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission's report on the CAA's provision of air navigation and air traffic control services to civil aircraft published in July 1990; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. MacGregor: The Civil Aviation Authority publishes its third and final response today. I have arranged for copies to be placed in the Library. Hon. Members will see that the final response records all the progress made since the report itself was published.

The authority's initial response, made in December 1990, said that the authority had accepted all but one of the MMC's 40 recommendations. I am pleased to report that 30 of the recommendations have now been fully acted upon—in some cases, the authority has gone even further in implementing the recommendations than was envisaged by the MMC—and substantial progress has been made on a further five which have proved more complex than originally envisaged.

In three instances, practical constraints have meant that the recommendations could not be implemented in precisely the way proposed by the MMC. But the authority is taking all possible steps to fulfil the intent of the recommendations.

In the three years since the report was published, the effects of the recession on the aviation industry have caused the authority to pay special attention to cost control and improved effectiveness. It is to the authority's credit that it has made such good progress in implementing the report against so difficult a background.

Street Works Advisory Committee

Mr. Lester: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement about the street works advisory committee.

Mr. Key: I am glad to say that I have reappointed the committee for a period of two years from 1 July 1993 to 30 June 1995, with a particular remit to produce a report for publication towards the end of that period. This will complete the committee's work and it will then be wound up.

I am grateful to the committee for its work since it was first appointed in 1987, and look forward to receiving its advice during this further period.

Tankers

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secetary of State for Transport what action is currently undertaken by his Department to monitor tanker movements in dangerous sea passages.

Mr. Norris: The United Kingdom Chamber of Shipping, in consultation with the Department, developed an interim voluntary code for the routeing of tankers around the United Kingdom coast, which includes recommendations for reporting their movements to coastguard stations in sensitive areas. It is anticipated that the International Maritime Organisation's assembly will formally adopt the reporting proposals in the autumn.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape.

Mr. Freeman: Information published by the Department's disability unit is produced on tape as a matter of course; the unit's short documents are produced in Braille, and large print is produced on request.

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Freeman: The Department does not make special arrangements to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to most of the information it produces.

However, it does take care to ensure that the availability of its information is brought to the attention of as wide a range of the public as possible—including through the broadcast media.

In addition, information published by the Department's disability unit is produced on tape as a matter of course; the unit's short documents are produced in Braille, and large print is produced on request.

This policy is being reviewed.

M11

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will re-evaluate the environmental standards applied to M11 link road through Leyton and Leytonstone.

Mr. Norris: No. The assessment of the environmental effects of the A12, Hackney-M11 link road has been the subject of public debate over many years and through three public inquiries. All statutory procedures are complete and we expect to begin work in Wanstead in the autumn.

West Coast Main Line

Mr. Alton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from the transport users consultative committee for north-western England concerning investment and modernisation of the west coast main line for provision of IC225 trains for that route; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Freeman: The most recent representation from the transport users' consultative committee about upgrading the west coast main line was in its 1992-93 annual report which was sent to me earlier this month.

Rail Privatisation

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from operators who may wish to bid for franchises for passenger rail services in Wales.

Mr. Freeman: We have received a number of private sector expressions of interest in passenger rail franchises that would operate services in Wales.

Landscape Advisory Committee

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will list the members of the Landscape Advisory Committee; and which new road and road improvement schemes have been investigated by the committee within Wales in each of the last two years;

(2) if he will make it his policy to publish the reports on new road schemes and road improvements schemes produced for his Department by the Landscape Advisory Committee.

Mr. Key: The current members of the Landscape Advisory Committee are:

Professor D. K. C. Jones (Chairman)
Sir H. E. Aubrey-Fletcher
Professor M. Benwell
Dr J. A. Bergg
Professor G. E. Cherry
Mr. L. J. Clark
Professor M. M. Cole
Mr. G. P. Crow
M[illegible] A. O. Evans
Mr. J. V. S. Evans
Mr. C. R. Ferens
Professor P. J. Fowler
Mrs. E. J. Garland

Mr. H. J. R. Geddes
Mr. A. D. Gill
Mrs. J. Jack
Mrs. P. E. Lunn
Ms W. M. Lutley
Professor M. A. MacKeith
Mr. J. M. McCluskey
Mr. M. R. Porter
Miss W. E. Powell
Mrs. V. Russell
Mr. M. O. Slocock
Mr. M. E. G. Taylor
Mrs. V. Wakefield
Mr. R. W. Winter

Members of the committee have inspected the following road schemes in Wales during the past two years:

A470	Builth Wells Bypass	10 September 1991 and 28 January 1992
A487(T)4	Bontnewydd, Llanwnda and Dolydd Bypass	9-11 October 1991
A487(T)	Groeslon, Penygroes and Llanllyfni Bypass	9-11 October 1991
A494	Llanbedr Bypass	7 May 1992
A487	Fishguard Lower Town Improvements/ Bypass	11 May 1992
A465	Llangua-Pontrilas	25 November 1992
A40	Crickhowell Bypass (Re-Inspection)	25 January 1993
M4	Relief Road (Magor to Castleton)	26 January 1993
A497	Penrhyndeudraeth	18 March 1993
A470	Llanwrst Bypass	19 March 1993

Reports on road schemes in England and Wales which have been submitted by the Landscape Advisory Committee are already made available, on request, to any member of the public following the announcement of the preferred route for the scheme.

Barge, Hallsands

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will arrange for the barge scuttled at Hallsands, south Devon to be removed as a danger to shipping; and if he will make a statement as to the circumstances in which the barge was sunk and the application of the Oslo convention to the sinking.

Mr. Norris: I understand that the barge in question was being used in connection with coast protection works being undertaken for the National Rivers Authority. It has been moved from where it first sank, and subsequently scuttled nearby. It is an offence under the Coast Protection Act 1949 to deposit any object on the seabed so that obstruction or danger to navigation is caused, without the consent in writing of the Secretary of State. That consent was not sought in advance as the Act requires. We have had an application from a local person seeking retrospective consent for this action which has now been refused. My Department has invoked its powers of enforcement to ask the National Rivers Authority to ensure that this unauthorised danger is cleared as a matter of urgency. International agreements regulating scuttling have been implemented through the Food and Environment Protection Act 1973, administered by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. It, too, is considering appropriate action in this case.

Supply Vessels

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what was the percentage of supply vessels operating in the British sector of the North sea which were foreign flagged *(a)* in 1982 and *(b)* in 1992.

Mr. Norris: The Department does not collect details of supply vessels operating in the North sea, but I have obtained from other sources the following figures for June of each year: *(a)* 51 per cent. *(b)* 45 per cent.

Harbours (Speed Limits)

Mr. Ian Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what proposals he has received from Poole harbour commissioners to make byelaws relating to speed limits of vessels; and what was the outcome;

(2) if he will list those harbours on the English south coast that do not have speed restrictions in place;

(3) what consultations his Department has had on the environmental implications of vessel speed in the Poole harbour site of special scientific interest.

Mr. Norris: Poole harbour commissioners' proposed amendments to the harbour byelaws, for confirmation by the Secretary of State, to allow a speed limit of 10 knots to be imposed on power driven vessels, to enable water ski-ing and aquaplaning to be restricted to specified zones, and to exclude boardsailing from the main navigation channel. The last of these did not prove to be contentious and that amendment has been confirmed. The proposed speed and zoning restrictions, however, attracted a large number of objections. The commissioners have now produced a considered response to these, upon which the objectors have been given an opportunity to comment. The Secretary of State will then proceed to a decision as soon and possible. The local Act empowering the commissioners to make byelaws does not provide for any public inquiry into objections to proposed amendments and written representations have therefore been relied on.

The Department does not have a readily available record of speed limit byelaws by all harbour authorities. The commissioners' response refers to 25 harbour authorities on the south coast which have such limits. Poole already has one of 6 knots for the little channel, Poole quay channel and Holes bay. The commissioners have not proposed the amendments to their byelaws primarily on environmental grounds, but they have drawn attention to such considerations in their report.

Passenger Vessels

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to ensure the full compliance with the regulations on passenger vessels; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Norris: All passenger vessels operating to and from United Kingdom ports must comply with national and international requirements. An inspection programme is in place to ensure that these ships meet those requirements.

North Sea Pollution

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what information has been reported to Her Majesty's Government under the Polrep reporting system

of the 1983 Bonn agreement on co-operation in dealing with pollution of the North sea; and what incidents have been reported by contracting parties on radioactive releases under the Bonn agreement.

Mr. Norris: I will write to the hon. Member.

East London River Crossing

Ms Austin-Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Eltham (Mr. Bottomley) of 7 July, *Official Report*, columns *158-59*, if he will ensure that any new proposals in respect of the east London river crossing will not run through, over or under any part of Oxleas wood; if new proposals in respect of the east London river crossing will be the subject of a full environmental impact assessment in accordance with the terms of EC directive 85/337/EEC, section 105A of the Highways Act 1980 and the Highways (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988, and that there will be a public inquiry; and if in bringing forward new proposals, he will consider alternatives to a road link.

Mr. Norris *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Dartford (Mr. Dunn) on Monday 26 July 1993, at column *584*.

WALES

Orange Badges

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to issue new guidelines to local authorities in Wales concerning *(a)* the allocation of parking spaces to orange badge holders within (i) new car parking facilities and (ii) existing car parking facilities and *(b)* the accessibility of car park ticket machines.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The Government encourage local authorities to provide extra parking facilities wherever possible by designating special bays at convenient locations both on-street and in off-street car parks. Orange badge laws do not extend to off-street car parks, whether local authority or privately owned.

The accessibility of car park ticket machines is for the operator of the car park to determine. Current British standards for pay and display machines include requirements regarding the height of the display and coin slots, and the dimensions, of any plinth upon which the machines may be mounted. These requirements should facilitate access by wheelchair users.

Schools (Disabled Access)

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make it his policy to place a duty on local authorities to publish annually details of the proportion of local authority schools which are accessible to disabled people.

Sir Wyn Roberts: I have no plans to introduce such a duty. It is for each local education authority to decide what measures are required to fulfil its statutory obligations to ensure access to disabled people in schools. In addition, individual schools can publish details about their access facilities for disabled people in their prospectuses.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Redwood: The Government continue to help small businesses through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

Measures operated by my Department to assist small businesses include:

Enterprise Promotion

There are now seven training and enterprise councils (TECs) providing business counselling and support for small businesses across Wales. During 1992-93, TECs received 42,843 inquiries and provided 13,903 counselling sessions. In the same year, TECs also provided business start-up funding totalling £1·919 million; 2,077 businesses were using the business start-up scheme at the end of March 1993.

In addition to the work of the TECs, local enterprise agencies provide a range of support services to new and growing businesses. There are now 22 local enterprise agencies in Wales, including four merged to form two new agencies in 1991. The 22nd agency commenced operations on 2 July 1993. Enterprise and small business growth are also promoted under the Enterprise Wales scheme. Since its launch in 1988, more than 6,500 companies have applied for consultancy advice provided through this initiative.

Grant Support

Small businesses continue to take advantage of help available under regional selective assistance. During the year ending 30 June 1993, 120 firms employing under 200 accepted offers of regional selective assistance totalling £22·463 million, an increase of almost 17 per cent. on the previous year. A further 163 small firms—i.e., those with fewer than 25 employees for investment grant and fewer than 50 for innovation grant—accepted offers of regional enterprise grant totalling £2·469 million, an increase of 38 per cent. over the same period.

In addition, the Welsh Development Agency made 80 loans during 1992-93 with a value of £0·631 million from its small loans scheme. The Development Board for Rural Wales offered £2·8 million mid-Wales development grant assistance to 36 projects helping to generate private sector investment of £22 million and creating or safeguarding 1,172 job opportunities.

The small firms merit award for research and technology (SMART) continues to be very popular. In the previous two years, Welsh industry has gained 16 of the awards, 9 per cent. of the United Kingdom total. Under the support for products under research scheme (SPUR), grant support awarded to companies in Wales rose from £0·75 million in 1991 to £0·96 million in 1992, a percentage increase of 28 per cent.

Deregulation

The Welsh Office is contributing fully to the Government's deregulation initiative to lift the burden of Government regulations on business. No Wales-only regulations have been identified as placing a burden on business, but a consultation exercise is being carried out to assess the impact of United Kingdom-wide regulations on Welsh firms.

Primary School Assistant Teachers

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what information he has on the average amount spent by local education authorities in Wales in advertising each assistant teacher vacancy within the primary school sector.

Sir Wyn Roberts: The information requested is not held centrally.

Aerospace Industry

Mr. Barry Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what steps he is taking to respond to job losses in the aerospace industry in Clwyd; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Redwood: I am sorry about the job losses announced in Clwyd. The Welsh Office and other Government agencies already operate a wide range of measures aimed at increasing employment opportunities throughout Wales. All these bodies will continue to look for and respond swiftly to opportunities that arise which have the potential to increase employment prospects. Of course, we stand ready to help, within our powers, where we can in these difficult cases.

Beaches (Pollution)

Mr. Dafis: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) if he will list the beaches tested for entero-viruses in Wales in *(a)* 1991 and *(b)* 1992;

(2) how many tests for salmonella were conducted on each beach in Wales in *(a)* 1991 and *(b)* 1992.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The number of samples analysed by the National Rivers Authority for entero-viruses and for salmonella from EC identified bathing waters in Wales were published in the 1991 and 1992 volumes of "Bathing Water Quality in England and Wales", copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

Defence Job Losses

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, pursuant to his oral answer to the hon. Member for Mid-Staffordshire (Mr. Fabricant) on 19 July, *Official Report*, column 7, what was the source of the estimate of job losses in the defence sector to which he refers.

Mr. Redwood: The source was Conservative central office.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Redwood: The information is not held centrally.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, pursuant to his answer of 6 July, *Official Report*, column *64*, whether a register of the interests declared by members of non-departmental public bodies available for public inspection, is maintained by his Department or at the main offices of the various bodies.

Mr. Redwood: No central register is maintained. It is the practice of some bodies to publish such information in their annual report and accounts.

GP Fund Holders

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if a decision has been made regarding the final allocation of resources for 1993-94 to family health services authorities in respect of general practitioner practice expenses and support costs for general practitioner fund holders.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: On Thursday 4 March, *Official Report*, columns *255-61*, in announcing the cash allocation for 1993-94 for health authorities, my right hon. Friend indicated that further resources would be made available to family health services authorities in respect of GP fund holders' support costs. He explained also that £867,000 held back from the initial allocation to the authorities of funding for GP cash-limited expenses would be distributed following the outcome of a consultation.

The authorities will be responsible for 71 operational and 31 preparatory GP fund holders in Wales in 1993-94. In recognition of the enhanced practice management computer systems required by fund holders, funding of up to £7,000 to meet the full computer maintenance costs of each operational fund holding practice and up to £22,000 to meet the additional computer hardware and software costs involved in preparing for fund holding will be available. Allocations to authorities will be in line with the numbers of operational and preparatory fund holders in each area.

Separate funding is provided to authorities in respect of their expenditure on GPs' practice premises, practice support staff and practice computerisation—distinct from that for fund-holding practices. Prior to this year, the shares of the total annual funding for this purpose were determined largely by the extent of past investment decisions by GPs.

The period immediately before the introduction of the revised GP contract in April 1990 saw substantial growth in committed expenditure on practice premises improvement. In addition, the revised contract stimulated increased investment in practice support staff. During the period 1989-90 to 1993-94, the resources for expenditure on GP practice expenses in Wales increased by 67 per cent. in real terms.

In April, 1993, all health authorities and community health councils in Wales, plus GP professional interests, represented by the General Medical Services Committee (Wales) and, at the local level, by individual local medical committees, were consulted on proposals to allocate this funding with effect from 1993-94 on the basis of a weighted capitation formula. Copies of the consultation document are in the Library of the House.

This formula produces for each family health services authority a target share of the total resource available for Wales for GP practice premises, support staff and practice computerisation. The starting point for the formula is the resident population of each district, taken from the population estimates based on the 1991 census. This is weighted for age and sex, by GP consultation rates for Wales and by the standardised mortality ratios for the area. In recognition of the heavier costs involved in providing additional surgeries to ensure reasonable access for patients in rural areas, the formula includes a rurality component based on comparative road lengths. This component is given a 15 per cent. weighting in the formula.

It is our view that this formula meets the essential criteria for a capitation-based approach to the allocation of health care resources. In addition, the population basis of the formula is consistent with the features of the GP contract whereby age-banded capitation lists comprise the major fees mechanism in remunerating and partially reimbursing GPs, and a special subvention is given in recognition of the specific problems of rural areas.

A change of this order in any resource allocation process cannot take place overnight. It is our intention

that authorities' progression, from their historical shares of funding for this expenditure to their target shares based on the weighted capitation formula, will be phased over the period from the present financial year to 2002-03. This will take place against a planning framework which recognises continued real terms growth throughout the period. The span of this transitional period should ensure that those authorities with a reducing share of the total funding will be able to plan an orderly realignment of their expenditure plans; and those with increasing shares of the total resources will be able to utilise the extra funds as effectively as possible. In both cases, the availability of resources for reinvestment—as existing cost rent schemes mature—coupled with the beneficial effect on allocations of the reduction in interest rates, should, with good management, ensure continued development of GP support staffing and facilities throughout Wales over this period.

Whilst I remain convinced that the services provided by family doctors in rural parts of Wales require a recognition of unavoidable additional costs, I am open to further suggestions on how best to do this. Therefore, during this year, there will be further consultations to discuss this aspect of the formula. During the course of the transitional period to 2002-03, the Welsh Office will remain open to opportunities and proposals for improving the formula.

As I have indicated, pending the outcome of the consultation exercise, £867,000 was held back from the initial allocations for 1993-94 for expenditure on GPs' practice premises, practice support staff and practice computerisation. We propose to use this to initiate the progression from historical shares of funding for this expenditure, to target shares, as indicated by the weighted capitation formula. The £867,000 will be divided equally between Clwyd, Mid Glamorgan and West Glamorgan, which are at present below their target shares. Taking account of this, the intended final revenue allocations for 1993-94 for this purpose are shown in table 1, together with the capital allocations. Table 2 shows each authority's percentage share of the total revenue funding for 1993-94 for this purpose, as a consequence of these final allocations, compared with the target share to be attained by 2002-03.

I envisage that the progression to target shares over the 10-year span to 2002-03 will be effected in two ways: first, by directing available growth funding each year to those authorities remaining below their target shares, pro rata with their respective distance from their target shares; and, secondly, for those authorities above their target shares, there will be three years of marking time—no growth funding but also no reduction in funding—followed in subsequent years by a series of annual percentage reductions in their shares. The funding thereby released will be added to available growth funding and allocated to below-target authorities. On this basis and, I must stress, for planning purposes only, the percentage changes in annual revenue funding for this purpose that authorities in Wales might anticipate over the next 10 years are shown in table 3.

For the sake of completeness, table 4 shows the final allocations incorporating funding for the additional costs of computer support for GP fund holders. As fund holding has progressed at markedly different rates in different parts of Wales, this funding element is not included in the formula shares. Authorities will also be able to draw from Welsh Office funds relating to GP fund holder management allowances within the prescribed limits.

Table 1

1993-94 final allocations to family health services authorities for cash limited expenditure on GPs practice premises, practice support staff and practice computerisation (excluding GP fund holder support)

	Revenue £000's	*Capital £000's*	*Total £000's*
Clwyd	4,956	101	5,057
Dyfed	5,029	103	5,132
Gwent	5,897	120	6,017
Gwynedd	3,802	78	3,880
Mid Glamorgan	6,236	127	6,363
Powys	2,182	45	2,227
South Glamorgan	4,628	94	4,722
West Glamorgan	4,045	83	4,128
Wales	36,775	751	37,526

Table 2

Percentage Share of Revenue Funding

Family Health Services Authority	*1993-94*	*Formula share*
Clwyd	13·48	14·21
Dyfed	13·68	13·57
Gwent	16·03	14·89
Gwynedd	10·34	9·04
Mid Glamorgan	16·96	18·65
Powys	5·93	5·77
South Glamorgan	12·58	11·98
West Glamorgan	11·00	11·89
WALES	100·00	100·00

Table 3

Annual Change in Funding as a Percentage of Previous Year's Allocation a: Constant Prices

Family Health Services Authority	*1994-95*	*1995-96*	*1996-97*	*1997-98*	*1998-99*	*1999-00*	*2000-01*	*2001-02*	*2002-03*
Clwyd	0·83	0·84	1·71	1·38	1·36	1·30	0·99	0·91	0·52
Dyfed	0·00	0·00	0·08	0·25	0·47	0·70	0·77	0·95	0·51
Gwent	0·00	0·00	−1·00	−1·01	−1·00	−0·99	0·00	0·50	0·60
Gwynedd	0·00	0·00	−1·49	−1·52	−1·49	−1·51	−1·48	−1·50	0·06
Mid Glamorgan	1·51	1·47	2·82	2·14	1·93	1·72	1·12	0·87	0·55
Powys	0·00	0·00	−0·99	0·00	0·00	0·50	0·77	0·85	0·58
South Glamorgan	0·00	0·01	−1·02	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·00	0·60
West Glamorgan	1·21	1·22	2·36	1·82	1·70	1·54	1·08	0·87	0·56

Table 4
1993-94 Final allocations to family health services authorities for cash limited expenditure on GPs practice premises, practice support staff and practice computerisation (including GP fund-holder computer support)

FHSA	Revenue £000's	Capital £000's	Total £000's
Clwyd	5,075	145	5,220
Dyfed	5,071	279	5,350
Gwent	5,988	186	6,174
Gwynedd	3,809	188	3,997
Mid Glamorgan	6,285	149	6,434
Powys	2,217	89	2,306
South Glamorgan	4,656	270	4,926
West Glamorgan	4,171	127	4,298
Wales	37,272	1,433	38,705

Construction Contracts

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what representations he has received about the proposal that construction contracts worth over £1 million should continue to be subject to compulsory competitive tendering during the period of local government reorganisation in Wales; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Redwood: I have received a number of representations, including some from the private sector.

In the light of those representations, I have decided that it would be appropriate to continue to require competition for construction contracts worth over £500,000. This change will enhance the opportunities of private sector firms to compete for work from local authorities during the period of local government reorganisation.

Trauma

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many major trauma units are in operation in Wales; and what is the projected budget for trauma in 1994, 1995 and 1996.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: I refer the hon. Lady to my answer to the hon. Member for Ynys Môn (Mr. Jones), on 26 January 1993, *Official Report*, column *671*.

Projected budgets for trauma are not available. Individual health authorities are funded on the basis of their resident populations and it is a matter for them to determine the level of funding needed to secure a comprehensive range of health services, including the treatment of trauma, for their residents.

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many *(a)* orthopaedic trauma operations and *(b)* trauma operations were performed in Wales in each year since 1990.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The information is not immediately available. I will write to the hon. Lady and place a copy of the reply in the Library of the House.

NHS Provider Units

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will place a copy in the Library of the guidelines of March 1993 on the pricing and costing of services by provider units within the NHS to purchasers.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: The guidance issued in March 1993 related to the costing of specific service targets within contracts to be let by Welsh health authorities in 1993-94. Earlier this month, more general guidance on costing for contracting in future years was issued by the Welsh Office following work undertaken in England. Copies of both documents have now been placed in the Library of the House.

Incontinence Aids

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will place a copy in the Library of the guidance on the free supply of incontinence aids by health authorities on a non-discriminatory basis.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: Annex C of Welsh Office circular 27/93 provides guidance on the supply of incontinence aids for people living in the community.

A copy of this circular has been placed in the Library of the House.

Educational Qualifications

Mr. Ron Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) how many, and what percentage, of *(a)* women and *(b)* men in Wales have *(a)* university degrees, *(b)* higher technician diplomas, *(c)* craft/lower technical diplomas and *(d)* no vocational qualifications at the latest available date;

(2) how many, and what percentage, of those working in Wales have *(a)* university degrees, *(b)* higher technician diplomas, *(c)* craft/lower technical diplomas and *(d)* no vocational qualifications at the latest available date.

Sir Wyn Roberts: I will write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as possible and place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House.

Forestry

Mr. Morley: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list, by county, those forest areas in Wales currently available for sale to the private sector.

Sir Wyn Roberts: I will write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as possible and place a copy of my reply in the Library of the House.

Grant-maintained Schools

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many grant-maintained schools there are in Wales; what are the rules about the personal responsibility of members of their governing bodies; whether members are required to declare interests; what statutory provision is made for public access to information about a school and the governors' proceedings; what charter provision applies to their activities; and whether they are subject to performance indicators.

Sir Wyn Roberts: There are seven grant-maintained schools operating in Wales with a further three approved.

Generally, liability rests with the governing body rather than individual members. Individual members may however, be held liable in certain circumstances and schools are advised to take out insurance against these contingencies.

The instrument of government sets out in detail the circumstances in which members of the governing body should declare an interest and may be required to leave a

meeting or will not be permitted to take part in a discussion or vote. The general principle is that no one should be involved in a decision where his or her own personal interests conflict with those of the school.

The article of government render a grant-maintained school accountable to the community it serves. It is required to publish a prospectus and annual report, hold an annual parents meeting, and make available non-confidential details of governors' meetings.

Grant-maintained schools are subject to the same citizens charter provisions and are required to provide the same performance data as their local education authority counterparts.

Orthopaedic Consultancies

Ms Lynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what are his estimates for the number of orthopaedic consultant posts that will be required in Wales in 1994, 1995 and 1996.

Mr. Gwilym Jones: This information is not held centrally. Consultant expansion is a matter for employing bodies who should have regard to the health care needs of their local population.

Teacher Training

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what was the intake at each teacher training establishment in Wales for each year since 1990 together with the numbers who qualified as teachers from each establishment during the same period.

Sir Wyn Roberts *[holding answer 14 July 1993]:* As this information will be available shortly, I will write to the hon. Gentleman and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Local Government Reorganisation

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what measures he is to take to protect the interests of local government staff in the run up to local government reorganisation in Wales.

Mr. Redwood *[pursuant to his reply, 8 June 1993, c. 218-19]:* The chairman and members of the advisory committee on the staffing implications of local government reorganisation are to be:

Sir Richard Lloyd Jones KCB (Chairman)
Peter Anthony Bennett
David Hughes Davies DL
Michael Roger Towers

The appointments will take effect from 1 September 1993.

The members of the committee will be able to bring to bear their extensive experience of management and personnel issues, which has been gained at senior level in both tiers of local government and in the public and private sectors. I look forward to receiving their advice.

Mr. Richards: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement about his proposals to delegate power to area committees as part of the reorganisation of local government in Wales; and to which areas of Wales it will apply.

Mr. Redwood: I am considering taking a power that would permit me to require shadow unitary authorities in certain specified circumstances to produce decentralisation schemes. Such schemes would set out their proposals for devolving responsibilities to area or shire committees. They would have to be produced in accordance with guidance prepared by my Department, and I would be empowered to approve and amend them.

This proposal builds upon the statement my predecessor made to the House on 1 March when he suggested that a structure of area committees, representing the existing district areas, might be the most appropriate form of internal organisation for the proposed Powys unitary authority, given that authority's size and population. Since that time, my colleagues and I have been considering how best to give effect to that suggestion.

I envisage that the power to require an authority to prepare a decentralisation scheme would be applied:

1. Where a specified number of members—probably 10—of the unitary authority had requested it; and
2. Where the Secretary of State was satisfied that a scheme was appropriate having regard to relevant geographic, cultural and demographic considerations.

Authorities would normally be expected to prepare schemes for areas based upon the present or former areas of principal councils.

Each area committee would have real decision-making powers over the functions delegated to it by the full council. While the full council would possess, as at present, a power to override committee decisions, this would be subject to a qualified majority vote of, say, 90 per cent. so that the whole council could not overturn an area committee's decision without the support of some members of that area committee. Delegated powers could be returned to the full council by agreement; likewise, further powers could be devolved to the area committee.

It would be for members of the unitary authorities in the first instance to suggest which functions to delegate. But they would decide which in the light of my guidance, and the decisions themselves would be subject to my powers of amendment. Normally, I would expect delegation to cover those aspects of a district's functions —for example, housing, environmental health, waste collection, local planning—that lend themselves to local administration, but some present county functions or particular elements of them could also be delegated.

The decentralisation scheme would need to set out the principles upon which resources were to be allocated. It would also have to provide for matters such as access to staff and equipment.

The power would be available for use in all 21 of the authorities proposed in the White Paper, Cm 2155. In practice, I do not envisage it being applied widely, but its availability would provide people from areas such as Montgomeryshire, Breconshire and Radnorshire with the assurance that their elected representatives will have substantial control over the administration of local services in their areas. It would not be available for individual towns and villages that currently are part of a larger district council area.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many movements of spent fuel of radioactive waste to Sellafield have resulted from the Magnox reprocessing programme to date.

Mr. Eggar: To date, more than 12,000 flasks of spent Magnox fuel have been delivered to Sellafield for reprocessing.

Mr. Simon Hughes: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many and what range of movements of radioactive waste will arise in the lifetime of the operation of THORP if substitution is not permitted.

Mr. Eggar: British Nuclear Fuels plc estimates that, from the first 10 years of operating its thermal oxide reprocessing plant and assuming that waste substitution is not approved, some 3,300 containers of radioactive waste would have to be returned to its customers overseas. The quantities for subsequent years will depend upon BNFL's progress in securing additional orders for the plant.

Mr. Tipping: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what studies he has commissioned and which compare the viability of returning the intermediate-level wastes arising from the reprocessing of foreign nuclear fuel at the thermal oxide reprocessing plant for the customer countries rather than vitrified high-level waste.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* None.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if his Department has been consulted regarding the location of storage facilities for intermediate-level waste generated by reprocessing foreign spent fuel at the thermal oxide reprocessing plant, between the planned start-up of THORP and the beginning of operation of the planned Nirex repository; and if he will make it his policy not to include Dounreay in his consideration.

Mr. Eggar: BNFL's plans for intermediate level waste are to store it, following encapsulation, in purpose-built facilities at Sellafield until it is returned to the customer or disposed of as appropriate.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what storage facilities there are, or are planned, for intermediate-level wastes arising from the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel at the thermal oxide reprocessing plant, between the planned start up of THORP and the beginning of operation of the planned Nirex repository; and if he will take this into account when considering approval of the principle of waste substitution.

Mr. Eggar: The provision of waste storage facilites at Sellafield is a matter for British Nuclear Fuels plc as operators of the site. All relevant factors will be taken into account in considering the company's proposal for waste substitution.

National Environmental Technology Centre

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade who has been appointed head of the National Enviornmental Technology Centre announced on 10 June, *Official Report*, column *303;* and what is the formal relationship between the National Environmental Technology Centre and AEA Technology.

Mr. McLoughlin: An appointment has not yet been made. The National Environmental Technology Centre will form part of AEA Technology.

AEA Technology

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what plans he has to make a grant from public funds to allow AEA Technology to reorganise its environmental functions so as to combine them with Warren Spring Laboratory.

Mr. McLoughlin: The National Environmental Technology Centre will be funded by fees from its customers, as the Warren Spring Laboratory has been. The AEA's agreed costs, in establishing the NETC, will be provided by my Department.

Japan

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the achievements and objectives of Her Majesty's Government's policy on trade with Japan.

Mr. Needham: Since the late 1980s, the Government have established a close, plain-speaking and positive relationship with Japan. In addition to the United Kingdom's welcome for overseas investment and the other advantages it offers, this has contributed to the United Kingdom being Japan's preferred investment partner in Europe. This investment represents over 40 per cent. of Japanese investment in the EC and has created more than 50,000 manufacturing jobs. Our export promotion campaigns, "Opportunity Japan" and "Priority Japan" have successfully encouraged United Kingdom firms to make inroads into the Japanese market. United Kingdom exports rose 75 per cent. to £2·63 billion in the period 1988-90 and have held up well—standing at £2·24 billion—compared with our major trading partners in the past two years, despite difficult economic conditions in Japan. The Japanese Government also assist United Kingdom companies who export to and invest in Japan.

Working with our European Community partners, we seek from the Japanese Government further measures to stimulate domestic demand in Japan and to increase her propensity to import. We also seek further practical assistance to new investors in and exporters to Japan and the removal of the remaining barriers which affect British business. Such barriers are few but very important for the industries concerned. My Department remains committed to increasing awareness of the immense business opportunities in Japan and to strengthening our industrial base by learning from best Japanese practice. To that end, we are working with United Kingdom industry through our Priority Japan campaign, Engineers to Japan scheme and other activities.

Economy, North-West

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement about the economy in the north-west region.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: In spite of intense international competition, the north-west has shown considerable resilience in recent years. Important modernisation and rationalisation have taken place and companies continue to win important contracts both at home and abroad ranging from hi-tech electronic goods to lozenge manufacturers. The region has increased its GDP by over 50 per cent. in five years, recording a figure of £50·3 billion

in 1991, second only to the south-east within the United Kingdom. The north-west's stock of VAT-registered businesses increased by over 14 per cent. in the five years to 1991 while unemployment trends have been reversed with the seasonally-adjusted total being reduced by 9,700 in six months to June 1993.

There have been a number of favourable comments on the economic situation in recent months. The North West Chambers of Commerce in their 2nd quarter 1993 survey report have commented on a further strengthening of domestic sales and orders, especially for smaller companies, while claiming that the higher level of confidence achieved in the first quarter has been broadly maintained. The Invest in Britain Bureau's annual report indicates that 23 inward investment schemes are under way in the north-west involving over 3,300 associated jobs. These projects are from a number of countries including the USA, Japan and Germany.

Aerospace Companies

Mr. Callaghan: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what economic contributions aerospace companies make to the United Kingdom industrial production, investment, the balance of payments and corporation tax revenues.

Mr. Sainsbury: Output of the aeropace in 1990, in terms of gross domestic product at current factor cost, was £5,139 million or 4·9 per cent. of the output of the manufacturing industry as a whole. Net capital expenditure by the aerospace industry was £424 million in 1990. In 1990, aerospace accounted for 3 per cent. of net capital expenditure in manufacturing.

In 1992, the aerospace industry had a trade surplus of £2,340 million.

Separate data on corporation tax are not available for the aerospace industry. Classification of companies by industry for corporation tax is by summary trade classification within which aerospace companies are included with "other transport equipment manufacturers".

Mr. Barry Jones: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps he is taking to promote the aerospace industry in Clwyd.

Mr. Sainsbury: My Department maintains a continuous dialogue with the aerospace industry on ways in which the Government can help. The British Aerospace Broughton site has received over £10 million of regional selective assistance and regional development grants. It has also benefited from the launch aid support for the Airbus Airbus A320 and A340.

Data Protection

Mr. Cohen: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what bearing his initiative in relation to cutting red tape has on the Data Protection Act 1984; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: All regulations having an impact on business, which includes the Data Protection Act 1984, are being reviewed as part of the deregulation initiative.

Carbon Saving

Mrs. Gorman: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has estimated the cost to British industry of implementing the measures announced to date for achieving a saving of 10 million tonnes of carbon, per annum.

Mr. McLoughlin: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply which she received from my hon. Friend the Minister for the Environment and Countryside on 6 July 1993 at column *78*.

My hon. Friend will also wish to note the statement on 16 March 1993 *Official Report*, column 183, by my right hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Thames (Mr. Lamont) that the measures which he was introducing to help meet our environmental commitments would do so in a way which does the least possible damage to the competitiveness to British industry; and that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment yesterday announced that the Government will be strengthening the Energy Efficiency Office's programmes of advice and information to help business make energy savings, as part of the Government's programme for meeting its international commitments for limiting carbon dioxide emissions.

Companies Act Investigations

Ms Mowlam: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many investigations under section 447 of the Companies Act 1985 are currently being undertaken by private contractors.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: As at 23 July 1993, 10 investigations involving 14 companies were being undertaken under section 447(3) of the Companies Act 1985 by competent persons other than officers of the Department.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. McLoughlin: The Government continue to help small businesses, through improvements to the business climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes and initiatives of suport and assistance.

Measures operated by my Department to assist small businesses include:

Business Link. The development of a national network of one-stop shops—to be known as business links—is a key component of the Government's strategy for small firms. Good progress is being made by the original six pilots, and they have now been joined by two more areas—Leicestershire and Shropshire. The first business links are expected to open in September. An assessment panel will meet quarterly, starting in October, to consider further proposals to set up business links. Eventually there should be a network of about 200 business links throughout the country, each one providing a single point of access to a wide range of high quality business information and advice and removing the confusion that is too often experienced by small firms seeking help.

Deregulation measures. The seven business task forces, created following the Prime Minister's seminar on deregulation on 2 February, are giving priority to the concerns of small businesses. Each task force has at least one representative from, or looking after the interests of, small firms. In addition, a sub-group has been set up, with membership drawn from all the task forces, to consider and make recommendations on issues which have a particular small business dimension.

The task forces have recommended that, when formulating new regulation, the interests of small firms should be the first consideration. Following the Prime Minister's deregulation progress meeting on 20 July it has been decided that this recommendation will be implemented by the introduction of a small firms 'litmus test' as part of the compliance cost assessment.

The Enterprise Initiative Consultancy Scheme. In the year ended March 1993, 23,082 applications were received and 14,375 were approved.

The consultancy scheme will continue until 31 March 1994 as scheduled. Beyond that, a new package of support, including a new diagnostic service, a consultancy brokerage scheme, new consultancy services and technology advice will be phased in alongside the consultancy scheme from 1994-95 onwards to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements. This comprehensive range of local services, contracted through TECs and delivered by TECs and business links will provide high quality support for business, be suited to business needs and make cost-effective use of public funds.

The Small Firms Merit Award for Research and Technology (SMART) scheme. Last year, 180 grants, the maximum number on offer, were made.

Support for Products Under Research (SPUR) which helps small firms develop new products and processes. In the 12 months to March 1993, 138 grants were offered, worth over £12 million.

EUREKA. Last year, the United Kingdom participated in 43 announced EUREKA projects, involving 107 organisations, including 33 small to medium sized enterprises. This year, the United Kingdom participated in 49 announced projects, involving 76 organisations, 28 of which were smaller companies.

The Loan Guarantee Scheme facilitates smaller firms' access to finance. In the 12 months to May 1993, 2,407 loans were guaranteed to a value of £51 million.

The terms of the scheme were enhanced in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget statement. The changes, which were implemented in 1 July, are: the premium in the inner city task force and city challenge areas was reduced from 1 to 0·5 per cent. At the same time, premiums were reduced on all other loans, from 2·5 per cent. of the guaranteed portion of the loan to 1·5 per cent. for variable rate lending and 0·5 per cent for fixed rate lending on the whole loan;
the maximum loan available for established businesses increased to £250,000;
the guarantee level increased to 85 per cent. for these businesses.

Informal investment demonstration projects. Five of these projects were established by TECs in partnership with other local organisations in January 1992 with Departmental pump-priming. They help together potential investors and small businesses seeking investment. An interim review of progress was carried out in early 1993 with favourable results.

Late Payment. The Department continues to address the difficult problem of late payment of commercial debt. Three trade association pilot initiatives have been established with financial support from the Department; we are monitoring the payment performance of Government Departments and my noble Friend Baroness Denton, Minister for Consumer Affairs and Small Firms, continues to follow up individual cases of late payment to small firms by large companies and public bodies. The Department has also endorsed the CBI's prompt payer's code.

The Department also issued a consultation paper on the 1992 Budget proposal to require large companies to state in their reports and accounts how quickly they pay. The responses to the consultation exercises are presently under consideration.

It is extremely difficult to measure the extent of late payment or the impact of any one measure and it is too soon to evaluate the results of the trade association initiatives. However, there are indications, most recently from the Association of British Factors and Discounters, that payment times in the United Kingdom are improving.

Export Promotion. My Department and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office provide, through Overseas Trade Services, a wide range of help, advice and support to United Kingdom exporters at each stage of the export process, from researching opportunities through to contacting and visiting markets. The services we offer are particularly geared to meet the needs of smaller firms. An independent monthly survey of the delivery of the services shows a consistently high level of customer satisfaction, and some 90 per cent. of respondents regularly say that they will use the services again. Details of the services and of their take-up are featured in the "British Overseas Trade Board Annual Report 1992-93 and Forward Plan"—a copy of which is in the Library.

GATT

Ms Short: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make it his policy to urge the EC representatives involved in the negotiation of the GATT Uruguay round to ensure that any agreement on a multilateral trade organisation, *(a)* state unequivocally that existing international environmental treaties will not be liable to challenge using GATT rules and *(b)* states a clear commitment to promotion of sustainable development in the main body of the text.

Mr. Needham: As the GATT has no powers to challenge other international agreements, and does not seek such powers, such a statement is not required. Language on sustainable development is already incorporated in the draft text of the MTO preamble. The Commission has sought to strengthen this language and to annex a ministerial declaration on future trade and environment work to the Uruguay round final act.

Ms Short: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what are the terms of reference of the GATT working group on environmental measures and trade; how many times the group has met since 1971; what matters have been discussed at recent meetings; what reports have been produced; and what is the method by which Her Majesty's Government have input into the discussions at meetings of the group.

Mr. Needham: The formal terms of reference of the GATT group remain those under which it was established in November 1971. The group did not meet until 1991, but has met 11 times since then, to discuss three agenda items: the GATT's relationship to multilateral environmental agreements; transparency of environmental regulations; and packaging and labelling. The group is also discussing those elements of the follow-up to UNCED "Agenda 21" which fall to the GATT. The GATT secretariat has reported transactions of the meetings and has, at the group's request, produced background papers to facilitate discussion. Individual contracting parties have also tabled papers. The European Commission speaks for the Community in GATT. United Kingdom input is made in three ways: at Community co-ordinations in Geneva; in the article 113 committee in Brussels; and by informal contacts with the Commission.

Ozone Depletion

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what quantity of HCFC 22 is purchased by his Department per annum.

Mr. McLoughlin: Information on the quantity of HCFC 22 purchased by the Department is not available.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what are the latest available figures for his Department's total purchase of CFCs and HCFCs.

Mr. McLoughlin: Information on the purchase of CFCs and HCFCs by the Department is not available.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many chlorofluorocarbons and hydrochlorofluorocarbons installations are contained within his Department's buildings.

Mr. McLoughlin: The Department does not maintain central records of the number of its installations that contain CFC and HCFC.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade which current uses of ozone-depleting chemicals by his Department are considered essential.

Mr. McLoughlin: Following the consultation exercise carried out by the Department of the Environment earlier this year, no decision has yet been taken on any applications by the United Kingdom under the terms of the Montreal protocol for continued production of ozone-depleting chemicals for essential use.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what proportion of his Department's consumption of ozone-depleting substances become controlled waste in terms of section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Mr. McLoughlin: All ozone-depleting substances that need to be disposed of are controlled waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the quantity of ozone-depleting substances recycled within his Department and returned to the manufacturer.

Mr. McLoughlin: Information on the quantity of ozone-depleting substances returned to the manufacturer is not available. The Department's policy is to ensure that such substances are disposed of or recycled in an environmentally responsible way.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many catastrophic leaks of ozone-depleting substances have occured within Department buildings in the last five years.

Mr. McLoughlin: It is departmental policy to ensure that installations and equipment are properly maintained, in particular so to avoid catastrophic leaks of ozone-depleting substances. Detailed maintenance records are not kept centrally.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how much funding has been allocated or spent to specifically deal with measures to reduce his Department's consumption of ozone-depleting substances.

Mr. McLoughlin: The objective of reducing the use of ozone-depleting substances is integrated into the Department's general purchasing decisions. Separate information on funding for specific measures is therefore not available.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) how many chlorofluorocarbon domestic fridges are contained within his Department's buildings;

(2) if he will give an undertaking to purchase only ozone-friendly fridges that do not contain CFCs or HCFCs for his Department.

Mr. McLoughlin: Information on the number of CFC domestic fridges contained within the Department's buildings is not available. My Department will phase-out the use of refrigerators containing CFCs and HCFCs as soon as possible, taking into account value for money and all relevant environmental factors, including energy efficiency.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade by what date his Department's use of ozone-depleting chemicals will conform to EC regulations on limits on these chemicals.

Mr. McLoughlin: There are as yet no EC regulations limiting the use of ozone-depleting chemicals.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many portable halon fire extinguishers are contained within departmental buildings; and what measures are being taken to ensure their recycling and replacement.

Mr. McLoughlin: Portable halon fire extinguishers are replaced, when time-expired, with non-ozone depleting alternatives, in accordance with the Department's policy.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) what action has been taken to ensure that ozone-destroying substances consumed by his Department are identified as controlled wastes when they are no longer in use;

(2) what measures have been taken to ensure that ozone-destroying substances in use by his Department identified as controlled waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 do not reach the atmosphere.

Mr. McLoughlin: My Department and its contractors take appropriate action to deal with the disposal of

ozone-depleting substances used within departmental buildings in accordance with existing requirements. We also have the Department of the Environment's new guidance for procurement and accommodation staff, which instructs them to ensure that contractors comply with best practice in terms of professional guidance and relevant British standards.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many refrigeration and air conditioning systems in his Department are equipped with automatic leak detection systems.

Mr. McLoughlin: Information on the number of the Department's refrigeration and air conditioning systems that use automatic leak detection systems is not held centrally. However, the Department ensures that effective preventive monitoring and detection equipment is part of the maintenance regime.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what targets have been set for the recycling of ozone-depleting chemicals within departmental buildings.

Mr. McLoughlin: Although no specific targets have been set, the Department aims to recycle ozone-depleting chemicals as far as possible.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what guidance has been sought and received on alternatives or substitutes to the ozone-destroying chemicals in use by his Department.

Mr. McLoughlin: The purchasing policy of my Department has been informed by guidance from several sources. This includes the Department of the Environment's new guidance for procurement and accommodation staff, which instructs them to ensure that contractors comply with best practice in terms of professional guidance and relevant British standards. My Department has also published guidance on the replacement of ozone-depleting substances used in refrigeration and air conditioning, for fire extinguishing systems or as solvents.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will provide details from the maintenance and servicing record of the quantity and type of ozone-destroying chemicals used annually in his Department's refrigeration and air conditioning equipment for servicing and in leakages; and what proportion is removed for recycling.

Mr. McLoughlin: Information on the quantity and type of ozone-depleting chemicals used annually by the Department's refrigeration and air conditioning equipment for servicing and in leakages is not held centrally.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how his departmental Green Minister has promoted protection of the ozone layer with specific policy measures; which possible measures have been considered and rejected; and on what grounds.

Mr. McLoughlin: My Department subscribes to the Government's policy on protection of the ozone layer as reflected in the United Kingdom's existing commitments to phase-out production of some ozone-depleting substances and its participation in continuing international discussions to introduce wider controls.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps he has taken to promote and assist the UKAEA's development into a profitable commercial research and development contractor.

Mr. Eggar: The Atomic Energy Authority is expected to meet objectives prescribed by the Government. The prime objective is to ensure that it competes effectively in its markets, develops its business to meet customers' needs and earns an acceptable return on its assets. Performance against these objectives is monitored on a regular basis. The AEA is also eligible to receive support under various export promotion and other schemes operated by my Department to assist British companies.

Nuclear Emergencies

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps he has taken to meet his target to complete a strategy for information management on nuclear emergencies through his nuclear planning liaison group by November.

Mr. Eggar: Work on information management is continuing through the nuclear emergency planning liaison group and progress so far has been satisfactory.

Nuclear Industry

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement on the report prepared by his Department on the options available to open up decommissioning and radioactive waste management operations to competition.

Mr. Eggar: The Government are concerned to ensure maximum cost-effectiveness in their expenditure on decommissioning and radioactive waste mangement operations. For new projects, the aim will be to put every contract out to competition unless there is a clear reason why this would not provide best value for money. We are also systematically reviewing projects currently under way to establish whether there is scope for increased competition.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will set out a breakdown of the allocation of expenditure to British Nuclear Fuels, waste management and decommissioning, respectively, under his departmental resource allocation in part 5 of his management information system for Ministers 1993 returns.

Mr. Eggar: The available information is published in MINIS 93, part 5: energy, the entry for atomic energy division.

European Energy Council

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps he has taken to ensure discussions on nuclear matters in the European Energy Council are consistent with United Kingdom interest.

Mr. Eggar: Specific discussions on nuclear matters are infrequently held in the Energy Council. Whether debated there or in other Councils, the United Kingdom's line is decided only after full consultation with all interested home Departments.

EUREKA Programme

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what information he has on the participation of United Kingdom companies in the Membrane project of the EUREKA programme.

Mr. McLoughlin: EU 5 ULTRAMEM, which is known as Membrane in France, is a completed EUREKA project in which there were no United Kingdom partners.

UKAEA

Mr. Brazier: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what objectives he has set for the new chairman of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority.

Mr. Eggar: I have set objectives for the new UKAEA Chairman, Sir Anthony Cleaver, as follows:

Introduction

I am writing to set the objectives I wish you to pursue as the Chairman of the AEA. These objectives set out the general direction in which the Government wishes you to take the AEA. Specific targets in support of these objectives will be set from time to time, after consultation with you. Nothing in these objectives over-rides your responsibilities as an Accounting Officer.

Statutory Framework

The AEA's activities are undertaken within the framework of the Atomic Energy Authority Acts 1954 and 1986, the Science and Technology Act 1965, and other relevant legislation.

Aims

The AEA has, with Government support, progressively sought to increase its competitiveness, cut costs, provide better value for money for its customers and increase profitability. Good progress has been made but the AEA is operating in increasingly competitive markets, both for the work which it undertakes for the Government and for other customers.

Within the statutory framework, your prime objective is to ensure that the AEA competes effectively in these markets, develops its business to meet the needs of its customers and, in doing so earns an acceptable return on its assets. To this end, you should ensure that the AEA has a structure and cost levels that secure these objectives and subject the AEA's support activities to market testing and contractorisation where appropriate. You should also ensure that the AEA has a clear market strategy and sufficient marketing and management expertise competent to deliver the objectives of that strategy. More generally you should continue the process of cultural change focusing the organisation on commercial success and recognising the key role that the development of staff has in this context.

Defined customer-contractor relations should apply to all work carried out by the AEA. As far as funding by the Department of Trade and Industry is concerned, this work will be in Programme Letters agreed with the Department or under contract and will be carried out in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in the Letters or contract. Subject to its statutory constraints the AEA should undertake work for customers, whether nuclear or non-nuclear, on the basis of an acceptable return after taking into account any related waste management and decommissioning costs and the overall needs of the business.

Within the framework of legislation and Government policy, you should ensure that the AEA explores all options for exploiting its technology, including collaboration with other organisations where this is commercially justified or where I indicate that there is a national interest in doing so. You should ensure that AEA informs the Department, at an early stage, of its plans for such collaboration. Consistent with the development of its competitive position and securing an appropriate return for its investment in R&D, I also expect the AEA to take every opportunity to facilitate the process of technology transfer particularly to small firms.

You should ensure that the AEA annually submits to the Department a Corporate Plan covering the Public Expenditure Survey period. This should contain Business Plans for the AEA as a whole and for each main business area. In particular the Plan should contain a clear strategy for reducing operating costs and identify those areas where increased resources (money, manpower, and research) are justified by prospects of future profitable business and those where effort should be reduced. The Plan should include a Capital Investment Memorandum setting out the AEA's capital expenditure proposals. It should also include contingency planning showing how the AEA would respond to different market out-turns to those assumed in the Plan.

Financial

The Government, whilst continuing to support the AEA in restructuring its operations, looks to the AEA to achieve returns that enable it to fund the costs of restructuring and make a return for the Exchequer.

I expect you to ensure that the financial target, as set by me from time to time after discussion with the AEA, is achieved.

I also expect you to ensure that the AEA stays within its External Financing Limit (EFL) as agreed from year to year and to surrender distributions of agreed sums from time to time to the Consolidated Fund.

Performance Targets

You should propose suitable measurable performance targets, including efficiency and quality of service targets, consistent with and complementary to the financial target for approval by the Department.

Safety

The AEA is subject to the safety requirements imposed on licensed operators by the Health and Safety Executive under the Nuclear Installations Act 1965. You should ensure that the AEA continues to have arrangements which secure at all times the highest standards in safety that are reasonably practicable in its day-to-day activities, in its decommissioning activities and in the management of radioactive waste.

Decommissioning and radioactive waste management

Decommissioning and radioactive waste management are substantial and important activities within the AEA's total sphere of operations. You should accordingly ensure that the AEA carries out its decommissioning and radioactive waste management responsibilities in the most cost effective way, consistent with safety and other requirements of the regulatory authorities.

Options for the future

I have recently set in hand a study to consider options for the future of the AEA, including the possibility of privatisation and have appointed consultants to advise me. I expect you to ensure that the AEA co-operates fully with my Department and its advisers in considering the range of options. You should also ensure that the AEA conducts its business in such a way which does not restrict those options.

Conclusion

This letter sets out the main strategic objectives for the term of your current appointment until decisions are taken on the future of the AEA. I expect to discuss each annual Corporate Plan with you, to review the AEA's achievements against the specific targets which have been set, and if necessary to set new targets in the light of this discussion and review. I will review these objectives once decisions have been reached on the future of the AEA.

Russia

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what joint ventures between British Nuclear Fuels and the Russian Ministry of Atomic Energy have been sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. Eggar: None.

Clothing and Textiles

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) what assessment he has made of the effect on trade in clothing and textiles with the poorest third-world countries of the recent decision to lift quotas on clothing imports from countries of east and central Europe;

(2) what steps he has taken to remove trade barriers on clothing and textiles;

(3) what decisions taken at the G7 summit in Tokyo will improve the treatment of the poorest nations in the multi-fibre arrangement.

Mr. Needham: The Government have consistently worked for an early conclusion to the GATT Uruguay round of multilateral trade negotiations which would include the phasing out of the multi-fibre arrangement and of the associated quantitative restrictions maintained by the European Community and most other importing countries against exports of textiles and clothing from the main low-cost suppliers. The progress made in Tokyo on the Uruguay round in general has enabled multilateral negotiations to resume in Geneva and has greatly improved the prospects for a successful conclusions by the end of the year. As regards other trade barriers, the EC has recently concluded agreements with the Czech republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria providing for restrictions on imports of textiles and clothing into the EC to be removed over a five to six-year period. The Government do not expect this process to have any implications for the poorest developing countries, most of which already enjoy unlimited duty-free access to the EC and are not subject to any quota restrictions.

Nuclear Reactor, Dounreay

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer of 13 July, *Official Report*, column *433*, how the plutonium content of the final fuel loading of the prototype fast reactor at Dounreay is dependent upon the operational programme.

Mr. Eggar: The plutonium content of nuclear reactor fuel changes during operation as a result of nuclear reactions in the core. The amount of plutonium in the fuel of the prototype fast reactor at Dounreay when the reactor is shut down in 1994 will therefore depend on the reactor performance and also on the timing and extent of any refuelling that may be required.

Coal Bed Methane

Mr. Thomason: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if the coal bed methane industry will be represented on the proposed energy advisory panel.

Mr. Eggar: I shall make an announcement about the composition of the panel in due course.

Mr. Thomason: To ask the President of the Board of Trade who will determine primacy of use for coal resources between coal mining and coal bed methane interests following coal privatisation; and what criteria will be used to determine primacy.

Mr. Eggar: The Government's consistent policy is to ensure the largest economically viable coal industry which the market can support in the long term. The Government also wish to encourage the development of coal bed methane as a potentially significant energy source. Both these factors are being taken into account in planning for privatisation.

Mr. Thomason: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if access in the future to the British Coal Corporation's geological data will be made available to the coal bed methane industry on a similar basis to that which oil and gas data is currently available to the industry.

Mr. Eggar: As indicated in the White Paper "The Prospects for Coal", Cm 2235, we propose to establish a new public sector body to be known as the Coal Authority, which will be responsible for licensing coal mining activity. The Coal Authority will be required to make available to potential licensees and other interested parties records of past, present and planned mining and geological information in its possession, subject to commercial confidentiality and any reasonable fee that may be charged.

Mr. Thomason: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what effect British Coal's claim to ownership of coal bed methane aborbed in coal has on the Department of Trade and Industry's right to issue exploration licences to companies intending to extract coal bed methane.

Mr. Eggar: None. The Petroleum (Production) Act, 1934, vests all petroleum in the Crown. For purposes of the Act the definition of petroleum includes any natural gas, such as methane, existing in its natural condition in strata. Exploration licences granted under the Petroleum (Production) Act, 1934, allow the licensees to search and bore for petroleum, and get petroleum in the course of exploration.

Mr. Thomason: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what progress was made at the recent meeting between his Department, the British Coal Corporation and the United Kingdom Onshore Operators Group towards resolving whether the corporation or the Crown owns coal bed methane absorbed in coal seams.

Mr. Eggar: My officials chaired a meeting on 15 June 1993 between British Coal and the United Kingdom Onshore Operators Group aimed at achieving greater understanding of the principles surrounding the entry into the coal seams and their occupation and use for the purpose of extraction of coal bed methane. I understand that both parties found the meeting useful and I hope that further progress in detailed negotiations between the two sides will now be possible. While reserving its position on ownership of coal bed methane, British Coal undertook at the meeting not to charge a production-related royalty for such methane, in order to help facilitate the development of the new industry.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Eggar: The President of the Board of Trade is responsible for about 45 public bodies. The information requested is not immediately available, but I will write to the hon. Gentleman as soon as possible.

Sugar

Mr. Bayley: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will update for each year for which the information is available the information listed in the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report on sugar of 1987 on the proportion of United Kingdom sugar production by *(a)* British Sugar and *(b)* Tate and Lyle.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: More up-to-date information was provided in the 1991 Monopolies and Mergers Commission report on the proposed merger between Tate and Lyle plc and British Sugar plc. This showed the following position:

The volume and value of United Kingdom sugar sales by supplier in 1988/89 with their respective market shares

	'000 tonnes	Per cent. share	£ million	Per cent. share
British Sugar	1,218·1	52·1	532·3	52·3
Tate and Lyle	944·0	40·4	427·1	41·9
Imports[1]	175·7	7·5	[2]68·2	6·7
Total	2,337·8	100·00	1,018·6	100·00

Source: Table 4.9. MMC Report on the proposed merger between Tate and Lyle plc and British Sugar plc. February 1991.
[1] Includes some imports by Tate and Lyle and British Sugar.
[2] MMC estimate based on survey figures from the merchants and others.

Information about later years is not publicly available.

Assisted Areas

Mr. Burden: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what parts of each of the local government wards currently in effect in the city of Birmingham have not been designated as having development area status under the Assisted Area Order 1993.

Mr. Sainsbury: The designation of wards within travel-to-work areas as development areas or intermediate areas is based on wards as they existed for the decennial census of population in April 1981. This is necessary because these travel-to-work areas themselves are based on 1981 wards, and using wards defined at any other time, when their boundaries may not necessarily match those used to define the boundaries of travel-to-work areas, means that some of the areas intended for designation could inadvertently be counted twice, or missed out.

Birmingham is a case in point and by using the city's 1981 wards in the Assisted Areas Order 1993, development area status applies for the whole of the city of Birmingham. However, on examination, I think the Assisted Areas Order 1993, is not sufficiently clear on this point and I have therefore made and laid an amending order to clarify the position. I shall write to the hon. Member further about the position in Birmingham, and to other hon. Members representing areas where designations for parts of travel-to-work areas have been based on wards.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what discussions he has had with his Irish counterpart on the subject of Merseyside's application for objective 1 status within the European Community; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Sainsbury: The Government's proposal of objective 1 status for Merseyside was approved by the Council in Brussels on 20 July. I did not discuss it bilaterally with the Government of the Republic of Ireland, but I hope that the European structural funds will in future contribute appropriately to the development of links between what will now be two neighbouring objective 1 regions.

Nuclear Electric

Mr. Corbyn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what representations have been received by his Department concerning Nuclear Electric and the Simpkin partnership; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: The hon. Member has written to DTI Ministers and asked several parliamentary questions. No other representations have been received.

Coal Mines

Mr. Dicks: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what discussions he has had with British Coal on the subject of the removal of machinery from the pits which British Coal is currently offering for license to the private sector.

Mr. Eggar: Under the Coal Industry Nationalisation Act 1946, matters such as the deployment of machinery are operational matters for British Coal, and the Government are not given powers to intervene. My Department has however kept in close touch with British Coal, and I have raised the matter on a number of occasions with the chairman of the corporation. He has given me assurances that no equipment with be redeployed unnecessarily, that each decision to salvage major equipment will be taken on the basis of all relevant economic and operational criteria, and in particular that British Coal is prepared to give details of the destination of any major items of machinery which it removes. It is up to British Coal to justify each such decision.

Market Testing

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list those functions in his Department which have been subject to market testing; and in how many cases, an in-house bid was *(a)* made and *(b)* awarded.

Mr. Eggar: A full list of market tests to be undertaken in my Department in the period ending September 1993 was published in "The Citizen's Charter, First Report: 1992", Cm 2101. Although there have been instances of contracting out of some of these services for policy or management reasons, only one case of formal market

testing against internal provision has so far been completed. In that particular case, an in-house bid was made and was successful.

Consultants

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list, for the last three financial years, the contracts of more than £10,000 in value awarded to outside consultants by his Department; what was the purpose of each contract; and whether each contract awarded was subject to competitive tendering.

Mr. Eggar: It is my Department's policy to apply competitive tendering procedures to consultancy contracts. The individual contract information requested cannot be provided other than at disproportionate cost.

Tying-in Arrangements

Mr. Nigel Griffiths: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps are being taken to implement the tying-in provisions, sections 104 to 107 of the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990; and when they will be implemented.

Mr. McLoughlin: Following wide consultation over proposals to implement these provisions, the Government are considering how best to proceed.

EC Structural Funds

Sir John Hannam: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what will be the financial allocations for the three United Kingdom regions designated for objective 1 of the EC structural funds.

Mr. Sainsbury: During the Foreign Affairs Council meeting on 20 July, it was agreed that the objective 1 financial allocation for the United Kingdom for the period 1994-99 should be 2,430 million ecu at 1992 prices. The Government have decided to distribute this allocation as follows: Northern Ireland 1,270 mecu, Merseyside 840 mecu and the Scottish Highlands and Islands 320 mecu.

Fur Trade

Mr. Milburn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many companies are involved in tanning of fur skins; and how many employees they have.

Mr. Sainsbury: This information is available only for the whole of the leather—tanning and dressing—and fellmongery industries. In 1991, there were 180 businesses with 6,500 employees, including working proprietors.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade (1) how many *(a)* mink pelts and *(b)* Arctic fox pelts from British mink farms were exported in each year since 1988; and what was their value;

(2) how many British red fox pelts were exported in each year since 1988; and what was their value.

Mr. Needham: Official statistics do not distinguish between mink produced by British farms and re-exports, or between various species of fox. The available information is given in the table.

United Kingdom Exports of Fur Pelts

	1988	*1989*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*
Mink					
Raw					
number	3,183,931	3,067,732	454,688	314,089	359,866
£'000	48,259	37,718	6,088	4,117	3,343
Treated					
number	10,152	4,474	54,653	17,073	9,136
£'000	1,668	1,396	2,093	2,301	1,728
Total					
number	3,194,083	3,072,206	509,341	331,162	369,002
£'000	49,927	39,114	8,181	6,418	5,071
Fox					
Raw					
number	982,246	366,651	48,208	30,763	70,922
£'000	17,551	6,334	684	548	1,465
Treated					
number	4,266	46,169	522	111	3,954
£'000	168	1,151	15	5	37
Total					
number	986,512	412,820	48,730	30,874	74,876
£'000	17,719	7,485	699	553	1,502

Mr. Milburn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many retail businesses were involved in the fur trade; and how many employees they had for each of the past five years.

Mr. Sainsbury: The number of retail businesses classified as furriers is as follows:

	Numbers
1989	114
1990	93
1991	79
1992	57

Information for earlier years on employment and the number of businesses is not available.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many import and export businesses were involved in the fur trade; and how many employees they had for each of the past five years.

Mr. Sainsbury: This information is not available.

Payment of Bills

Sir Roger Moate: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what proportion of bills are paid on time by Government Departments.

Mr. McLoughlin: During the financial year 1992-93, major purchasing Departments and agencies undertook sample surveys to determine the percentage of invoices paid within the agreed credit period, or within 30 days where no credit period has been set. Government Departments reported results in the range 75 to 100 per cent.

The full results are:

Department	*Percent of invoices paid within contract terms or 30 days*
Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	85
Central Statistical Office	86
Customs and Excise	85
Defence	99
Education and Science	84.4
Employment and ACAS	84
Employment Service	84.4
Environment	90
Foreign and Commonwealth	91.37
Health	90
Health and Safety Executive	94
Inland Revenue	86.2
Lord Chancellors	83.4
National Savings	95.3
Paymaster General's Office	100
PSA—Building Management	73
Royal Mint	78
Social Security	94
Trade and Industry	90.5
Transport	85.8
Treasury	92.4
Welsh Office	76

Departments will continue to monitor their payment performance and for subsequent years the returns will be published in departmental annual reports.

Waste Recycling

Sir Roger Moate: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what role he foresees for business in recovering waste for recycling.

Mr. McLoughlin: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment and I have today announced a new initiative to encourage industry and commerce to play a greater role in reducing the amount of waste which has to be disposed of through landfill, including by establishing systems to recover and reuse waste materials whenever it is practicable and environmentally advantageous to do so. I intend to continue the dialogue which has already begun with different sectors of industry and commerce producing products which eventually become waste, such as tyres, batteries, vehicles and electronic equipment, to determine how our objective can best be put into effect in these and other areas.

An important plank in our policy is the need to maintain and develop our existing recycling infrastructure, on which many jobs depend. This is currently threatened by surplus of waste materials generated as a result of recycling policies elsewhere in Europe. We are looking to all the sectors concerned in our initiative to help counter this threat. In addition, our policies will create new opportunities and jobs—in collecting, sorting and processing materials for reuse and recycling. I intend to explore with companies how Britain can best capitalise on this growing market area.

Pit Licences

Mrs. Peacock: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what information British Coal is providing to potential licensees of the pits it has offered for licensing to the private sector.

Mr. Eggar: I understand that those expressing interest in pits which British Coal has offered for licensing to the private sector have been provided by British Coal with an initial information pack setting out a brief description of the colliery and detailed information on the licensing process. At the next stage, potential licensees who submit a bond are able to visit the pits, are provided with an information memorandum setting out detailed information about the colliery and have access to source documents in a data room. Much of this detailed information is commercially confidential. However, I am placing in the Library a list provided by British Coal of the contents of the information memoranda and data rooms, together with a copy of the initial information pack.

Telephone Bills

Mr. Richards: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he will be making regulations enabling the Director General of Telecommunications to determine billing disputes.

Mr. McLoughlin: The Competition and Service (Utilities) Act 1992 included provisions giving my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade the power to make regulations enabling the Director General of Telecommunications to determine disputes about bills for certain telephone services.

However, there have been important developments which have led me to reconsider the need to make the regulations at the present time.

BT sends out some 100 million bills each year. The number of complaints about billing disputes made to the Office of Telecommunications—Oftel—and the Scottish and Welsh telecommunications advisory committees has fallen from 12,778 in 1991 to 6,892 in 1992 and Oftel expects its figure to fall further in 1993. The reduction in complaints involving BT's customers appears to be due to a number of factors, including the modernisation of BT's network, which has resulted in itemised bills now being available on 90 per cent of its lines;call barring, which enables the customer to bar premium rate services and is now available on some 65 per cent. of its lines;a network security study carried out by BT which has resulted in

improved security, detection and investigation techniques;the launching by BT of a new customer care service based on freefone numbers—BT is also in the process of agreeing improved procedures for dealing with complaints with the director general under the powers of the Competition and Service (Utilities) Act 1992;BT is also carrying out trials for introducing itemisation for calls below 50p, monthly billing and credit limits on usage.

In addition, BT has recently announced that it will be introducing "opting-in" for adult premium rate services through the use of personal identification numbers from July next year. This welcome action, together with the other measures detailed in my answer, should lead to an even greater reduction in the number of billing disputes.

In the light of the action which BT has taken and in the expectation of further reductions in the level of complaints about telephone bills to Oftel, I have decided not to proceed to make the regulations at the present time. I do, however, attach importance to continued improvements and I will want to look closely at this again in a year's time.

West Cumbria Development Agency

Mr. Salmond: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the relationship between the West Lakes Development Agency and British Nuclear Fuels; if he will define the role of the agency; and how much ERDF funding it received in each year since 1988.

Mr. Eggar: There is no such organisation as the West Lakes Development Agency. The West Cumbria Development Agency has the objectives of attracting investment to the area, creating and sustaining employment there and helping local businesses become more competitive. I understand that British Nuclear Fuels plc, which is a member of the agency, has contributed just over £1 million each year to the West Cumbria Development Fund Ltd which provides financial support for the agency. In addition, the agency receives funding from a number of public and private sector organisations. The European regional development fund contributed £270,000 in 1990-91 towards business support measures.

Nuclear Accidents

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what preparations he has made for United Kingdom participation in the diplomatic conference on third party liability on nuclear accidents; and when he expects the conference to be held.

Mr. Eggar: My officials are taking an active part in the negotiations being held in the International Atomic Energy Agency's standing committee on liability for nuclear damage. The director general of the IAEA has not yet proposed a date for a diplomatic conference.

Deregulation

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Harrogate (Mr. Banks) of 7 July, *Official Report*, column *151*, if he will make a statement on the matters reported upon to date by the deregulation task forces; and what decisions Her Majesty's Government have taken to implement deregulation proposals.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: I refer the hon. Member to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's reply to the hon. Member for Islington, South and Finsbury (Mr. Smith) on 26 July, at columns *561-63*.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he expects to be able to announce those regulatory and administrative burdens upon business which will be abolished by his forthcoming Bill on deregulation; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: We propose to introduce a Bill including measures arising from the work of the business task forces and departmental reviews of regulations as soon as parliamentary time permits.

Mr. Nicholas Winterton: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement indicating the principles upon which his forthcoming deregulation Bill will be based; and if he intends to ensure that this proposed legislation fully addresses the need fundamentally to enhance and encourage the international competitiveness of British industry.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: A key objective of the Government's deregulation initiative is to simplify existing regulations in order to remove unnecessary burdens on business and any proposed legislation would reflect this objective. The need to enhance and encourage the international competitiveness of British industry is a main aim of the Department and will certainly be taken fully into account.

Mrs. Helen Jackson: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many times the deregulation unit has met since its inception; and if he will publish the notes of the meetings and of the Prime Minister's seminars of 2 February and 20 July.

Mr. Neil Hamilton *[holding answer 23 July 1993]*: The deregulation unit is a division of my Department and does not maintain a record of the number of meetings it has held. The seven deregulation task forces have held 105 meetings among themselves and over 40 meetings with Government Departments, but have not produced formal notes of meetings. For the outcome of the Prime Minister's meetings on 2 February and 20 July, I refer the hon. Member to the Prime Minister's reply of Thursday 4 February 1993, *Official Report*, column *470* and to the hon. Member for Islington, South and Finsbury (Mr. Smith) on Monday 26 July, at columns *561-63*.

Innovation Budget

Mr. Fatchett: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was his Department's innovation budget for each of the last three financial years, and for 1993-94.

Mr. McLoughlin: Expenditure under the innovation budget of the Department of Trade and Industry for the last three financial years, and forecast expenditure for 1993-94, are as follows:

£ million

Outturn		*Forecast (gross)*	
1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94
82·3	102·7	137·4	124·7

British Gas

Mr. Tipping: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when he expects to receive the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report on British Gas; when he intends to make a response; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The Monopolies and Mergers Commission is due to make its reports on gas to my right hon. Friend the President of the Board and to the Director General of Gas Supply by 30 July. I shall wait to see the reports before coming to a view on the timetable for any response.

Office of Gas Supply

Mr. Tipping: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when the term of office of the present Director General of Ofgas ends; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Eggar: Sir James McKinnon's second term of office as Director General of Gas Supply expires in August 1994. Earlier this year, Sir James announced his intention to retire on 31 October 1993. We have, therefore, initiated the process of identifying a successor and an announcement will be made in due course.

Competitiveness Assessment

Mr. Nicholas Winterton: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will make a statement setting out the arrangements which he intends to adopt to fulfil his commitment that the impact upon the international competitiveness of British companies, particularly small companies, will be asssessed prior to the introduction of future legislation or regulations; what steps he intends to take to involve representatives of industry in the on-going assessment of that impact; and if he will make it his policy to publish the results of that assessment alongside the assessment of public service manpower and finance requirements currently included in the explanatory memoranda attached to Government Bills and orders.

Mr. Neil Hamilton: The potential impact on the international competitiveness of British companies, including small firms, is a factor taken into account in all Government policies. Industry will be consulted in an appropriate manner in each case in the framing and implementation of new legislation. The Government are committed to the publication of compliance cost assessments for all new proposals for legislation which impact on business.

EC Perifra Programme

Dr. David Clark: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, Central (Mr. Cousins), of 4 November 1992, *Official Report*, columns *315-16*, how much EC funding was made available under the Perifra scheme to each of the eight projects that were approved on 7 August 1992; and how much direct funding was made available to each project by *(a)* local authorities, *(b)* Hertfordshire training and enterprise council, *(c)* the Royal British Legion and *(d)* the Government.

Mr. Sainsbury *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* The information requested is as follows.

Table showing expected participation Perifra II projects approved by the commission in August 1992

1 ECU = 0·698 UK £

Project/region	*Total cost of project £'000*	*Community contribution £'000*	*Contribution from other sources £'000*		
			Local authority	*TEC/LECs*	*Other*
Scottish Borders	3,005	1,202	216	1,304	Borders College, Scottish Historic Buildings Trust: 62
Calderdale: Todmorden Regeneration Scheme	645	323	—	—	Consortium including local authority, Rural Development Commission and private sector: 323
Chorley: Lancashire Technology Centre	2,400	1,200	70	—	Royal Ordnance: 1,030 Chorley Local Enterprise Agency: 100
Dyfed/West Wales Task Force	1,550	146	—	—	West Wales Task Force: 775
Fife region	1,158	579	—	579	—
Hertfordshire TEC: Innovation and Development Centre	1,911	700	275	530	Private sector: 406
Leeds: Clothing Resource Centre	310	155	—	—	Consortium including the TEC, local authority Trade Association: 155
Royal British Legion	4,399	1,374	—	—	Royal British Legion: 3,025

Note:
Small subsequent adjustments may have been made which are not shown here as a result of changes in the rate of exchange.

SMART and SPUR

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what has been the distribution between the regions and nations of the number and value of small firms merit award for research and technology and support for products under research projects; what has been the amount of committed spending so far; and what is the length of processing time from submission of applications to approval.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* SMART—small firms merit award for research and technology—is an annual competition with a closing date for entries. Winners are announced three months later. The number and value of awards made within the current programme, which commenced in 1992, and expenditure to 30 June 1993 are as follows:

Region/Nation	No. of awards	Value of awards offered (£'000)	Expenditure (£'000)
East	17	763	271
East Midlands	17	757	489
North East	8	352	201
Northern Ireland	6	239	134
North West	16	684	456
Scotland	17	755	419
South East	31	1,350	856
South West	20	880	542
Wales	16	714	471
West Midlands	18	765	496
Yorks/Humberside	14	611	478
Total	* 180	7,870	4,813

SPUR—support for products under research—was launched in 1991. The average processing time of applications is 108 days. The number and value of awards, and expenditure to 30 June 1993 are:

Region/Nation	No. of awards	Value of awards offered (£'000)	Expenditure (£'000)
East	29	2,607	450
East Midlands	18	1,848	507
North East	12	1,070	194
North West	57	3,993	1,178
Scotland	28	3,157	1,173
South East	56	5,956	1,619
South West	19	1,450	537
Wales	21	1,893	430
West Midlands	32	2,274	729
Yorkshire/Humberside	42	3,145	999
Total	314	27,393	7,816

Pharmaceuticals

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what are the present export guidelines for *(a)* anthrax vaccine and *(b)* penicillin.

Mr. Needham *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The Export of Goods (Control) Order 1992, as amended, controls the export of certain isolated live cultures in the form of vaccines, including bacillus anthracis. As such, an export licence is required. There is no similar control on the export of penicillin.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what restrictions exist for the export of raw materials for the production of medicine to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Needham *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* All exports of humanitarian aid to Serbia or Montenegro must be licensed by the Department of Trade and Industry and accompanied by a letter of authorisation from the United Nations sanctions committee.

The UN sanctions committee automatically agrees to the export of finished medicines to Serbia and Montenegro. The export of medical raw materials and precursors is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Environmental Technology

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when the environmental technology innovation scheme and the environmental management options scheme were open for applications; when they were closed to further applications; and how many applications had been received subsequent to closure.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The environmental technology innovation scheme—ETIS—jointly managed by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of the Environment and DTI's environmental management options scheme—DEMOS—were both launched on 2 October 1990. The schemes are open to new applications until 30 September 1993. However, since February this year the Departments have informed new applicants that projects already under assessment are expected to take up the remaining resources of each scheme. Since that time, nine ETIS and eight DEMOS applications have been received.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many applications were made, grants awarded and how much expenditure committed, in each region and nation and for the United Kingdom, on *(a)* the environmental technology innovation scheme, *(b)* the environmental management options scheme and *(c)* EUROENVIRON, together with in each case the average and target processing cycles from application to award.

Mr. McLoughlin *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The average processing time for approved projects under the three schemes was as follows:

	Months
ETIS	11·5
DEMOS	12·4
EUROENVIRON	4·3

These processing times include periods when responses were awaited from applicants to supply information necessary to complete assessment of their project proposals by the Department concerned. The processing times for ETIS and DEMOS include the initial outline application stage. We will be taking account of the results of an interim evaluation carried out on the three schemes last year in the design of any successor programmes.

The information requested is as follows:

(a) Environmental Technology Innovation Scheme (ETIS) (Jointly managed by DTI and DOE)

Region/Country	Applications received	Grants awarded	Expenditure committed £
South East	167	8	1,514,769
East	39	3	564,180
South West	47	—	—
East Midlands	34	2	138,025
West Midlands	62	8	1,494,910
Yorkshire and Humberside	40	3	598,789
North West	65	6	674,020
North East	19	1	24,186
Scotland	33	1	835,120
Wales	14	—	—
Northern Ireland	1	—	—
Unspecified/Non UK	1	—	—
Totals	522	32	5,843,999

(b) DTI's Environmental Management Options Scheme (DEMOS)

Region/Country	Applications received	Grants awarded	Expenditue committed £
South East	168	2	290,250
East	48	—	—
South West	54	1	409,000
East Midlands	41	3	570,805
West Midlands	66	4	662,130
Yorkshire and Humberside	44	1	8,100
North West	72	4	491,800
North East	24	—	—
Scotland	45	1	157,516
Wales	25	1	121,865
Northern Ireland	9	—	—
Unspecified/Non United Kingdom	7	—	—
Totals	603	17	2,711,466

EUROENVIRON

Region/Country	Applications received	Grants awarded	Expenditure committed £
South/East	42	14	2,131,405
East	1	1	33,977
South West	4	1	19,878
East Midlands	7	—	—
West Midlands	3	1	683,218
Yorkshire and Humberside	9	2	927,100
North West	4	5	544,741
North East	7	4	670,764
Scotland	7	3	241,562
Wales	2	—	—
Northern Ireland	13	—	—
Totals	99	[31]	5,297,645

[31] United Kingdom companies have received offers of grant for 22 projects of which six projects involve more than one United Kingdom company.

British Coal Directors

Mr. Tipping: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will list the declarations of interests of directors of the British Coal Corporation notified to him since 1983.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* No.

Mr. Tipping: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what guidelines are laid down when appointing directors of the British Coal Corporation about the declaration of pecuniary interests; how long they have been in existence; and what plans there are to revise them.

Mr. Eggar *[holding answer 22 July 1993]:* The appointments of British Coal Corporation members are subject to the provisions of the Coal Industry Nationalisation (National Coal Board) Regulations 1946.

Regulation 3 in essence requires members:

a) to disclose to my right hon. Friend full particulars of any interest or securities held or acquired in any undertaking carrying on a business similar to that at any time carried on by the Corporation; and

b) to disclose at a meeting of the Members of the Corporation any direct or indirect interest in a contract made or proposed by the Corporation.

I have no present plans to revise those regulations.

Patent Office

Mr. Flynn: To ask the President of the Board of Trade which categories of work at the Patent Office are *(a)* currently being market tested and *(b)* being considered for future market testing.

Mr. McLoughlin: The current programme which is nearing completion, having entered the consultation phase, includes reprographics, messenger and post dispatch services, file repository, stationery, trade marks data capture and trade marks referencing. Market testing will be applied in due course to other Patent Office work, but no decisions have been taken on the content of next year's programme.

SCOTLAND

Councillors (Salaries)

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what representations he has had in respect of the payment of salaries to local government representatives in Scotland; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart: Council membership is based on the principle of voluntary public service and is not regarded as a salaried appointment. All payments to members of local authorities are by way of allowances and travel and subsistence. A new system of councillors' allowances was introduced in April 1991. The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities' comments on the first year's operation of the new system are currently being considered in the wider context of local government reform and the consultation paper on the review of internal management of local authorities, the responses to which are currently being analysed. A number of local authorities have expressed their views separately and these will also be taken into account in the review of allowances.

Local Government Reform

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) whether home helps will be able to stand in elections to any new single-tier local authorities proposed in his White Paper on the reform of Scottish local government;

(2) if he will make a statement on disqualification from standing for elections to the new councils proposed in the White Paper on the reform of Scottish local government.

Mr. Stewart: The question of the eligibility of local authority employees to stand for election to the authority which employs them was among the issues considered in our recent consultation paper "The Internal Management of Local Authorities in Scotland". Responses to this paper are currently being analysed and a decision on this issue will be taken in the light of these.

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will publish the written remit of the review of local government in Scotland; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart: The Government's first consultation paper on local government reform in Scotland, issued in June 1991, set out the principles on which the new system should be based. These included the need for the new system to reflect local loyalties and allegiances, to be efficient, accountable to its electorate and cost-effective.

The principles were widely endorsed by those who responded to the consultation paper and formed the basis for the local government structure proposed in the White Paper published by my right hon. Friend on 8 July.

Mr. McAvoy: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what powers he has to prevent asset stripping by a district council prior to a reorganisation of local government;

(2) if he will make a statement on the powers the Commissioner for Local Government has to investigate complaints of discrimination made by residents within a district council;

(3) what statutes govern the holding by a district council of a referendum in all or part of its area;

(4) what powers he has to change a capital programme, submitted by a district council, to ensure that the programme is not discriminatory against a particular geographical area;

(5) what plans he has to provide that in a referendum organised by a district council prominence is given by that council to all viewpoints on the isue of the referendum;

(6) what powers he has to prevent a district coucil discriminating against residents in part of its area;

(7) what requirements are imposed on district councils on the conduct of referendums.

Mr. Stewart: The issues raised by the hon. Member are serious and important and I shall write to him as soon as possible.

Mr. Galbraith: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland who has made representations to him concerning the transfer of Chryston, Stepps and the Moodiesburn ward from Strathkelvin in the proposed East Dunbartonshire to the proposed Lanarkshire, North; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 23 July 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what is his estimate of the final cost of the consultation processes with regard to both local government reorganisation and changes to the water and sewerage services in Scotland;

(2) what plans he has to bring forward his proposals for local government reorganisation in a separate Bill from the one containing his proposals for water and sewerage services;

(3) when he expects to be able to bring forward legislation to implement the White Paper on local government reorganisation;

(4) what plans he has to establish an executive body to operate the Glasgow underground following local government reorganisation;

(5) what assessment he has made of the financial consequences of local government reorganisation for the operation of the Land Register.

Mr. Lang: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Welsh: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what consideration was given to the establishment of an independent commission to examine the reorganisation of Scottish local government; what representations he received advocating that such a commission be established; what assessment was made of the costs of establishing such a commission; on what basis he decided not to establish such a commission; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if he will meet the regional council directors of planning to discuss the implications for planning services arising from the reorganisation of Scottish local government; and if he will make a statement;

(3) what steps he is taking to minimise disruption arising from the reorganisation of Scottish local government to *(a)* planning services, *(b)* environmental health services, *(c)* housing as a local authority service, *(d)* industrial development and *(e)* urban regeneration; and if he will make a statement;

(4) what evidence he has considered in assessing the level of voter satisfaction with the existing structure of local government in Scotland; what steps he has taken in order to determine the level of voter satisfaction with that structure; what further steps he intends to take to determine the level of voter satisfaction with that structure, and if he will make a statement;

(5) what assessment he has made as part of the reorganisation of Scottish local government of the optimum authority size necessary to ensure adequate service provision; and if he will make a statement;

(6) what evidence he has considered in assessing the extent to which the electorate identify with the existing councils in their locality; and if he will make a statement;

(7) if he will meet the regional council directors of transport to discuss the implications for transport services arising from the reorganisation of Scottish local government; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will estimate the cost to each regional, district and island authority of the task of local government reorganisation;

(2) if he will publish details of the specific criteria used to determine the boundaries of each of the proposed new single-tier authorities; and if he will list the key criteria for each individual authority;

(3) what is his estimate of *(a)* the number of anticipated redundancies and *(b)* the cost of redundancy payments resulting from the anticipated job losses associated with his local government reorganisation proposals; and if he will break these figures down for each regional, district and island authority;

(4) if he will meet the regional council directors of education to discuss the implications for the provision of education services arising out of the reorganisation of Scottish local government; and if he will make a statement;

(5) what steps he is taking to minimise disruption arising from the reorganisation of Scottish local government to the provision of *(a)* transport services, *(b)* police and fire services, *(c)* social work services and *(d)* education services; and if he will make a statement;

(6) if he will give details of his Department's estimate of savings resulting from the reorganisation of Scottish local government for each regional, district and island authority;

(7) if he will meet the regional council directors of roads services to discuss the implications for roads services arising from the reorganisation of Scottish local government; and if he will make a statement;

(8) if he will publish details of which local authority boundaries were recommended to be coterminous with which health board or local enterprise boundary; and if he will identify the respondents making such recommendations;

(9) if he will meet the regional council directors of social work to discuss the implications for social work services arising out of the reorganisation of Scottish local government; and if he will make a statement;

(10) if he will list the names of those respondents expressing concern about the possibility of local government reorganisation jeopardising future funding for voluntary organisations; and if he will provide a geographical breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(11) if he will produce a list of the organisations referred to by those respondents referring to links with other bodies and identify which respondents referred to links with which body; and if he will provide a geographical breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(12) if he will publish a list of the names of those respondents who criticised the short-term costs of the reform of Scottish local government reorganisation; and if he will provide a geographical breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(13) if he will publish a list of the names of those respondents who welcomed reform of Scottish local government as representing long-term savings; and if he will provide a geographical breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(14) if he will list the names of those respondents who commented on the transitional arrangements to be made for *(a)* local authority property, *(b)* local authority information technology, *(c)* local authority compulsory competitive tendering and *(d)* local authority staff in their submissions to the consultation paper "Shaping the New Councils"; and if he will provide a geographical breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(15) if he will list the names of those respondents to the consultation paper "Shaping the New Councils" who were not supportive of local government reorganisation; and if he will provide a geographical breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(16) if he will list the names of those respondents to the consultation paper "Shaping the New Councils" who were not supportive of the proposal to reorganise Scottish local government into single-tier authorities; and if he will provide a geographical breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(17) if he will list the names of those organisations whose submissions to the consultation paper "Shaping the New Councils" whose preferred local government structure for Scotland as a whole was to retain the regions; and if will provide a breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(18) if he will list the names of those respondents to the consultation paper "Shaping the New Councils" who commented on community councils; and if he will provide a geographical breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(19) if he will list the names of those respondents who recommended that local authority boundaries should be coterminous with health board or local enterprise company boundaries in their submissions to the consultation paper "Shaping the New Councils"; and if he will provide a geographical breakdown of this information by regional, district and island authority area;

(20) if he will list the names of those respondents who referred to the costs of reform in their submissions to the consultation paper "Shaping the New Councils".

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Ray Michie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what representations he has had from foreign owned water companies in response to the consultation paper "Investing in Our Future" during the recent consultation exercise and since the publication of "Shaping the Future—The New Councils";

(2) if he will list the organisations which supported option *(d)* in the consultation paper "Investing in Our Future" during the recent consultation exercise;

(3) what role the local authority ombudsman will have within the new councils in Scotland;

(4) if he will list the individuals or organisations who expressed a preference for three-yearly local government elections in the course of the recent consultation exercise on local government reform;

(5) what approval a council will need to change its name after the new local authority structure has been established; and what statutory construction exercise with the public will be expected;

(6) what is the expected increase in water charges as a result of investment in water and sewerage services in the next five years;

(7) when he expects to publish fuller details of his plans for the water and sewerage services in Scotland;

(8) what meetings he has had with representatives from Milngavie district council and Eastwood district council since the publication of "Shaping the Future—The New Councils" to discuss the new council structure;

(9) if he will publish the names of individuals or organisations who supported the view that there should be multi-member divisions in the course of the recent consultation exercise on local government reform;

(10) if he will publish the names of those organisations or individuals that made representations supporting *(a)* Westhill belong included within Aberdeen city council and *(b)* the creation of North Lanarkshire council during the recent consultation exercise on local government reform;

(11) what representations he received from individuals and organisations that there should be separate water authorities for each island authority during the recent consultation exercise;

(12) what representations were received supporting the formation of a national service for the reporter to children's hearings during the recent consultation exercise on local government reform; and if he will list the individuals and organisations;

(13) when the Local Government Boundary Commission will conduct a review of boundaries after the new councils have been created in Scotland;

(14) when the elections for the shadow authorities will be held in 1995; and if there are any plans to change the traditional arrangements;

(15) when he intends to consult further regarding the future of water and sewerage services in Scotland; and what form this consultation will take;

(16) which private companies and organisations have made representations to be involved in the provision of water and sewerage services during the recent consultation exercise on local government reform;

(17) what plans he has to meet the present regional and district councils in Scotland to discuss transitional arrangements regarding the formation of the new councils;

(18) if he will list the posts the holders of which will not be eligible to stand for election for the new councils;

(19) what representations he received from islands authorities that the elections to the three islands councils should be held in 1994 and subsequently delayed until 1999 during the recent consultation exercise on local government reform;

(20) if he will publish details of the representations he has received from organisations and individuals that the new water authorities should have the power to disconnect water supplies during the recent consultation exercise;

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he intends to make available to the proposed new local government authorities a general power of competency enabling them to do anything they think necessary for the benefit of the people they serve;

(2) what plans he has to prescribe by law minimum standards for services provided by local authorities;

(3) what representations he has received in the course of consultation on local government reorganisation concerning the national road network and the future role of local authorities as road authorities;

(4) what has been the cost to date of the consultation process for local government reform in Scotland;

(5) whether he intends to bring forward proposals to require elections for membership of the proposed new water authorities;

(6) how many copies of the two consultation documents on local government reorganisation and the White Paper, "Shaping the Future—the New Councils" were published; what proportion of them were sold to the public; and how many further copies of the White Paper he intends to make available to the public;

(7) what regulatory and financial controls he intends to implement with regard to the proposed new water authorities;

(8) whether members of the proposed new water authorities must be elected local government councillors;

(9) what plans he has to change the electoral system used in district and regional council elections;

(10) Whether he has considered in terms of annex B paragraph 4 of the White Paper on local government reorganisation, the financial or manpower consequences of the establishment of joint boards in estimating a reduction in council staffing levels of between 700 and 2,200 employees;

(11) whether he intends to make changes to the current role of the Commission for Local Authority Accounts in Scotland in local government reorganisation;

(12) how many representations he has received in favour of *(a)* an electoral system based on proportional representation and *(b)* specifically the single transferable vote electoral system, in connection with his proposals to reorganise local government in Scotland;

(13) what criteria he has taken into account in proposing a Lothians council which is not geographically contiguous;

(14) how many of his Department's officials were involved in the drafting of the two consultation documents on local government reorganisation and the White Paper, "Shaping the Future—the New Councils";

(15) which interested persons he intends to consult in terms of paragraph 6.4 of the White Paper on local government reorganisation;

(16) what regard he had to the pre-1974 council boundaries in drawing up the proposed council boundaries as contained in the White Paper on local government reorganisation;

(17) if he will explain for what reasons in terms of paragraph 3.4 of the white paper on local government reorganisation, he proposes a power allowing the Secretary of State to approve joint boards for council co-operation; and what representations advocating such an approach he has received.

Mr. Lang: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Training Schemes

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list for each local enterprise company in Scotland its youth training performance in 1992-93 showing *(a)* the cost per output points and *(b)* the number of national vocational qualifications per 100 leavers, together with the latest information he has for 1993-94 and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list for each LEC in Scotland their employment training performance in 1992-93 showing *(a)* the cost per output point, *(b)* the number of NVQs per 100 leavers and *(c)* the number of positive outcomes per 100 leavers, together with the latest information he has for 1993-94; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart: In Scotland the responsibility for monitoring local enterprise company performance on employment training, and on its successor training for work, rests with Scottish Enterprise and with Highlands and Islands Enterprise. I have therefore asked the chairmen of these bodies to write to the hon. Member.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the achievements of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* his Department in helping small businesses over the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors those achievements and the statistical results of such monitoring.

Mr. Stewart: The Government continue to place a high priority on helping small businesses, through improvements to the busniness climate, through deregulation and through specific programmes of support and assistance.

Small businesses are of crucial importance to the Scottish economy and are continuing to benefit from the comprehensive schemes of support which the Government have introduced. My Department has overall responsibility for assisting small firms in Scotland while specific schemes are delivered mainly through Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the network of 22 local enterprise companies. In addition to providing services specific to Scotland, these bodies also have responsibility for the delivery and monitoring in Scotland of United Kingdom services on behalf of other Departments including the Department of Trade and Industry. Measures operated directly by my Department to assist small business include the regional enterprise grant for investment, regional enterprise grant for innovation and regional selective assistance.

For the period 1992-93, my Department made 102 offers of regional selective assistance to the value of over £18·2 million to small companies—those employing fewer than 200. This contributed to the creation of 2,320 planned new jobs and the safeguarding of 480 existing jobs. Under both the investment and innovation elements of the regional enterprise grant scheme, 272 offers to the value of £3.5 million were made in Scotland in 1992-93 to companies employing under 25 people, contributing to the creation of 1,060 planned new jobs and the safeguarding of 940 existing jobs.

The success of these and other Government policies is demonstrated by statistics for VAT registration. A total of 9,800 additional companies registered for VAT in 1980. In 1991, the comparable figure was 13,900, an increase of 42 per cent. At the end of 1991, the total number of VAT-registered businesses in Scotland was 118,000 an increase of 24,600 or 26 per cent. on the comparable figure for 1979.

Empty Housing

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many local authority-owned houses were empty at the last date for which figures were available; what information he has on the length of time they had been vacant; what is his estimate of the rent forgone for each local authority during the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: Details of the numbers of vacant local authority dwellings at 31 March 1992, together with information on the length of time which they had been vacant, are shown at table 17 of the Scottish Office Statistical Bulletin (Housing Series) No. Hsg/1992/8. Rental income lost by each local authority because of unlet dwellings in 1992-93 is shown in table 7 of the Scottish Office Statistical Bulletin (Housing Series) No. Hsg/1993/5. Both bulletins are available in the House of Commons Library.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Lang: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Blind and Partially Sighted People

Mr. Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what arrangements his Department makes to ensure that blind and partially sighted people have access to information produced by his Department where it has not been published in alternative media such as Braille, large print or tape;

(2) what is his Department's policy on which information produced by his Department is published in alternative media to standard print such as Braille, tape or large print.

Mr. Stewart: The Scottish Office targets information in an appropriate manner to those who have an interest. Each constituent Department within the Scottish Office determines how best to publish and disseminate the information which it produces. Consideration is consistently given to whether a need exists for a publication to be reproduced in Braille or tape format.

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many people were registered blind and partially sighted in each year since 1985; and what figures are projected for registrations in *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years time.

Mr. Stewart: The number of people reported by local authorities as registered blind and partially sighted at 31 March of each year is as follows:

Year	*Blind*	*Partially sighted*
1985	12,738	3,586
1986	13,710	4,008
1987	13,678	4,479
1988	13,760	4,651
1989	14,088	4,834
1990	14,120	5,012
1991	14,552	5,237
1992	19,506	6,210

The increase between 1991 and 1992 is due to revised figures received from Strathclyde region. It is not possible to project future registrations in *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years time.

Blind and Partially Sighted at 31 March by Year and Region

Region	*1992*		*1991*		*1990*		*1989*		*1988*		*1987*		*1986*		*1985*	
	Blind	*Partially Sighted*	*Blind*	*Partially Sighted*	*Blind*	*Partially Sighted*	*Blind*	*Partially Sighted*	*Blind*	*Partially Sighted*	*Blind*	*Partially Sighted*	*Blind*	*Partially Sighted*	*Blind*	*Partially Sighted*
	Number	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*	*Number*
Borders	378	127	332	108	309	105	292	96	271	84	282	93	279	76	286	85
Central[1]	974	229	1,026	204	786	181	786	181	590	180	590	180	651	134	636	128
Dumfries and Galloway	455	366	436	348	442	322	453	313	463	276	460	266	445	225	434	190

Region	1992 Blind Number	1992 Partially Sighted Number	1991 Blind Number	1991 Partially Sighted Number	1990 Blind Number	1990 Partially Sighted Number	1989 Blind Number	1989 Partially Sighted Number	1988 Blind Number	1988 Partially Sighted Number	1987 Blind Number	1987 Partially Sighted Number	1986 Blind Number	1986 Partially Sighted Number	1985 Blind Number	1985 Partially Sighted Number
Fife	721	502	735	444	716	415	711	382	714	344	721	292	693	262	649	241
Grampian	1,128	502	1,039	448	1,002	371	999	305	946	285	916	227	853	189	732	126
Highland	636	261	622	211	594	212	579	190	540	171	536	177	483	173	465	156
Lothian	2,468	859	2,317	706	2,241	661	2,227	644	2,210	612	2,251	588	2,193	525	2,192	500
Strathclyde[2]	11,370	2,721	6,709	2,211	6,709	2,211	6,709	2,211	6,709	2,211	6,585	2,193	6,777	1,981	5,985	1,763
Tayside	1,157	519	1,076	454	1,081	440	1,086	417	1,078	405	1,089	373	1,095	353	1,125	309
Orkney	42	22	63	12	50	1	58	1	59	1	58	1	51	2	47	1
Shetland	40	12	55	5	53	6	43	7	39	8	32	13	27	14	25	16
Western Isles	137	90	142	86	137	87	145	87	141	74	158	76	163	74	162	71
Scotland	19,506	6,210	14,552	5,237	14,120	5,012	14,088	4,834	13,760	4,651	13,678	4,479	13,710	4,008	12,738	3,586

[1] 1989 Figure used in 1990, 1987 Figure used in 1988
[2] 1992 Figure estimated, 1988 Figure used in 1991, 1990 and 1989; 1984 Figure used for Renfrew in 1986 and 1985

Data Processing

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the numbers of staff by grade that are employed in his Department and agencies in the automatic data processing functional specialism.

Mr. Lang: There is no automatic data processing functional specialism in the Scottish Office and its agencies, but the numbers of staff by grade at 30 June 1993 in receipt of an ADP allowance are listed in the following table:

Grade	Number
AA (Data Processor)	73
AO (Senior Data Processor)	28
EO	68
HEO	78
SEO	29
Total	276

Contracting Out

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list all those services or functions contracted out in his Department and Agencies, since November 1991, in which the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 were not applied.

Mr. Lang: Whether or not the Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 apply in any particular case will depend on the nature of the work awarded and the contractors' own proposals for carrying out the work. Since publication of the "Competing for Quality" White Paper, the Scottish Office's market testing programme has included the activities listed which have been contracted out under contractual arrangements which did not incorporate the TUPE regulations.

Functions contracted out by the Scottish Office and Scottish Office agencies
Property management at the Scottish Police College
Toll collection at the Erskine Bridge
Maintenance and management of Court Houses (five contracts)
Building and Planned Maintenance for the Scottish Fire Service Training School
Property management at the Marine Laboratory, Aberdeen
Audit of two national health service bonds
Audit of three national health service trusts
Professional services relating to the Secretary of State's trunk road programme and the capital building programmes, of the Scottish Prison Service
Scottish Agricultural Science Agency, Animal House

Information on services and functions contracted out since November 1991 but not included in the market testing programme could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ophthalmic Out-patients

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the average cost of a visit to a hospital ophthalmic out-patient department.

Mr. Stewart: This information is not held centrally. In 1992-93, the average cost of a visit to an out-patient department in an acute hospital was £27.

Rent Arrears

Mr. Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list by local authority the rent arrears owed by local authority tenants for the last year for which figures are available and the total rent owing.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: Information on local authority rent arrears accumulated in individual years is not held centrally. The rent arrears outstanding to each local authority at 31 March 1992 is shown in the table. The total rent arrears written off as irrecoverable by local authorities in Scotland during 1992-93 is estimated to have been £6·25 million.

	£
Berwickshire	39,721
Ettrick and Lauderdale	67,482
Roxburgh	27,392
Tweeddale	23,221
Clackmannan	453,115
Falkirk	814,783
Stirling	1,016,998
Annandale and Eskdale	122,911
Nithsdale	318,211
Stewartry	56,008
Wigtown	160,935
Dunfermline	559,961
Kirkcaldy	746,420
North East Fife	131,136
Aberdeen	1,476,770
Banff and Buchan	292,617
Gordon	83,046
Kincardine and Deeside	75,562
Moray	61,152
Badenoch and Strathspey	18,000
Caithness	84,606
Inverness	115,578
Lochaber	81,203
Nairn	13,304

	£
Ross and Cromarty	199,304
Skye and Lochalsh	19,935
Sutherland	14,157
East Lothian	681,815
Edinburgh	2,013,333
Midlothian	230,960
West Lothian	441,324
Argyll and Bute	141,923
Bearsden and Milngavie	59,935
Clydebank	728,694
Clydesdale	454,758
Cumbernauld and Kilsyth	369,450
Cumnock and Doon Valley	354,792
Cunninghame	582,078
Dumbarton	838,160
East Kilbride	47,218
Eastwood	31,277
Glasgow	12,726,402
Hamilton	757,260
Inverclyde	930,352
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	293,435
Kyle and Carrick	611,616
Monklands	829,249
Motherwell	884,199
Renfrew	2,137,488
Strathkelvin	614,339
Angus	101,368
Dundee	1,256,271
Perth and Kinross	140,682
Orkney Islands	54,573
Shetland Islands	156,964
Western Isles	332,250
Total	35,875,693

Dounreay

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the radiological consequences of the spillage of plutonium at the AEA Technology plant at Dounreay on 29 June; and when his Department first learned of the incident.

Mr. Stewart: On the morning of 30 June the Atomic Energy Authority reported to my Department that two workers at Dounreay had been contaminated following the opening of a drum which contained centrifuge filter bodies in sealed bags. Subsequent reports indicated that detailed checks had been carried out to determine whether there had been any intake of material by personnel either directly involved in the operation or nearby. As a result, early analysis suggested that one worker would be subject to further checks in order to determine the precise level of material ingested. Two other workers were confirmed as having received significantly less exposure. The cause of the incident is being investigated by the Atomic Energy Authority and the nuclear installations inspectorate.

Sight Tests

Mr. Kynoch: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what are the estimated savings made in 1992-93 in Scotland as a result of the introduction of a charge for sight tests.

Mr. Stewart: We estimate that the savings made in 1992-93 as a result of the restriction of the categories of people eligible for an NHS sight test in 1989 were of the order of £9 million.

Veterinary Services

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what alterations he plans to make to the operation of the Highlands and Islands veterinary services scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lang: These plans are at present being finalised, and we hope to put firm proposals to those concerned shortly.

Young People in Care

Mr. Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether children and young people looked after in care in Roxburgh and Berwickshire have access to a telephone in private.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Museums

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what information he has on the amount of financial assistance received by *(a)* all industrial museums and *(b)* the Scottish mining museum, from local authorities.

Mr. Lang: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Edinburgh Airport

Sir Nicholas Fairbairn: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the estimated or actual cost of the fancification of the two roundabouts on the under-approach to Edinburgh airport and the various associated pillars and railings around them; and by whom they were authorised.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The landscaping work on the two roundabouts at the Edinburgh airport interchange is being undertaken by Lothians and Edinburgh Enterprise Ltd.

I understand the costs are being met in full by the Enterprise Company. The Scottish Office, as one of the two road authorities affected, has been consulted during design and construction and satisfied itself as to the safety of the proposal before consenting to the work.

My hon. and learned Friend may find it helpful to contact the local enterprise company direct should he wish to discuss the matter. The enterprise company would be happy to discuss the project and to provide any further details he may require about it.

MV Braer

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what consideration the Lord Advocate has given to the bringing of charges against the *(a)* master and *(b)* owner of the MV Braer in respect of the stranding of the vessel and events leading up to the stranding of the vessel on Shetland on 5 January; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lang: Crown counsel have considered an interim report from the procurator fiscal. They expect to receive a further report in due course.

Laboratory Services

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many general practitioner fund-holding practices have chosen to use non-accredited laboratory services; and if he will provide a breakdown by regional health authority.

Mr. Stewart: This information is not available centrally.

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what was the total level of gross expenditure in Scotland for 1988-89 to 1992-93 and the estimated gross expenditure for 1993-94 on fund holding for general practitioners; what was the component assigned to laboratory services at constant prices; and if he will provide a breakdown by regional health authority.

Mr. Stewart: There were no operational fund holders in Scotland prior to 1991-92. In that year, gross expenditure by general practitioner fund holders was £8·19 million.

Details of gross expenditure for 1992-93 are not yet available as the audit of annual accounts for that period has not yet been completed. Estimates of gross expenditure for 1993-94 cannot be given at this stage due to the possibility of further fund holders joining the scheme in mid year. Information on the element of this gross expenditure assigned to laboratory services is not available centrally.

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what powers he has, and what further steps he is taking, to enforce quality standards on laboratory services in line with the recommendations provided by the Scottish Home and Health Department to regional health authorities; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what information he has on laboratory services in Scotland which are not accredited with CPA (UK) Ltd.; and if he will list them by regional health authority;

(3) which of the regional health authorities have external quality assurance checks for cervical screening; and what percentage of cervical examinations are subject to such external quality assurance checks;

(4) what was the total gross expenditure in Scotland for 1988-89 to 1991-92 on national external quality assurance schemes for laboratory tests; and how much expenditure was incurred within each regional health authority;

(5) what steps he is taking to ensure that all laboratory tests for cervical screening are subject to external quality assurance checks;

(6) what is the total gross expenditure for 1992-93 on *(a)* cervical screening and *(b)* external quality assurance checks for cervical screening; and if he will provide a breakdown by regional health authority;

(7) what guidance is offered by the Scottish Home and Health Department to regional health authorities regarding the quality standards of providers of laboratory services; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what financial allocations he has made to health boards for general practitioners fund holding for laboratory services at constant prices for 1993-94; and if he will provide a breakdown by regional health authority.

Mr. Stewart: The allocation of financial hospital and community health services, including laboratory services, to fund-holding general practices is a matter for the relevant health board. This finance comes from their general allocation for hospital and community health services.

No information on the portion of the fund holder's allocation from the board attributable to laboratory services is available centrally.

Mink Farms

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) how many Arctic fox are present on licensed mink farms currently operating in Scotland;

(2) if he will give details of the numbers of mink farms in Scotland over the past 10 years;

(3) what is the size and location of each mink farm currently operating in Scotland.

Sir Hector Monro: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letters to be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Tony Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if the mink factory farm at Appin in Scotland is currently licensed to keep mink; whether mink are currently present; and whether the farm was licensed to keep mink in September and October 1992.

Sir Hector Monro: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Nuclear Power

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what extension he has approved to the notional life of Scottish Nuclear's advanced gas-cooled reactor power stations; and what effect this extension will have on the annual provisions made by Scottish Nuclear to fund decommissioning and other nuclear liabilities.

Mr. Stewart: It is the responsibility of Scottish Nuclear to take a view on the notional life of its power stations, and to satisfy the nuclear installations inspectorate regarding safety and other licensing requirements. The effect of the extension to the notional life of Torness power station is to increase the time over which the company make charges against revenue in order to accumulate the provisions necessary to meet future liabilities; this has the effect of reducing the annual charge.

Fishing

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what response has been made to the report and representations made by the chairman of the Sea Fish Industry Authority to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, the hon. Member for Dumfries (Sir H. Monro), regarding the outcome of a recent seminar held in Inverness on the subject of several orders; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lang: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Astronomy

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with learned body authorities about the agreements on astronomy involving the United States of America, Canada, Chile, other south American countries and the United Kingdom relating to the Gemini project of two optical infra red telescopes, one in the Nauna Kec site in Hawaii, and the other in Sierra Paon in Chile.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: None. The proposal is an inter-agency agreement involving participation by the Science and Engineering research council. The research councils are the responsibility of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what progress he has made in the process of the appointment of an Astronomer Royal for Scotland.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Nuclear Waste

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how the spent fuel emplaced in the proposed Torness dry store is to be managed and disposed of after the planned period of storage.

Mr. Stewart: A public inquiry into the proposed dry store at Torness has been held. The reporter has not yet produced his report of that inquiry. Meantime, I understand from evidence led by Scottish Nuclear at the inquiry that no decision has yet been taken on the proposed longer-term management and disposal of the spent fuel.

Health Expenditure

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what is the total gross allocation to Scotland for health expenditure in the year 1993-94; and if he will publish a breakdown of *(a)* the revenue and capital allocation components of the gross total, *(b)* of the final allocation for practice team staff and premises and *(c)* the total gross allocation, the revenue and capital components of it and the final allocation for practice team staff and premises for each of the regional health authorities.

Mr. Stewart: The total gross allocation to Scotland for health expenditure in the year 1993-94 is £3,923 million comprising £3,754 million revenue and £169 million capital. The final allocation for practice team staff and premises will be £58·8 million. The total gross allocation, the revenue and capital components of it and the allocation to date for practice team staff and premises for each health board is as follows:

£ million

Health board	*Revenue*	*Capital*	*Practice team staff and premises*	*Total*
Argyll and Clyde	204·0	13·5	4·1	221·6
Ayrshire and Arran	161·7	1·6	3·3	167·1
Borders	51·7	3·6	1·0	56·3
Dumfries and Galloway	73·4	3·2	1·8	78·4
Fife	150·7	6·6	3·5	160·8
Forth Valley	121·1	6·8	2·7	130·6
Grampian	235·9	0·5	6·1	242·5
Greater Glasgow	522·9	26·6	10·5	560·0
Highland	98·4	5·9	2·8	107·1
Lanarkshire	230·3	8·8	4·3	243·4
Lothian	363·5	22·1	9·4	395·0
Orkney	10·6	1·4	0·2	12·2
Shetland	12·0	2·3	0·2	14·5
Tayside	211·4	11·2	5·5	228·1
Western Isles	18·6	1·5	0·7	20·8
State Hospital	12·3	4·1	—	16·4
Total	2,478·5	119·7	56·6	2,654·8

The remaining £1,268·2 million is mainly for expenditure on family health services but also on centrally financed and other specific services. These costs are met as they arise during the year.

Caledonian MacBrayne

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the future organisation of Caledonian MacBrayne.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer which I gave to him on 10 June 1993 at column *277*.

Scottish Nuclear

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how the guarantees made to Scottish Nuclear under schedule 12 to the Electricity Act 1989 are reflected in *(a)* Scottish Nuclear's accounts and *(b)* public sector accounts.

Mr. Stewart: The treatment of the guarantees made to Scottish Nuclear under schedule 12 to the Electricity Act 1989 are described in notes 4 and 15 to Scottish Nuclear's annual report and accounts for 1992-93. As far as public sector accounts are concerned, the schedule 12 guarantee is treated as a contingent liability.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make public the detailed engineering and economic assessment of the relative merits of dry storage and reprocessing made by Scottish Nuclear in 1991, with the removal of commercially sensitive material if necessary.

Mr. Stewart: Scottish Nuclear provided engineering assessments of the proposed dry storage at Torness at the recent public inquiry into the proposal. The company also made statements at the inquiry about the economic cases for dry storage as opposed to reprocessing. This will be reflected in the report of the public inquiry. Any more detailed economic assessment would be commercially confidential.

Public Bodies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to his answer of 15 July, *Official Report*, columns *647-48*, whether his Department

maintains a register of the interests of chairpersons or board members of the executive non-departmental public bodies sponsored by his Department.

Mr. Lang: No.

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Lang: The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 does not apply to any of the non-departmental public bodies for which I am responsible. Non-departmental public bodies are not required to hold meetings in public and do not normally do so. Health boards are covered by the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. NHS trusts are not covered by the Act, but are required to hold one public meeting each year.

Racially Motivated Incidents

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will consider the monitoring and reporting of racially motivated incidents and crimes on the same basis as in England and Wales.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Quangos

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list *(a)* former hon. Members of this House, *(b)* former Members of the European Parliament, *(c)* candidates at any parliamentary election since 1983 and *(d)* spouses of hon. Members, Members of the European Parliament, former hon. Members of Parliament or former Members of the European Parliament who have been appointed since January 1987 by his Department to quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations, health boards or NHS hospital trusts; and if he will list in each case the title of the post, the salary, the duration of the appointment and the party which each former Member, former MEP, or candidate represented.

Mr. Lang: The information held centrally by my Department does not show whether appointees were former hon. Members of this House, former Members of the European Parliament, candidates at any parliamentary election or the spouse of an hon. Member, former hon. Member or former Member of the European Parliament. As far as I am aware, the only appointee to a Scottish Office body listed in the Cabinet Office publication "Public Bodies" who is the spouse of an hon. Member of the House is Mrs. Kathleen Dalyell, wife of the hon. Member for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell). She is a member of the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland and her appointment runs from 1 June 1992 to 31 December 1996; it is unsalaried. Mrs. Deirdre Hutton, wife of the former MEP for the South of Scotland, is a member of the Parole Board for Scotland. Her appointment runs from 1 June 1993. It is unsalaried, but a fee is paid.

Mr. McLeish: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the names of individuals who *(a)* are spouses of hon. Members, *(b)* are members of the House of Lords, *(c)* are spouses of members of the House of Lords and *(d)* have been party candidates for Parliament, indicating for which party, who have been appointed since 1987 to quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations, giving in each case the title of the post, any salary payable and the duration of the appointment.

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:]* The information covers the Scottish Office bodies listed in the Cabinet Office publication "Public Bodies". The information is at 1 September 1992 and does not include appointments as justices of the peace, appointments to children's panels or appointments which expired before that date, details of which are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The information on appointments which I make is as follows:

(a) Mrs. Kathleen Dalyell, wife of the hon. Member for Linlithgow, is, as far as I am aware, the only spouse of a Member of the House who currently holds an appointment to a Scottish Office non-departmental public body. She is a member of the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland and her present appointment commenced on 1 June 1992 and runs to 31 December 1996; Mrs. Joan Mackenzie, widow of the former hon. Member for Rutherglen, is a member of the Greater Glasgow health board. Her appointment runs from 1 April 1993 to 31 March 1997. Health board members receive remuneration of £5,000 per annum.

(b) the following members of the House of Lords hold appointments on Scottish Office bodies: Lord Macfarlane of Bearsden is a member of the board of trustees of the National Galleries of Scotland; his appointment runs from 1 April 1990 to 31 March 1994. The right hon. the Lord Cameron of Lochbroom is a member of the Edinburgh new town conservation committee; his appointment runs from 1 February 1991 to 31 January 1996. Lord Goold is a member of the Scottish hospital endowment research trust; his appointment runs from 1 April 1990 to 31 March 1996. Viscount Thurso is a member of the Central Advisory Committee on Justices of the Peace (Scotland). His appointment runs from 30 May 1991 to 15 May 1995. The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres is chairman of the board of trustees of the National Library of Scotland. The appointment runs from 14 November 1990. Baroness Carnegy of Lour was a member of the Scottish Economic Council until 31 January 1993.

Until his death recently, the Marquess of Bute was chairman of the trustees of the National Museums of Scotland. All the above appointments are or were unsalaried;

(c) the only spouse of a member of the House of Lords holding appointment to a Scottish Office body is Lady Sanderson, wife of Lord Sanderson of Bowden, who is a member of Borders health board. Health board members receive remuneration of £5,000 per annum.

(d) since information on the political affiliations of appointees is not held centrally, I have no record of appointees who may have been parliamentary candidates.

Mr. McLeish: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the former hon. Members of the House who have been appointed since 1987 to quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations; and

if he will list in each case the title of the post, the salary, the duration of the appointment and the party which each represented as an hon. Member.

Mr. Lang *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* No former Members of Parliament who ceased to be Members of the House in 1987 and 1992 currently hold appointments on bodies for which my Department has responsibility.

The information held centrally by my Department does not show whether appointees were Members of this House during earlier Parliaments.

Royal Artillery Range, Balivanich

Mr. Macdonald: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what evaluation he has made of the survey by Highlands and Islands Enterprise of the economic impact of the Royal Artillery range in Balivanich upon the Western Isles economy; and if he will commission a similar survey of the social and economic impact of closure of the range.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton: The survey by Highlands and Islands Enterprise which was carried out with the full co-operation of the Army confirmed the important role which the Royal Artillery range Hebrides plays in the economic and social structure of the islands of Benbecula and North and South Uist. There are at present no plans to commission further studies.

Forestry

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps he is taking to ensure that public access will be maintained to any forests which may be privatised.

Sir Hector Monro: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Robert B. Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to his answer of 1 July to the hon. Member for Glanford and Scunthorpe (Mr. Morley), *Official Report*, column *611*, whether the environmental policies referred to include environmental and recreational benefits in the Forestry Commission estate.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* I shall write to my hon. Friend and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Robert B. Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will invite the Forestry Commission to produce a national forestry strategy combining the principles of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development with domestic forestry policy.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* Shortly after the Earth summit, the Prime Minister announced the Government's decision to publish a national plan for the implementation of the statement of forest principles agreed at Rio. The plan will cover both domestic forestry policy and the United Kingdom's interests in forestry overseas. It is being prepared by the Forestry Commission with the assistance of the other departments whose responsibilities are affected.

Mr. Robert B. Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what area of woodlands and forests presently owned and managed by the Forestry Commission and not designated as a site of special scientific interest or national nature reserve is subject to management for nature conservation benefits by Forestry Enterprise.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The Forestry Commission manages all its forests and woodlands to enhance their nature conservation value.

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list the criteria which are relevant in determining whether or not a forestry scheme requires an environmental assessment;

(2) if he will instruct the forestry authority to seek environmental assessments for forestry schemes on sites adjacent to or in the vicinity of sites of special scientific interest; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The criteria for determining whether the Forestry Commissioners should require an environmental assessment are set out in the Environmental Assessment (Afforestation) Regulations 1988, a copy of which is held in the Library.

Under the regulations, the commissioners already have the power to require an environmental assessment for an afforestation scheme adjacent to or in the vicinity of sites of special scientific interest if in their view the scheme is likely to have significant adverse effects on the environment.

Mr. Morley: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list, by county, those forest areas in Scotland currently available for sale to the private sector.

Sir Hector Monro: I shall write to the hon. Member as soon as possible and arrange for a copy of my letter to be placed in the Library.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much Forestry Commission land has been placed on the market for sale during the past 10 years but has not in the event been sold; and what is his estimate of the value of this land.

Sir Hector Monro: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Rating

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether rateable values have been harmonised to bring Scotland into line with England and Wales; and if he will provide details.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list those types of hereditaments where assessment of rateable values has not been harmonised to bring Scotland into line with rateable values in England;

(2) what powers he has to give direction to assessors in Scotland as to the assessment of the hereditaments for rating purposes; and what exercise has been made of such powers.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member.

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what information he expects to receive following the 1995 revaluation in respect of *(a)* hotels, *(b)* chemical plants, *(c)* fabrication yards and *(d)* airports.

Mr. Stewart: I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Housing Associations

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what proportion of housing association tenants were in receipt of housing benefits in each year since 1987 in *(a)* Strathclyde and *(b)* Scotland.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 20 July 1993]:* This information is not collected centrally.

Ethnic Minorities

Mr. Worthington: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps have been taken to provide in Scotland funding equivalent to that provided in England under section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 5 July 1993]:* Scottish needs have been taken into account in setting the level of aggregate external finance given to local authorities.

Laser Treatment

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) to what extent laser treatment of the eyeball to restore normal vision is available within the NHS in Scotland; and what plans he has to provide the service universally;

(2) what estimate he has made of the *(a)* capital and *(b)* revenue cost of providing laser treatment of eyeballs in each health board area.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Colorectal Surgery

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list the average waiting time for routine colorectal surgery at each hospital where it is offered; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what measures he is taking to ensure that waiting times for colorectal surgery are within guidelines promised by the patients charter.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Waiting Lists

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what measures he intends to use to ensure that waiting lists do not grow for medical treatments that have been identified as efficient by health boards.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Patients

Mrs. Fyfe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what measures he is taking to ensure that patients are given firm advance notice of the date when routine surgical procedures are to be carried out.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 19 July 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Patients (Transport)

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what advice or guidelines he has given to NHS trusts concerning specifications of contracts for ambulance services and transport services for patients and the minimum levels of training and skills required for such personnel.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* None. The ambulance and transport services for patients provided to NHS trusts in Scotland are covered by service level agreements with the Scottish ambulance service. These agreements specify standards of service and training of personnel.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many NHS trusts have one or more contracts with private operators for ambulance or patient transport services.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* None.

Council Tax

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what is his latest estimate of the number of band D equivalents in each council tax band in *(a)* Strathclyde and *(b)* Scotland as a whole; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what is his latest estimate of the total number in each council tax band in *(a)* Strathclyde and *(b)* Scotland as a whole of (i) dwellings, (ii) exempt dwellings, (iii) chargeable dwellings which are subject to a disabled reduction, (iv) chargeable dwellings which are entitled to a single discount for the purposes of council tax, (v) chargeable dwellings which are entitled to two discounts for the purposes of council tax and (vi) total equivalent number of dwellings after discount exemptions and disabled relief; and if he will make a statement;

(3) what is his latest estimate of the number of dwellings on the valuation list in *(a)* Strathclyde and *(b)* Scotland as a whole; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The available information is set out in the table. Updated estimates will be available in the autumn. These will give, for the first time, information, by band, on numbers of exempt dwellings, dwellings which are subject to disabled reduction, and dwellings receiving single discounts and two discounts.

	Strathclyde		Scotland	
	Tax proportion	Dwellings	Band D equivalent	Dwellings	Band D equivalent
Band A	6	311,874	207,916	588,607	392,405
Band B	7	237,648	184,837	570,284	443,554
Band C	8	145,646	129,463	330,040	293,369
Band D	9	99,244	99,244	234,530	234,530
Band E	11	91,087	110,229	232,051	283,618
Band F	13	41,497	59,940	112,868	163,032
Band G	15	27,361	45,602	78,449	130,748
Band H	18	2,695	5,390	10,088	20,176
Total		956,152	842,621	2,156,917	1,961,432

The number of dwellings expressed is determined by multiplying the number of dwellings in the band by the ratio of the tax proportion for the band to the proportion for band D.

Youth Unemployment

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many 16 and 17-year-olds in *(a)* the Greenock travel-to-work area, *(b)* Strathclyde and *(c)* Scotland as a whole are currently without a job, a place in higher education or a place on a training scheme.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* This information is not available in the form requested. The table shows the numbers of young people aged 17 and under who are unemployed and claiming benefit at employment service offices as at April 1993 in the Greenock travel-to-work area, Strathclyde and Scotland:

Unemployed and claiming benefit as at April 1993

	Aged under 17	Aged 17
Greenock travel-to-work area	11	38
Strathclyde Region	518	1,204
Scotland	937	2,202

Paediatrics

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many consultant paediatricians and senior registrars specialising in paediatrics are in post in hospitals in each of the health boards.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The numbers in whole-time equivalents as at 30 September 1992, the latest date for which information is available, are shown in the table.

Hospital consultants and senior registrars in paediatric specialities (Whole time equivalents) by health board as at 30 September 1992

	Consultants	Senior registrars
Argyll and Clyde	4·0	—
Ayrshire and Arran	5·0	—
Borders	2·0	—
Dumfries and Galloway	2·0	—
Fife	4·0	—
Forth Valley	3·0	—
Grampian	10·3	1·6
Greater Glasgow	23·6	6·0
Highland	2·0	0·6
Lanarkshire	4·0	—
Lothian	19·2	4·6
Orkney	—	—
Shetland	—	—
Tayside	8·9	1·2
Western Isles	—	—

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many of *(a)* consultant paediatricians and *(b)* senior registrars specialising in paediatrics currently employed by each of the health boards were trained in (i) Scotland, (ii) the United Kingdom, (iii) other European Community countries and (iv) countries outwith the EC.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The information is set out in the table.

Number of Consultants and Senior Registrars in Paediatric specialties by health board and country of qualification; as at 30 September 1992

Health Board	Grade and county of qualifaction						
	Consultant				Senior Registrar		
	Scotland	UK	Other EC	Non-EC	Scotland	UK	Non-EC
Argyll and Clyde	4	4	—	—	—	—	—
Ayrshire and Arran	5	5	—	—	—	—	—
Borders	1	2	—	—	—	—	—
Dumfries and Galloway	3	3	—	—	—	—	—
Fife	4	4	—	—	—	—	—
Forth Valley	3	3	—	—	—	—	—
Grampian	6	12	—	—	1	2	—
Greater Glasgow	13	22	1	5	5	6	—
Highland	2	2	—	—	—	1	—
Lanarkshire	4	4	—	1	—	—	—
Lothian	14	24	—	1	3	6	—
Orkney	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shetland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tayside	6	9	—	1	—	1	1
Western Isles	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Notes:

1. Paediatric specialties include medical paediatrics, surgical paediatrics and community child health.
2. Information collected centrally records only the main specialty of a doctor. No information is therefore available on the number of doctors who work in paediatrics but for whom this specialty constitutes an area of 'special interest' (second specialty).

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many vacant posts of consultant paediatricians have been notified by each of the health boards in each of the past five years; on average how long it takes to fill such posts; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* Information on vacant posts is available centrally only if an established post has been vacant for a period of at least six months during the year ending 30 September. For the years ending September 1989 to September 1992, only one such vacancy for consultant paediatrician was notified; it was in Greater Glasgow health board in the year ending 30 September 1991. No information is available centrally for the year ending 30 September 1988.

Midwifery

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the number of *(a)* female and *(b)* male midwifery staff, full-time and part-time, employed by each of the health boards in each of the past six years.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The available information is shown in the tables and includes staff working in hospitals and in the community; community staff whose combined duties cover midwifery are also included. Midwives on senior nurse or teaching grades cannot be identified by specialty and are therefore not included.

Table 1
Midwifery staff by gender and health board at 30 September 1987

	Scotland	Argyll and Clyde	Ayrshire and Arran	Borders	Dumfries and Galloway	Fife	Forth Valley	Grampian	Greater Glasgow	Highland	Lanarkshire	Lothian	Orkney	Shetland	Tayside	Western Isles
Qualified	3,954	358	278	91	143	202	215	394	693	262	361	429	32	31	393	72
Female	3,950	358	276	91	143	202	215	394	693	262	361	428	32	31	392	72
Whole-time	2,497	207	160	68	92	93	141	252	488	158	200	307	26	28	239	38
Part-time	1,453	151	116	23	51	109	74	142	205	104	161	121	6	3	153	34
Male	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Whole-time	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In training	992	72	61	0	25	52	75	79	253	27	87	187	0	0	74	0
Female	984	72	61	0	24	51	75	79	251	27	86	186	0	0	72	0
Whole-time	984	72	61	0	24	51	75	79	251	27	86	186	0	0	72	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Male	8	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	2	0
Whole-time	8	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	2	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unqualified	1,373	176	94	4	40	73	81	103	343	40	114	197	4	2	102	0
Female	1,372	176	94	4	40	73	81	103	343	39	114	197	4	2	102	0
Whole-time	374	33	16	3	3	5	23	21	128	12	57	44	0	1	28	0
Part-time	998	143	78	1	37	68	58	82	215	27	57	153	4	1	74	0
Male	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whole-time	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2
Midwifery staff by gender and health board at 31 March 1988

	Scotland	Argyll and Clyde	Ayrshire and Arran	Borders	Dumfries and Galloway	Fife	Forth Valley	Grampian	Greater Glasgow	Highland	Lanarkshire	Lothian	Orkney	Shetland	Tayside	Western Isles
Qualified	3,988	367	295	91	144	198	219	402	706	268	355	441	30	29	375	68
Female	3,985	367	294	91	144	198	219	402	706	268	355	440	30	29	374	68
Whole-time	2,499	200	173	69	90	93	149	256	492	158	193	316	22	25	227	36
Part-time	1,486	167	121	22	54	105	70	146	214	110	162	124	8	4	147	32
Male	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Whole-time	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In training	999	73	59	0	28	51	75	78	252	28	83	193	0	0	79	0
Female	989	73	59	0	27	50	74	78	249	28	81	193	0	0	77	0
Whole-time	987	73	58	0	27	50	74	78	249	28	80	193	0	0	77	0
Part-time	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Male	10	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
Whole-time	10	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unqualified	1,341	177	93	4	41	71	79	103	336	42	100	192	4	2	97	0
Female	1,340	177	93	4	41	71	79	103	336	41	100	192	4	2	97	0
Whole-time	353	34	16	3	3	5	20	21	123	11	46	44	0	1	26	0
Part-time	987	143	77	1	38	66	59	82	213	30	54	148	4	1	71	0
Male	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

	Scotland	Argyll and Clyde	Ayrshire and Arran	Borders	Dumfries and Galloway	Fife	Forth Valley	Grampian	Greater Glasgow	Highland	Lanarkshire	Lothian	Orkney	Shetland	Tayside	Western Isles
Whole-time	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3
Midwifery staff by gender and health board at 30 September 1989

	Scotland	Argyll and Clyde	Ayrshire and Arran	Borders	Dumfries and Galloway	Fife	Forth Valley	Grampian	Greater Glasgow	Highland	Lanarkshire	Lothian	Orkney	Shetland	Tayside	Western Isles
Qualified	3,996	364	267	106	140	200	208	407	716	300	342	446	28	33	363	74
Female	3,994	364	267	108	140	200	208	407	715	300	342	445	28	33	363	74
Whole-time	2,566	201	156	86	93	102	136	258	526	176	192	323	23	24	231	39
Part-time	1,428	163	111	22	47	98	72	149	189	124	150	122	5	9	132	35
Male	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Whole-time	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In training	910	64	57	0	29	53	58	68	242	28	81	178	0	0	52	0
Female	906	64	57	0	29	53	58	68	242	28	79	177	0	0	51	0
Whole-time	906	64	57	0	29	53	58	68	242	28	79	177	0	0	51	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Male	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0
Whole-time	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unqualified	1,180	160	82	21	39	67	69	97	323	39	79	107	4	2	91	0
Female	1,180	160	82	21	39	67	69	97	323	39	79	107	4	2	91	0
Whole-time	308	31	16	9	3	5	17	18	128	10	27	21	0	1	22	0
Part-time	872	129	66	12	36	62	52	79	195	29	52	86	4	1	69	0
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whole-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 4
Midwifery staff by gender and health board at 30 September 1990

	Scotland	Argyll and Clyde	Ayrshire and Arran	Borders	Dumfries and Galloway	Fife	Forth Valley	Grampian	Greater Glasgow	Highland	Lanarkshire	Lothian	Orkney	Shetland	Tayside	Western Isles
Qualified	4,053	375	271	101	159	204	220	420	709	289	346	444	29	34	383	69
Female	4,047	375	271	101	159	203	220	419	708	289	344	444	29	34	382	69
Whole-time	2,549	203	149	79	96	97	137	261	525	167	194	326	24	25	231	35
Part-time	1,498	172	122	22	63	106	83	158	183	122	150	118	5	9	151	34
Male	6	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
Whole-time	6	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In training	781	51	55	0	23	48	51	65	174	27	73	167	0	0	47	0
Female	779	51	54	0	23	47	51	65	174	27	73	167	0	0	47	0
Whole-time	777	51	54	0	23	47	51	65	172	27	73	167	0	0	47	0
Part-time	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Male	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whole-time	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unqualified	1,129	146	80	21	39	61	56	103	304	37	78	107	4	2	91	0
Female	1,129	146	80	21	39	61	56	103	304	37	78	107	4	2	91	0
Whole-time	277	27	17	9	4	2	10	17	117	8	25	21	0	1	19	0
Part-time	852	119	63	12	35	59	46	86	187	29	53	86	4	1	72	0
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whole-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 5
Midwifery staff by gender and health board at 30 September 1991

	Scotland	Argyll and Clyde	Ayrshire and Arran	Borders	Dumfries and Galloway	Fife	Forth Valley	Grampian	Greater Glasgow	Highland	Lanarkshire	Lothian	Orkney	Shetland	Tayside	Western Isles
Qualified	4,215	399	288	96	164	213	233	431	762	311	347	449	29	36	396	61
Female	4,211	399	288	96	164	213	232	431	761	311	345	449	29	36	396	61
Whole-time	2,562	210	165	80	91	100	135	250	505	187	195	323	23	26	244	28
Part-time	1,649	189	123	16	73	113	97	181	256	124	150	126	6	10	152	33
Male	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Whole-time	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	Scotland	Argyll and Clyde	Ayrshire and Arran	Borders	Dumfries and Galloway	Fife	Forth Valley	Grampian	Greater Glasgow	Highland	Lanarkshire	Lothian	Orkney	Shetland	Tayside	Western Isles
In training	657	46	59	0	26	32	47	60	98	25	60	142	0	0	62	0
Female	654	45	58	0	26	32	46	60	98	25	60	142	0	0	62	0
Whole-time	652	45	56	0	26	31	46	60	98	25	60	142	0	0	62	0
Part-time	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Male	3	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whole-time	3	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unqualified	1,198	143	80	22	34	69	71	106	309	38	80	157	4	2	81	2
Female	1,198	143	80	22	34	69	71	106	309	38	80	157	4	2	81	2
Whole-time	315	30	16	8	3	3	15	21	126	8	24	39	0	1	19	2
Part-time	883	113	64	14	31	66	56	85	183	30	56	118	4	1	62	0
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whole-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	—	—

Table 6
Midwifery staff by gender and health board at 30 September 1992

	Scotland	Argyll and Clyde	Ayrshire and Arran	Borders	Dumfries and Galloway	Fife	Forth Valley	Grampian	Greater Glasgow	Highland	Lanarkshire	Lothian	Orkney	Shetland	Tayside	Western Isles
Qualified	4,313	420	272	101	157	220	299	452	732	313	345	463	27	33	420	59
Female	4,304	419	272	101	157	219	297	452	730	313	343	463	27	33	419	59
Whole-time	2,502	208	147	80	82	95	132	247	509	181	187	317	23	25	242	27
Part-time	1,802	211	125	21	75	124	165	205	221	132	156	146	4	8	177	32
Male	9	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
Whole-time	6	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
Part-time	3	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In training	316	31	51	0	25	26	29	66	63	25	31	124	0	0	45	0
Female	512	31	51	0	24	26	28	66	63	24	31	123	0	0	45	0
Whole-time	511	31	50	0	24	26	28	66	63	24	31	123	0	0	45	0
Part-time	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Male	4	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Whole-time	4	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unqualified	1,210	133	75	21	26	66	70	114	350	38	73	149	4	2	87	2
Female	1,205	133	75	21	26	66	70	114	346	38	73	149	4	2	86	2
Whole-time	324	29	11	7	3	3	13	22	145	8	23	38	0	1	19	2
Part-time	881	104	64	14	23	63	57	92	201	30	50	111	4	1	67	0
Male	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Whole-time	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Students on 1992[1] programmes in midwifery	121	14	14	0	0	11	20	0	18	0	20	9	0	0	15	0
Female	120	14	14	0	0	11	19	0	18	0	20	9	0	0	15	0
Male	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

[1] Student midwife data are as at 31 October 1992; some students are not funded directly by health boards and all are shown by geographical location of their College.

Labour Statistics

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many people in *(a)* the Greenock travel-to-work area, *(b)* Strathclyde and *(c)* Scotland have been unemployed for 12 months or longer.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The latest Employment Department figures show that in April 1993 the number of claimants unemployed for 12 months or more in the Greenock travel-to-work area, Strathclyde and Scotland was 2,019, 50,853 and 86,591 respectively.

Scottish Arts Council

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) what recent discussions he has held with the chairman of the Scottish Arts Council concerning the role of the council in relation to the determination of such moneys which may come its way from the national lottery; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what recent discussions he has held with the chairman of the Scottish Arts Council concerning the council's role and functions; and if he will make a statement;

(3) what recent discussions he has held with the chairman of the Scottish Arts Council concerning *(a)* the future size and composition of the membership of the council and *(b)* regional representation on the council; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Hector Monro *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Inverclyde Enterprise Zone

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if it is his intention to apply for European structural funds for the proposed development at the Parklea (Kelburn) site in the Inverclyde enterprise zone; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* A decision on whether to apply for structural funds assistance for the proposed development is a matter for the project sponsor or sponsors.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what environmental assessment has been undertaken on the proposed development at the Parklea (Kelburn) site in the Inverclyde enterprise zone; what is the impact of the proposals in Parklea on the wildlife conservation value of the site; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* A lengthy study was conducted by Paisley college to assess the possible effect of reclamation of the Parklea site on its wildlife, and in particular its birdlife. The hon. Member can obtain a copy of the report, should he wish to do so, from Inverclyde district council.

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if the Parklea (Kelburn) site in the Inverclyde enterprise zone is designated as having any wildlife conservation interest; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Stewart *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* The foreshore at the Parklea (Kelburn) site is part of the Erskine-Langbank site of special scientific interest which was notified by the Nature Conservancy Council on 29 October 1984 in respect of the ornithological interest of the area. The site of special scientific interest forms part of the section of the inner Clyde estuary which was proposed by the council for designation as a special protection area by my right hon. Friend under the EC directive on the conservation of wild birds—79/409/EEC—and as a site under the Ramsar convention on wetlands of international importance.

Witnesses (Video Links)

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland on how many cases at the sheriff court and the High Court video link equipment has been employed in order to allow for the examination of child witnesses outwith the court in each of the past three years; in which courts these trials took place; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* Section 56 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990 which provides for the giving of evidence by a child by live television links came into force on 30 September 1991 and had been used in 16 cases up to 1 June 1993 the latest date for which figures are available. The table sets out the courts in which the trials took place by year:

	[1]1991	1992	[2]1993
High Court, Edinburgh	0	3	1
High Court, Glasgow	0	5	4
Sheriff Court, Edinburgh	0	0	1
Sheriff Court, Glasgow	0	1	1

[1] October to December.
[2] January to May.

Child Witnesses

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland in how many cases at the sheriff court and the High Court a screen has been used in order to shield child witnesses from those being proceeded against in each of the past three years; and if he will make a statement.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton *[holding answer 26 July 1993]:* I shall write to the hon. Member and arrange for a copy of the letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Cyprus

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last met President Clerides of Cyprus; what subjects were discussed; when he next expects to meet him; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, together with the Prime Minister, last met President Clerides on 23 March. Discussion included the UN-sponsored inter-communal talks, the application of Cyprus to join the EC, and arrangements for Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting—CHOGM. The next confirmed meeting with President Clerides is at CHOGM in October, although an opportunity may arise sooner.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if it is the policy of Her Majesty's Government to encourage the British high commissioner to Cyprus to seek visits into the occupied northern area of Cyprus of British hon. Members who may be visiting the island; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: As a courtesy to visiting parliamentarians, our high commissioner in Nicosia offers to arrange appointments with members of either Cypriot community or both. It is our policy to maintain contacts with both communities.

Treaties

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the treaties signed by Her Majesty's Government in 1992, giving for each treaty the date of signature and the date on which instruments of ratification were deposited, where appropriate.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: The treaties signed by Her Majesty's Government in 1992 are listed in the table.

Two of these have been ratified. An instrument of ratification for protocol No. 10 of the convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms was deposited on 9 March 1993 and instruments of ratification for the convention on social security with Barbados were exchanged at London on 27 February 1992.

Multi-lateral treaties

Instrument and Title	*Date of United Kingdom signature*
European Convention on the Protection of the Archeological Heritage (revised). Signed at Valletta on 16 January 1992.	16 January 1992
Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level. Signed at Strasbourg 5 February 1992.	5 February 1992
Treaty on European Union. Signed at Maastricht 7 February 1992.	7 February 1992
Onchocerciasis Fund Agreement 1992. Signed at Washington 25 February 1992.	25 February 1992
Convention on the Protection and the Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. Signed at Helsinki 18 March 1992.	18 March 1992
Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents. Signed at Helsinki 17 March 1992.	18 March 1992
Treaty on Open Skies. Signed at Helsinki 24 March 1992.	24 March 1992
Protocol No. 10 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Signed at Strasbourg 25 March 1992.	25 March 1992
Instrument of Ratification deposited on 9 March 1993.	
Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas. Signed at New York 17 March 1992.	16 April 1992
Agreement on the European Economic area with Protocols 1-49, Annexes I-XXII and Final Act. Signed at Oporto 2 May 1992.	2 May 1992
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Adopted at Nairobi 9 May 1992.	12 June 1992
Convention on Biological Diversity. Adopted at Nairobi 11 May 1992.	12 June 1992
Convention on the Accession of the Kingdom of Spain and the Portuguese Republic to the Convention on the Law Applicable to Contractual Obligations, opened for signature in Rome 19 June 1980. Signed at Funchal 18 May 1992.	18 May 1992
Convention on Revising the Convention setting up a European University Institute. Signed at Florence 18 June 1992.	18 June 1992
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic. Signed at Paris on 22 September 1992.	3 November 1992
European Convention on Cinematographic Co-Production. Signed at Strasbourg 2 October 1992.	5 November 1992
Second Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Extradition of 13 December 1957. Signed at Strasbourg 17 March 1978.	9 November 1992
Protocol of Accession of the Hellenic Republic to the Western European Union, with an Annex. Signed at Rome 20 November 1992.	20 November 1992
Protocol of 1992 to Amend the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969 – with Final Act.	27 November 1992
Decision taken by Common Agreement between the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on the location of the Seats of the Institutions and of Certain Bodies and Departments of the European Communities. Signed at Edinburgh 12 December 1992.	12 December 1992

Bilateral Treaties

Instrument and Title	*Dates of Signature*
Argentina	
Agreement concerning Air Services.	Buenos Aires 24 January 1992
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Argentina Debt Agreement No. 3 (1989)).	London 17 March 1992
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Argentina Debt Agreement No. 4 (1991)).	London 17 March 1992
Australia	
Exchange of Notes amending the Agreement on Social Security signed at London on 1 October 1990.	Canberra 22 April 1992
Austria	
Second Supplementary Convention to the Convention on Social Security between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Austria.	London 13 October 1992
Barbados	
Convention on Social Security with Protocol	London 7 January 1992
Instrument of Ratification deposited on 27 February 1992.	
Bolivia	
Exchange of Notes amending the United Kingdom/Bolivia Loan No. 1 1973 (The United Kingdom/Bolivia Retrospective Terms Agreement 1992)).	La Paz 14 April 1992 and 9 June 1992
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Bolivia Debt Agreement No. 4 (1992)).	La Paz 30 July 1992 and 8 September 1992
Exchange of Notes extending the Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments done at La Paz on 24 May 1988 to the Isle of Man, the Turks and Caicos Islands, Bermuda and the Bailiwicks of Guernsey and Jersey.	La Paz 3 December 1992 and 9 December 1992

Instrument and Title	Dates of Signature
Bulgaria	
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Bulgaria Debt Agreement No. 1 (1991).	Sofia 30 September 1992 and 14 October 1992
Burkina Faso	
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Burkina Faso Debt Agreement No. 1 (1991)).	Abidjan/ Ouagadougou 27 November 1991 and 13 January 1992
Canada	
Exchange of Notes amending the Treaty on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters signed at Ottawa on 22 June 1988.	London 26 March 1992
Colombia	
Exchange of Notes further amending the Air Services Agreement signed at Bogota on 16 October 1947.	Bogota 16 December 1991 and 13 January 1992
Costa Rica	
Exchange of Notes concerning the United Kingdom/Costa Rica Debt Rescheduling Agreement 1992.	San Jose 16 November 1992 and 20 November 1992
Cote D'Ivoire	
Agreement concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/Cote d'Ivoire Debt Agreement No. 6 (1991)).	Abidjan 9 July 1992 and 30 July 1992
Cyprus	
Exchange of Notes concerning the Berengaria Estate at Limassol.	Nicosia 18 May 1992
Ecuador	
Agreement concerning Mutual Assistance in relation to Drug Trafficking.	Quito 7 May 1992
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Ecuador Debt Agreement No. 5 (1992)).	London 30 July 1992
Estonia	
Exchange of Notes concerning the Settlement of Outstanding Claims and Financial Issues.	Tallinn 26 March 1992
Finland	
Exchange of Notes amending the Agreement for Air Services between and beyond their Respective Territories, done at London on 25 March 1965.	Helsinki 13 April 1992 and 17 June 1992
Exchange of Notes further amending the Convention on Social Security signed at London on 12 December 1978.	London 14 October 1992
France	
Exchange of Notes concerning the Activities of Fishermen in the vicinity of the Channel Islands and the French Coast of the Cotentin Peninsular and, in particular, on the Schole Bank.	Paris 10 July 1992

Instrument and Title	Dates of Signature
Gabon	
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Gabon Debt Agreement No. 4 (1991))	Paris and Librevill 19 March 1992
Grenada	
Exchange of Notes extending the Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments done at London on 25 February 1988 to the Isle of Man, Gibraltar, the Turks and Caicos Islands, Bermuda and the Bailiwicks of Guernsey and Jersey.	Bridgetown and St. George 16 July 1992 and 20 July 1992
Guyana	
Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and Capital Gains.	Georgetown 30 August 1992
Exchange of Notes extending the Promotion and Protection of Investments Agreement, 27 October 1989, to the Isle of Man, Gibraltar, the Turks and Caicos Islands, Bermuda and the Bailiwicks of Guernsey and Jersey.	Georgetown 15 September 1992 and 22 September 1992
Honduras	
Exchange of Notes concerning the United Kingdom/Honduras Retrospective Terms Adjustment Agreement 1992	Tegucigalpa 31 August 1992
Hungary	
Agreement on the Establishment of Activities of Cultural Centres.	Budapest 11 March 1992
Iceland	
Exchange of Notes amending the Convention on Social Security signed at Reykjavik on 25 August 1983.	London 6 October 1992 and 26 October 1992
India	
Extradition Treaty.	London 22 September 1992
Agreement concerning the Investigation and Prosecution of Crime and the Tracing, Restraint and Confiscation of the Proceeds and Instruments of Crime (including Crimes Involving Currency Transfer) and Terrorist Funds.	London 22 September 1992
Ireland	
Protocol Supplementary to the Agreement concerning the Delimitation of Areas of the Continental Shelf between the two countries signed at Dublin on 7 November 1988.	Dublin 8 December 1992
Japan	
Exchange of Notes further amending the Schedule annexed to the Air Services Agreement of 29 December 1952.	Tokyo 29 May 1992
Jordan	
Exchange of Notes amending the United Kingdom/Jordan Loan Agreement 1987.	Amman 26 March 1992

Instrument and Title	Dates of Signature
Exchange of Notes consolidating Certain Loans made by the United Kingdom to Jordan (The United Kingdom/Jordan Rescheduling Agreement 1992).	Amman 6 December 1992
Lithuania	
Exchange of Notes concerning the Transfer of Gold from the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to Lietuvos Bankas (The Bank of Lithuania).	Vilnius 27 March 1992
Miscellaneous	
Agreement between the Three Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Kingdom of The Netherlands and the Government of the United States of America regarding the Establishment, Construction and Operation of a Uranium Enrichment Installation in the United States.	Washington 24 July 1992
Morocco	
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Morocco Debt Agreement No. 6 (1992)).	Rabat 1 September 1992 and 7 September 1992
Agreement in the form of an Exchange of Letters concerning the Provisional Application of the Agreement on Relations in the Sea Fisheries Sector initialled in Brussels on 15 May 1992.	Brussels 21 December 1992
Agreement on Relations in the Sea Fisheries Sector.	Brussels 21 December 1992
The Netherlands	
Agreement relating to the Exploitation of the Markham Field Reservoirs and the Offtake of Petroleum therefrom.	The Hague 26 May 1992
Nicaragua	
Exchange of Notes amending the Treaty of Friendship Commerce and Navigation with Nicaragua signed at Managua on 28 July 1905.	Managua 04 April 1992
Exchange of Notes concerning the United Kingdom/Nicaragua Debt Rescheduling Agreement 1992.	Managua 07 October 1992 and 13 October 1992
Exchange of Notes amending the Treaty of Friendship Commerce and Navigation with Nicaragua signed at Managua on 28 July 1905.	Managua 09 April 1992
Norway	
Exchange of Notes concerning the Proposed Export by British Nuclear Fuels plc to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Halden Reactor Project, Oslo, of Uranium Oxide Powder.	Oslo 22 January 1992
Exchange of Notes amending the convention on Social Security signed at Oslo on 19 June 1990.	London 30 September 1992 and 05 November 1992
Peru	
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain Commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Peru Debt Agreement No. 3 (1991)).	London 17 September 1992
Philippines	
Exchange of Notes concerning the United Kingdom Debt Rescheduling Agreement No. 1 1992.	Manila 23 December 1992
Exchange of Notes concerning the United Kingdom/Philippines Debt Rescheduling Agreement No. 2 1992.	Manila 23 December 1992
Exchange of Notes concerning the United Kingdom/Philippines Debt Rescheduling Agreement No. 3 1992.	Manila 23 December 1992
Poland	
Exchange of Notes concerning the Abolition of Visas	Warsaw 17 June 1992
Russian Federation	
Exchange of Notes between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Vnescheconombank of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, concerning the Deferral of the Debt of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and its Successors, to Foreign Offical Creditors.	London 05 June 1992
Agreement on Economic Cooperation.	London 9 November 1992
Agreement on the Establishment of Direct Secure Telephone Links between 10 Downing Street in London and the Kremlin in Moscow.	London 9 November 1992
Treaty on the Principles of Relations.	London 9 November 1992
Senegal	
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Senegal Debt Agreement No. 9 (1991)).	Dakar 18 March 1992 and 9 April 1992
South Africa	
Agreement for Air Services between and beyond their Respective Territories.	London 11 August 1992
Agreement concerning Mutual Assistance in Relation to Drug Trafficking.	Pretoria 2 September 1992
Sweden	
Exchange of Notes amending the Convention on Social Security signed at Stockholm on 29 June 1987.	London 30 September 1992 and 20 October 1992
Switzerland	
Exchange of Notes further Amending the Agreement for Air Services between and beyond their respective Territories, done at London on 5 April 1950.	Berne 2 November 1992 and 23 November 1992

Instrument and Title	Dates of Signature
Tanzania	
Exchange of Notes concerning Certain commercial Debts (The United Kingdom/ Tanzania Debt Agreement No. 4 (1992)).	Dar es Salaam 24 August 1992
Uganda	
Convention for the Avoidance of double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital Gains.	Kampala 23 December 1992
United Arab Emirates	
Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	Dubai 8 December 1992
United States of America	
Exchange of Notes amending the Agreement for Financing of certain Programmes of Educational and Cultural Exchange signed in London on 10 May 1965.	London 11 September 1992 and 23 September 1992
Exchange of Notes extending the Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the United States of America concerning the Investigation of Drug Trafficking Offences and the Seizure and Forfeiture of Proceeds and Instrumentalities of Drug Trafficking, signed at London on 9 February 1988, to Gibraltar	London 30 September 1992
Exchange of Notes extending the Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the United States of America concerning the Investigation of drug Trafficking Offences and the Seizure and Forfeiture of Proceeds and Instrumentalities of Drug Trafficking, signed at London on 9 February 1988, to the Isle of Man	London 30 September 1992
Uruguay	
Agreement on Legal Assistance in Relation to Drug Trafficking between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay	Montevideo 23 January 1992

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the treaties to which Her Majesty's Government acceded in 1992, giving for each treaty the date on which instruments of accession were deposited.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We did not accede to any treaty in 1992.

India

Mr. Madden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he is making to the Government of India to provide immediate free access to India without conditions to reputable international human rights organisations to investigate human rights violations; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: We have been urging the Indian Government for some time to allow access by human rights organisations. We therefore welcome the recent decision of the Indian Government to allow certain human rights organisations to visit India and hope that such visits will take place in the near future.

EC Committee of the Regions

Mrs. Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will detail the criteria used in deciding the allocation of membership throughout the United Kingdom for the Committee of the Regions;

(2) if he will detail the mechanisms to be observed for nomination and designation of membership of the European Community Committee of the Regions;

(3) if he will list the number of members to be allocated to the European Committee of the Regions for *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Northern Ireland.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Of the 24 United Kingdom seats on the Committee of the Regions, 14 will be allocated to England, five to Scotland, three to Wales and two to Northern Ireland. This allocation will best meet the objectives for the Committee of the Regions, as set out in the treaty on European union.

Nominations for England will be handled by the Secretary of State for the Environment and, for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, by the respective Secretaries of State.

Northern Cyprus

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what records are kept of hon. Members who have visited northern Cyprus in the course of the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: There is no attempt at systematic or exhaustive monitoring of the movements of hon. Members.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice he gives to hon. Members or delegations of hon. Members from the United Kingdom who visit Cyprus as to the advisability of visiting the occupied area of northern Cyprus during their visit; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: As a courtesy to visiting parliamentarians, our high commissioner in Nicosia offers to arrange appointments with members of either Cypriot Community or both. It is our policy to maintain contacts with both communities.

Immigration

Mr. Madden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when a decision is to be taken on the application made by Mrs. Jahan Ara Khan—Ref: IMM/B5808—at the post at Islamabad to join her husband in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: In the absence of any information about this case, I have asked the high commission in Islamabad for a full report. I shall arrange for the hon. Member to receive a substantive reply from the migration and visa correspondence unit of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as soon as possible.

EC Economic and Social Committee

Mr. Nigel Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what nominations he has made to the European Community Economic and Social Committee to fill the vacancies which occurred during 1992.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Candidates have been selected to fill the vacancies which occurred last year and a further vacancy this year. The candidates have been informed of their nomination. Their details will shortly be passed to the Council secretariat for formal approval by the Council of Ministers.

Recess Dates

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has as to which of the legislatures of the G7 countries operate a system of fixed recess dates.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: Canada, France, Germany, Japan and the United States agree recess dates annually, but have a provision to extend or recall the legislature to meet urgent needs as required.

Westminster Foundation for Democracy

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library a copy of the annual report of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Copies of the foundation's first annual report were placed in the Library today.

In its first 13 months, with funding of £1·2 million, the foundation supported about 140 projects in 32 countries, ranging from the provision of an adviser to the President of Albania to the training of Russian ex-army officers as social workers. The average cost of each project was £13,500. We welcome the diversity of the foundation's projects, and its commitment to continuous improvement in the already high degree of their cost-effectiveness.

THORP

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what international representations Her Majesty's Government have received from non-governmental organisations and individuals regarding potential proliferation and safety risks posed by the thermal oxide reprocessing plant facility at Sellafield.

Mr. Yeo: I have been asked to reply.

Many of the responses from outside the United Kingdom to the public consultation on the draft authorisations for the Sellafield site mentioned these issues.

Mr. Colvin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what international security factors are to be taken into account in Her Majesty's Government's consideration of whether or not to commission the thermal oxide reprocessing plant for the manufacture of commercial domestic plutonium for sale in world markets.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: In accordance with the House of Commons resolution of 28 June, Her Majesty's Governemnt has confidence in the non-proliferation arrangements that underlie THORP's work for overseas customers. Such arrangements include our obligations and those of our customers under the non-proliferation treaty and the nuclear suppliers group guidelines. We would allow the export of plutonium from reprocessing only if we had received satisfactory assurances that it would be used only for peaceful, non-explosive purposes.

All shipments of plutonium from the United Kingdom will meet international requirements on safety, physical protection and safeguards for such exports.

Secret Intelligence Service

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will publish a brochure on the Secret Intelligence Service along the lines of the brochure recently published on the Security Service.

Mr. Hurd: Legislation will be brought forward during this Parliament to put the Secret Intelligence Service and GCHQ on a statutory footing. I cannot yet say what information we will make available on these agencies.

Croatia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in what circumstances her Majesty's Government will agree to the imposition of sanctions against the republic of Croatia; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Faber: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will consult EC Foreign Ministers with a view to the imposition of full economic and diplomatic sanctions against the republic of Croatia;

(2) what effect action by the Croatian army against neighbouring states will have on diplomatic recognition and economic assistance to the republic of Croatia;

(3) if Her Majesty's Government will sponsor a United Nations Security Council resolution leading to full economic and diplomatic sanctions against the republic of Croatia forthwith; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: European Community Foreign Ministers agreed on 19 July to consider the withdrawal of Croatia's preferential trade benefits with the Community in the light of Croatia's involvement in the conflict in Bosnia. Further measures against Croatia have not been ruled out, but are not at present under consideration.

Mr. Faber: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has received from the United Nations of the presence of brigades of the regular Croatian army in the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina; and whether such action will be treated as aggression by one state against another for the purpose of United Nations rules.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: There is evidence that Croatian Government forces are engaged in the conflict in Bosnia. European Community Foreign Ministers agreed on 19 July to consider the withdrawal of Croatian preferential trade benefits with the Community in the light of Croatia's involvement in the conflict in Bosnia.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to raise with the German Foreign Minister the question of future sanctions against Croatia; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs discussed Croatia with Herr Kinkel on 15 July as well as during the meeting of EC Foreign Ministers in Brussels on 19 July. The subject is likely to arise again when he is next in touch with Herr Kinkel.

Mr. Faber: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the extent to which the republic of Croatia has met the requirements set by the London conference; and what steps Her Majesty's Government intend to take to ensure that these obligations are met.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: I refer my hon. Friend the Member to the reply that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave the hon. Member for Liverpool, West Derby, (Mr. Wareing) on 16 July, *Official Report*, column *688*.

Mr. Faber: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations were made by Herr Klaus Kinkel, German Foreign Minister, at the EC meeting of Foreign Ministers on 19 July in relation to Croatia and economic and diplomatic sanctions.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The question whether to withdraw the preferential trading benefits that Croatia enjoys with the European Community was discussed by all Foreign Ministers, including Herr Kinkel. It was agreed to consider the withdrawal of these benefits in the light of Croatian Government involvement in the fighting in Bosnia.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Croatian Government regarding the deportation by Bosnian-Croat forces of Bosnian Muslims to third nations.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: No specific representations have been made. We have made repeatedly clear to the Croatian Government that they must use their influence with the Bosnian Croats to press for an end to the fighting and to prevent further atrocities, including forced movement of populations.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what plans Her Majesty's Government have made to take action against the republic of Croatia in the event of its continuing aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina; and if he will make a statement;

(2) if Her Majesty's Government will oppose the imposition of sanctions against the republic of Croatia in the absence of a change of policy by the Croatian Government towards Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosnian Croats; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The international community continues to watch closely for further evidence of the involvement of Croatian Government forces in the fighting in Bosnia. Our policy will continue to be influenced by such reports. As Heads of Government at the Group of Seven summit in Tokyo on 7 to 9 July made clear, stronger measures against Croatia and Serbia cannot be excluded.

Mr. Faber: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to summon the Croatian ambassador or to send a demand to Zagreb in respect of Croatian army invasion of a neighbouring sovereign state.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have repeatedly raised with the Croatian authorities their involvement in the conflict in Bosnia, most recently on 21 July, when the Belgian Foreign Minister, Mr. Claes, as European Community President, saw President Tudjman in Zagreb.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has had from UN sources on joint action by Croatian Government and Bosnian Croat forces to displace Bosnian Muslims from around Mostar and the establishment of transit camps; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: There is evidence that Croatian Government forces are providing active support in Bosnia for the Bosnian Croat forces, including in the Mostar area.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees regarding possible assistance by the Croatian Government in the forced deportation of Bosnian Muslims from Bosnia-Herzegovina; what requests have been made by Bosnian-Croat and Croatian Government officials to the UNHCR requesting assistance facilitating the deportation of Muslims from Bosnia-Herzegovina; and if he will publish the UNHCR's response.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: No reports have been received from the UNHCR to date. But the UNHCR has undertaken to write to Her Majesty's Government detailing any such requests she has received. A copy of their letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Yugoslavia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what are the requirements for *(a)* the removal of sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and *(b)* the imposition of sanctions against the republic of Croatia; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The conditions to be fulfilled by Serbia and Montenegro in order for sanctions to be lifted are spelt out in the relevant Security Council resolutions. There are no specific requirements for the imposition of sanctions, which must be judged in the light of circumstances. With respect to the possible imposition of sanctions on Croatia, European Community Foreign Ministers agreed on 19 July to consider the withdrawal of Croatia's preferential trade benefits with the Community in the light of Croatia's involvement in the conflict in Bosnia.

Armenia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the extent of the implementation by the republic of Armenia of the CSCE agreement calling for a 60-day ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh, and the withdrawal of Armenian troops from Kelbadjn in Azerbaijan.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: President Ter-Petrossian of Armenia has expressed his support for the CSCE plan and

his willingness to co-operate both with the CSCE and the authorities in Baku to bring about its immediate implementation. Leaders of the local Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh have also agreed to the plan in principle. We have, however, noted with concern that local Armenian forces have apparently attacked and captured Agdam, which is Azerbaijani territory with an exclusively Azeri population. We deplore this escalation of the fighting. We have made clear that the CSCE plan must be implemented as soon as possible.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if Her Majesty's Government will make representations to the Government of the Republic of Armenia over the continued military attacks on Agdam and surrounding areas in violation of the recently signed ceasefire agreement negotiated by the CSCE.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We are disturbed by reports that local Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh have taken advantage of the political uncertainty in Azerbaijan to launch a series of attacks. We note with concern that they have now apparently occupied Agdam, which is Azerbaijani territory with an exclusively Azeri population. We deplore this escalation of the fighting. We have made clear that fighting around Agdam, and elsewhere in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, must cease and that the CSCE peace plan must be implemented as soon as possible.

Israel

Mr. Gapes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his German counterparts on the Arab trade boycott of Israel; and what plans he has for such discussions in the future.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The boycott was discussed with G7 colleagues, including the Germans, at the Tokyo summit, and the political declaration included a statement calling for its end. We have no plans to discuss this further with German colleagues.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what legislative plans he has to prevent United Kingdom companies from complying with the Arab trade boycott of Israel.

Mr. Needham: I have been asked to reply.

Her Majesty's Government have no plans for the introduction of legislation on the Arab boycott of Israel.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Warley, West (Mr. Spellar) of 16 July, *Official Report*, column *725*, what his Department *(a)* has done and *(b)* intends to do in relation to Israel's membership of the Asian regional group at the United Nations; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have made our views clear on this issue, and will continue to do so.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will support Israel's admission to PREPCOM of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, in the Hague; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Israel is already a member of the preparatory commission of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons—OPCW—in The Hague. We welcome Israel's signature of the chemical weapons convention and participation in the OPCW PREPCOM. We are working with Israel and other signatory states for the speedy and effective implementation of the convention.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department *(a)* has done and *(b)* intends to do in ensuring the Arab states maintain their commitment to abandon the Arab trade boycott of Israel.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Under the United Kingdom presidency, the EC initiated a demarche to Arab States urging them to lift the boycott. We continue to urge them to do so.

Bosnia

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *18*, whether previous investigations into allegations of rape as a tool of war in Bosnia-Herzegovina applied equally to such crimes committed by members of all groups involved in the conflict.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Investigations carried out by a range of non-governmental and international organisations and special missions into sexual abuse of women in the Bosnian conflict indicate that such abuse has been carried out by combatants from all parties to the conflict.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *18*, what steps he has taken to collect information on rapes by *(a)* Muslim forces, *(b)* Croat forces and *(c)* Serbian forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina; what are his sources of information; what steps have been taken to ensure the objective collation of evidence, regardless of the ethnic origin of either the perpetrator or the victim; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is collecting substantial information about breaches of international humanitarian law, including information about rape, committed by all parties to the conflict in former Yugoslavia, for submission to the United Nations commission of experts in Geneva. The information collected has come from a variety of sources including non-governmental organisations, the media and individual witnesses.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *18*, if he regards existing investigations into rape as a tool of war in Bosnia-Herzegovina as having given an accurate picture of this practice, regardless of the ethnic origin of either the perpetrator or victim.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: A number of international and non-governmental organisations and special investigative missions, such as the EC mission led by Dame Anne Warburton, have reported on the abuse of women in the Yugoslav conflict. We believe that these reports provide an accurate picture of the situation.

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what information Her Majesty's Government received on the role of Sefer Halilovic, newly appointed commander of the Bosnian Muslim army in his previous commission as a JNA officer leading Yugoslav army units engaged in the siege and destruction of Vukovar;

(2) what information he has as to the identity of the commander of the Bosnian Muslim army; and when this information became available.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The newly appointed commander of the Bosnian Muslim army is Rasim Delic; Sefer Halilovic was the previous commander.

Maastricht

Mr. David Nicholson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will give an estimate of the cost to date to public funds of preparing and representing in the courts Her Majesty's Government's case in relation to the Maastricht treaty.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: The court hearing on the application for judicial review began on 26 July. It is not possible at this stage to give an accurate estimate of the costs of preparing the Government's case.

Nagorno-Karabakh

Mr. Elletson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the current efforts by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to secure a renewed ceasefire in and around Nagorno-Karabakh and the response of the various parties to these endeavours.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: The chairman of the CSCE Minsk conference, Mario Raffaelli, visited the region from 9 to 13 July. Both President Ter-Petrossian of Armenia and acting President Aliev of Azerbaijan expressed support for the early implementation of the CSCE plan and willingness to co-operate with each other. Mr. Raffaelli also paid his first visit to Stepanakert where the local leaders have agreed to the plan in principle. This is, however, at odds with recent reports that local Armenian forces have attacked and apparently captured Agdam, which is Azerbaijani territory with an exclusively Azeri population.

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Goodlad: None.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 6 July, *Official Report*, columns *87-88*, whether his Department maintains a register of the interests declared by chairpersons and board members of executive non-departmental public bodies, available for public inspection at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or at the main offices of the various bodies.

Mr. Goodlad: No. But the Commonwealth Development Corporation publishes information on board members' interests, if any, in its annual accounts.

United Nations

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many new members have been admitted to the United Nations over the past 18 months; how many remain excluded from a regional group; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Twenty-five new members have been admitted to the United Nations since the beginning of 1991. Five of these states—Estonia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia—have not yet joined a regional group. We would expect them to join the geographically most appropriate group in each case in due course.

Foreign Affairs Council

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the outcome of the Foreign Affairs Council held on 19 and 20 July.

Mr. Hurd: I attended the Foreign Affairs Council on 19 July with the Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Office, my hon. Friend the Member for Wells (Mr. Heathcoat-Amory) and my right hon. Friend the Minister for Trade.

In a debate in open session on the presidency's programme, EC colleagues echoed my emphasis on the need to pursue the Edinburgh and Copenhagen initiatives to increase growth, jobs and competitiveness.

The Council adopted six new regulations governing the structural funds. Agreement was also reached on financial allocations for member states' objective 1 regions. The United Kingdom will receive 2·43 becu for the period 1994-99 for its objective 1 regions—Northern Ireland, the highlands and islands of Scotland and Merseyside.

The Council discussed the Commission's draft directive to extend the franchise for European parliamentary elections. Several member states, including the United Kingdom, criticised the draft for being too detailed. The presidency recommended a light directive for the 1994 elections. A revised text will be considered by the October FAC.

The Presidency updated the Council on its discussions with the European Parliament on a new inter-institutional agreement on budget discipline to implement the Edinburgh financial perspective.

Over lunch, Lord Owen briefed Ministers on the latest situation on the ground in ex-Yugoslavia, and on the co-chairmen's continued efforts to identify proposals for a settlement that all three parties could accept. Ministers agreed that the presidency should visit the region as soon as possible in July to underline the EC's support for the co-chairmen. Serbia would be told that their present position remained unacceptable and that sanctions would be maintained, Croatia would be warned that the EC was seriously considering withdrawing Croatia's preferential EC trade access and the Muslims would be encouraged to negotiate. Ministers emphasised the importance of the rigorous implementation of sanctions and the maintenance of humanitarian aid.

Ministers set preparations in hand for consideration of the French proposal for a stability pact with central and eastern Europe. They also briefly discussed recent events in Somalia.

The Commission presented its opinions on the applications of Malta and Cyprus to join the Community. The Council welcomed the Commission's positive messages on Maltese and Cypriot eligibility and European vocation, and asked COREPER to examine the opinions so as to enable the FAC to take a position on the Commission's recommendations at its next meeting in October.

The Council briefly discussed a draft regulation on the control of exports of certain dual-use goods and technologies, and asked COREPER to prepare for further discussion in October.

The Commission reported on the GATT Uruguay round negotiations. The Council welcomed the progress at the Tokyo summit and the resumption of multilateral negotiations in Geneva. At France's request, the presidency will examine the possibility of a joint Council of Foreign Affairs and Agriculture Ministers in September to consider the agricultural aspects of the negotiations. The Council also discussed the anti-dumping and countervailing duties imposed by the United States on imports of EC steel. The Commission will determine what further action should be taken in the light of the International Trade Commission's findings which will be announced on 27 July.

The Council agreed to the conclusion of an EC trade and co-operation agreement, financial protocol and transport agreement with Slovenia.

The Council adopted measures to implement decisions of the 21 to 22 June Copenhagen European Council accelerating trade access to Community markets for the central European associate countries—Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia. The Council also adopted a new regulation to extend the provision of EC technical assistance to the former Soviet Union until the end of 1995.

The Council discussed a Commission proposal to increase Stabex expenditure for 1993, a proposal which the United Kingdom could not accept. The Council asked COREPEPER to consider the issue further.

The presidency and the Commission reported to the Council on the 7 to 9 July G7 summit in Tokyo, and on the 6 July EC/Japan summit.

An EC-Tunisia Co-operation Council was held in the margins, and Ministers discussed European parliamentary commission issues, including events in the former Yugoslavia, with the Tunisian Foreign Minister over dinner. No formal votes were taken.

Sudan

Mr. Simon Coombs: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on Her Majesty's Government's policy towards Sudan; and what representations they are making to the Government of Sudan in relation to this policy.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We have many concerns. Chief among them is the failure to settle the civil war in the south, the continuing humanitarian crisis in many parts of the country and persistent reports of human rights abuses. We take every suitable opportunity to raise these issues with the Government of Sudan, both bilaterally, and with our EC partners and other donor states. A key role is played by Her Majesty's ambassador to Sudan, Mr. Peter Streams, who has tackled skilfully the difficult task of conveying our concerns directly to the authorities in Khartoum. Indeed, Mr. Streams has shown a high degreee of professionalism and competence in carrying out his duties in a testing environment.

Iraq

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the agreement reached between Mr. Ekeus as special representative for the United Nations Security Council and the Iraqi government on 22 July in regard to implementation of UN Security Council resolutions in Iraq.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: Security Council members, including the United Kingdom, have expressed support for Mr. Ekeus' actions. The Security Council, and UNSCOM, will continue to press for sustained Iraqi implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Low Pay

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer of 28 October 1992, *Official Report*, column *736*, if he will give the average equivalised income at April 1993 prices for the poorest 20 per cent. of individuals in households of families with children, excluding and including free school meals, both before and after housing costs.

Mr. Burt: The information requested is in the table. All information is presented according to households below average incomes conventions.

Average median equivalised income at April 1993 prices for the bottom 20 per cent. of individuals in households of families with children

	1979 £	*1988-89* £	*1990-91* £
Before housing costs			
Excluding free school meals	97	98	95
Including free school meals	100	100	96
After housing costs			
Excluding free school meals	80	77	72
Including free school meals	84	79	74

Notes:

1. Income is in equivalised pounds per week.
2. All estimates are subject to sampling error.
3. Families with children include both single parents and couples with children.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Raynsford To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what would have been the change in expenditure on housing benefit in 1993-94 broken down between *(a)* council tenants, *(b)* housing association tenants and *(c)* private tenants if (i) the taper had been set at 80 per cent., (ii) all earnings disregards had been halved and (iii) all non-dependant deductions had been doubled.

Mr. Burt: It is not currently possible to disaggregate expenditure on rent allowance between housing association and private sector tenants. Estimated expenditure, for 1993-94, is that housing benefit of £4,920 million will be in

respect of council tenants in the form of rent rebates and £3,250 million in respect of housing association tenants and private tenants in the form of rent allowances.

If the housing benefit taper were set at 80 per cent., earnings disregards halved and non-dependant deductions doubled, it is estimated that, in 1993-94, expenditure would be £4,565 million in respect of council tenants in the form of rent rebates and £3,020 million in respect of housing association tenants and private tenants in the form of rent allowances.

Notes:
Source: 1989-90-91 Family Expenditure Surveys modelled at 1993-94 prices and benefit levels.
All figures rounded to the nearest £5 million.

Disability Working Allowance

Mr. Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what has been the take-up rate of the disability working allowance since its introduction; what percentage of applications for disability working allowance have been successful; and what percentage of appeals concerning decisions on applications for disability working allowance were successful.

Mr. Scott: The information requested is in the tables.

Claims to disability working allowance from 10 March 1992 to 30 June 1993

	Number
Number received (take-up)	28,766
Number decided	28,380
Number awarded	3,915
Percentage successful	14

Note: The percentage of successful awards on new claims for June 1993 was 30 per cent.

Appeals from 10 March 1992 to 25 June 1993

	Number
Number received	95
Number cleared	58
Number awarded or increased	7
Percentage successful	12

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what has been the take-up rate of the disability living allowance since its introduction; what percentage of applications for disability living allowance were successful; and what percentage of appeals concering decisions on disability living allowance were successful.

Mr. Scott: The information requested is in the tables.

Claims to disability living allowance from 1 February 1992 to 30 June 1993

	Claims
Number received (take-up)	874,034
Number decided	818,930
Number awarded	504,103
Percentage successful	62

Appeals from 1 February 1992 to 30 June 1993

	Appeals
Number received	15,592
Number cleared	1,874
Number awarded or increased	760
Percentage successful	41

Incomes

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the percentage change in income during the period 1979 to the latest date for which information is available before and after housing costs, of each percentile group in the population.

Mr. Burt: Real increases in income between 1979 and 1990-91 for each decile group in the income distribution are provided in the tables; greater disaggregation would not give statistically reliable results. These figures relate to the United Kingdom and are based on income equivalised for household size and composition.

Percentage changes in real income by decile group 1979—1990-91

Decile Group Medians	*Income before housing costs*	*Income after housing costs*
Decile 1	−1	−14
Decile 2	6	0
Decile 3	11	7
Decile 4	17	16
Decile 5	23	—
Decile 6	27	28
Decile 7	31	33
Decile 8	36	38
Decile 9	43	45
Decile 10	58	62

Note: All estimates are subject to sampling error.

Invalidity Benefit

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will give *(a)* the mean income, at April 1993 prices, of those receiving invalidity benefit, *(b)* the mean income of those in the poorest two quintiles receving invalidity benefit and *(c)* the numbers of households in the family expenditure survey to which *(a)* and *(b)* separately apply, and the numbers in the population as a whole which these categories represent, on the basis of the latest households below average income analysis, for 1979 and 1990-91.

Mr. Burt: The information is in the tables.

Average equivalised household income of reported invalidity benefit recipients (£ per week, April 1993 prices)

Income group of total population	*Before housing costs*		*After housing costs*	
	1979	*1990-91*	*1979*	*1990-91*
1st quintile	99	105	81	84
2nd quintile	133	152	113	127
All IVB recipients	141	196	122	178

Notes:
1. IVB recipients include all individuals in benefit units where someone reports receipt of IVB.
2. Average income for all IVB recipients is mean income; for quintile groups median income is used.
3. The quintile averages quoted are the median incomes of IVB recipients in the relevant quintile of the population income distribution.
4. All estimates subject to sampling error.
5. The quintile group results cannot be interpreted as indicating changes in the incomes of IVB recipients; they reflect movements in and out of each overall quintile, as well as changes within a quintile.

Numbers of Households in ungrossed FES with reported receipt of invalidity benefit (sample cases)

Income group of total population	Before housing costs		After housing costs	
	1979	1990-91	1979	1990-91
1st Quintile	69	107	69	104
2nd Quintile	46	173	40	161
All IVB recipients	167	521	167	521

Notes:

1. The figures show the number of households in the FES sample where at least one member reported receipt of invalidity benefit. Quintile groups refer to the whole population income distribution.

Numbers of reported IVB recipients within population income groups (000's)

Income group of total population	Before housing costs		After housing costs	
	1979	1990-91	1979	1990-91
1st Quintile	460	460	460	450
2nd Quintile	330	570	300	540
All IVB recipients	1,130	1,940	1,130	1,940

Notes:

1. The populations given are numbers of individuals in benefit units in receipt of IVB. Quintile groups refer to the whole population income distribution.
2. Estimates of IVB recipients are based on reported receipt in the Family Expenditure Survey and will be subject to sampling error.

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what were the number and proportion of invalidity benefit claims in 1992-93 lasting *(a)* up to six months, *(b)* six months to one year, *(c)* one to two years and *(d)* over two years, broken down by (i) age, (ii) sex and (iii) region.

Mr. Scott: The latest year for which figures are available is 1990-91, but information is not readily available at present. I will write to the hon. Member shortly with such information as is available.

Disability

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *71*, for how many households of long-term sick and disabled beneficiaries in the bottom quintile of income after housing costs no estimate is provided; and on how many occasions quantile data on income provided by the Central Statistical Office in recent years have not been published when the 95 per cent. confidence intervals of plus 9 to plus 30, minus 7 to plus 15 and plus 12 to plus 36 apply.

Mr. Burt: I will write to the hon. Member shortly.

Ms Corston: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer of 19 July, *Official Report*, column *71*, what was the main income at April 1993 prices before and after housing costs, of the poorest quintile and of all households below average income of people who are long-term sick or receiving disability benefits for 1979 and 1990-91.

Mr. Burt: Available estimates are in the table.

Median equivalised household incomes of non-working long-term sick and people declaring receipt of disability benefits (pounds per week).

	1979		1990-91	
	BHC	AHC	BHC	AHC
Bottom Quintile	92	76	96	79
Below average income	133	116	160	143

Notes:

1. The Households Below Average Income (HBAI) dataset, the Family Expenditure Survey (FES), does not identify all long-term sick or disabled people and its identification of receipt of disability benefits is imperfect. The estimates are susceptible to those imperfections as well as sampling errors. The results in the tables may, therefore, reflect changes in the categories of long-term sick or disabled people identified in the FES as well as changes in the incomes of such people.
2. Reliable estimates of the mean income of people in the bottom quintile of this group and of those in households below average income are not available. Below average income refers to the population average income in the relevant year.
3. Disability benefits counted here are Invalidity Benefit, Mobility Allowance and Attendance Allowance and Severe Disability Allowance (1990-91) or Non-Contributory Invalidity Pension (1979).

Mobility Equipment Fund

Mr. Livingstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) what arrangements are made for repayments of mobility equipment fund grants; to what extent recipients are offered a choice of lender and terms; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what plans he has to extend means testing to all levels of grants made under the mobility components of the disability living allowance;

(3) what is his policy on means testing grants from the mobility equipment fund exclusively to meet the costs of major adaptions to vehicles for severely disabled recipients of the mobility component of the disability living allowance; whether the higher rate of the mobility component of the disability living allowance is means tested; and if he will make a statement;

(4) what are the criteria according to which Motability awards grants from the mobility equipment fund; and under what arrangements Motability is accountable to his Department for its distribution of the mobility equipment fund;

(5) what is the total of his Department's current provision including motor tax exemption for *(a)* the mobility component, high rate and *(b)* the mobility equipment fund.

Mr. Scott: Motability is an independent charity; and it is for it to set the criteria for payments from the mobility equipment fund. Like any other charity which receives funds from Government, it is required to show that such funds are used economically, efficiently and effectively and for the purpose for which they were provided. MEF grants are not repayable.

Any question as to the level of motor tax exemption is one for my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The higher rate of the mobility component of the disability living allowance is not means tested.

It is expected that, in 1993-94, £2·184 billion will be spent on disability living allowance. Figures are not available to show the proportion within this figure likely to be spent on the higher rate of the mobility component. The contribution from the Department of Social Security to the MEF for 1993-94 is £2 million.

Lone Parents

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many lone parents were refused budgeting loans as a percentage of the total number of applicants during the year 1992-93.

Mr. Scott: Social fund data are recorded by application rather than by applicant. In 1992-93, the number of applications for a budgeting loan from lone parents which did not result in an award was 11·4 per cent. of all budgeting loan applications received.

Benefits

Dr. Godman: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what was the number of recipients of *(a)* housing benefit, *(b)* income support, *(c)* family credit and *(d)* invalidity benefit in (i) Inverclyde, (ii) Strathclyde and (iii) Scotland as a whole; and the percentage of the eligible population in each area receiving such benefit in each of the last five years.

Mr. Burt: The administration of social security benefits is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Dr. Norman Godman, dated 26 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking what was the number of recipients of *(a)* housing benefit, *(b)* income support, *(c)* family credit and *(d)* invalidity benefit in (i) Inverclyde, (ii) Strathclyde and (iii) Scotland as a whole; and the percentage of the eligible population in each area receiving such benefit in each of the last five years.

The complete range of information you request is either not available or could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. This is because statistics are not routinely collected to reflect the numbers of recipients over a given period. The statistics that are available show the number of recipients at a given point in time. In addition, statistics are not routinely collected for Inverclyde and Strathclyde in respect of Income Support, Family Credit and Invalidity Benefit. The figures available are for the Benefits Agency Districts covering these areas and, as the boundaries of these offices do not correspond exactly with those of the Inverclyde and Strathclyde areas, it would require a manual trawl of benefit records to obtain the information. The information that is available is in the attached appendix.

Finally, take-up figures for income related and Invalidity Benefit are not available on a regional basis. Estimates of the take-up of Income Support, Family Credit and the new unified Housing Benefit for Great Britain were published in "Income Related Benefit Estimates of Take-up in 1989" in January this year. Take-up estimates for the income related benefits that were available before the 1988 benefit reforms are for 1985 and 1987 and are provided in Social Security Statistics 1990 (Table 48) and Social Security Statistics (Table H.5) respectively. Copies of these publications are in the Library. Information for Invalidity benefit is not available.

I hope that you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

APPENDIX TO PQ 3394 1992/93

Family Credit

Figures prior to May 1990 are not available since this information is routinely destroyed. This information has been supplied by the Family Credit Unit.

Date	*Region*	*Number*
May 1990	Inverclyde	911
	Strathclyde	13,246
	Scotland	33,462
May 1991	Inverclyde	1,051
	Strathclyde	14,581
	Scotland	36,252
June 1992	Inverclyde	1,345
	Strathclyde	19,113
	Scotland	46,501
May 1993	Inverclyde	1,690
	Strathclyde	21,982
	Scotland	52,830

Housing Benefit

This information has been provided by the Analytical Services Division of the Department of Social Security. The figures quoted are averages of the quarterly counts of Housing Benefit cases. Estimates have been included for those quarters where Local Authorities in Strathclyde failed to respond. Figures for Inverclyde have been rounded to the nearest hundred; the other figures are rounded to the nearest thousand. It is not possible to show the overlap with other benefits apart from Income Support.

Region	*Number (with IS)*	*Number (without IS)*	*Total*
1988-89			
Inverclyde	9,800	5,300	15,100
Strathclyde	168,000	104,000	272,000
Scotland	321,000	243,000	564,000
1989-90			
Inverclyde	9,900	5,000	14,900
Strathclyde	159,000	109,000	268,000
Scotland	315,000	241,000	556,000
1990-91			
Inverclyde	6,600	5,100	11,700
Strathclyde	155,000	112,000	266,000
Scotland	307,000	236,000	542,000
1991-92			
Inverclyde	6,000	5,000	11,100
Strathclyde	151,000	115,000	266,000
Scotland	301,000	260,000	561,000
1992-93			
Inverclyde	6,100	5,000	11,100
Strathclyde	154,000	111,000	266,000
Scotland	308,000	233,000	541,000

Invalidity benefit

Figures for Inverclyde and Strathclyde are not available prior to May 1991 since this information is routinely destroyed. Figures for Scotland have been provided for the last five available years and have been rounded to the nearest thousand. This information has been supplied by the Analytical Services Division of the Department of Social Security in conjunction with Management Information Statistics.

Region	*Number*
April 1987	
Scotland	135,000
April 1988	
Scotland	147,000
April 1989	
Scotland	158,000

Region	Number
March 1990	
Scotland	169,000
May 1991	
Inverclyde	6,487
Strathclyde	115,964
Scotland	n.a.
May 1992	
Inverclyde	6,201
Strathclyde	132,237
Scotland	n.a.
May 1993	
Inverclyde	6,627
Strathclyde	142,212
Scotland	n.a.

Income Support

Figures are not available for Inverclyde and Strathclyde prior to 1991 since this information is routinely destroyed. However, for Scotland as a whole, figures are available for the five year period requested, rounded to the nearest thousand. These figures have been provided by Analytical Services Division and are based on a 1 per cent. count. The information for Strathclyde and Inverclyde have been supplied by the Income Support Management Information Statistics.

Region	Number
May 1988	
Scotland	499,000
May 1989	
Scotland	486,000
May 1990	
Scotland	481,000
May 1991	
Inverclyde	15,617
Strathclyde	293,529
Scotland	487,000
May 1992	
Inverclyde	15,971
Strathclyde	294,081
Scotland	519,000
May 1993	
Inverclyde	16,595
Strathclyde	315,636
Scotland	n/a

Mr. Janner: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will conduct a survey of waiting times for benefit claimants at benefit centres in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and place a copy of the results in the Library.

Mr. Burt: Waiting times in benefit offices are a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. and learned Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Mr. Greville Janner, dated 27 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security, asking if he will conduct a survey of waiting times for benefit claimants in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

There are no plans to conduct a survey of waiting times for benefit claimants in England, Wales and Scotland. A survey in Northern Ireland is a matter for the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

The Benefits Agency is currently piloting an advanced-caller system that will enable staff to continuously monitor waiting times. The system will also alert staff if a customer has been waiting an unduly long time, or if there is an increase in the number of callers. This enables a decision on whether to deploy more reception staff to be made at an early stage. In addition, most offices now run their reception points as a fast stream service. Customers are seen and wherever possible their enquiries are cleared at the initial reception point.

I place great importance on listening to our customers. The Benefits Agency Customer Charter gives a commitment to actively seek, listen to and act on the views of our customers. Each District in the Agency tests customer opinion at least once a year to find out which aspects of the service are seen as most in need of improvement, so that resources can be targeted appropriately.

The Benefits Agency also commissions a national independent survey of its customers each year. One of the topics covered in the survey concerns the customer's perception of the length of time they have to wait in the office before being seen. A copy of the 1991 survey is in the Library.

I hope that this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Income Support

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) what is the average amount of deductions for recipients of income support who receive the disability premium and have *(a)* more than one deduction and *(b)* more than two deductions;

(2) how many recipients of income support are subject to more than *(a)* one, *(b)* two or *(c)* three deductions from their income support; and what is the average amount per person of those deductions;

(3) what is the number and average amount of deductions for recipients of income support who receive the lone parent premium and have *(a)* more than one deduction and *(b)* more than two deductions;

(4) what is the number and average amount of deductions for recipients of income support who receive the family premium and have *(a)* more than one deduction and *(b)* more than two deductions.

Mr. Burt: I shall write to the hon. Member shortly wth such information as is available.

Ms Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many income support and unemployment benefit claimants have *(a)* successfully and *(b)* unsuccessfully claimed income support under the hardship rules, showing those whose claim was in doubt due to (i) not actively seeking work, (ii) refusing suitable employment and (iii) availability for work for each region and for Great Britain as a whole for each quarter since April 1992.

Mr. Burt: The administration of income support is a matter for Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Ms Clare Short, dated 26 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary

Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many income support and unemployment benefit claimants have (a) successfully and (b) unsuccessfully claimed income support under the hardship rules, showing those whose claim was in doubt due to (i) not actively seeking work, (ii) refusing suitable employment and (iii) availability for work for each region and for Great Britain as a whole for each quarter since 1992.

The information has been taken from the Benefits Agency Management Information Statistics and is attached. The number of customers who have successfully or unsuccessfully applied for a hardship payment because they have refused suitable employment are included in the numbers of customers whose claim is in doubt because of their availability for employment. I regret it is not possible to break this figure down.

The figures are based on the Benefits Agency's Territorial structure, which has been in force since April 1991.

I hope that you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

Availability for work—Hardship Applications

Territory	*June 1992*	*September 1992*	*December 1992*	*March 1993*
Scotland and Northern				
[1]A	203	213	152	136
[2]R	46	83	66	89
Wales and Central				
[1]A	150	156	168	52
[2]R	84	73	54	55
Southern				
[1]A	370	416	293	421
[2]R	115	146	261	428
National Totals				
[1]A	723	785	613	609
[2]R	245	302	381	572

[1]A = Awards
[2]R = Refusals

Actively Seeking Work—Hardship Applications

Territory	*June 1992*	*September 1992*	*December 1992*	*March 1993*
Scotland and Northern				
[1]A	24	43	14	19
[2]R	139	145	96	112
Wales and Central				
[1]A	52	69	30	38
[2]R	55	59	44	25
Southern				
[1]A	71	141	101	75
[2]R	54	51	21	35
National Totals				
[1]A	147	253	145	132
[2]R	248	255	161	172

[1]A = Awards
[2]R = Refusals

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the average level of deductions from income support excluding current liability for mortgage interest in each year since 1989.

Mr. Burt: The information requested can be obtained from the figures in table 10.1 of volume 1 of the "Department of Social Security Income Support Statistics Annual Statistical Enquiry", May 1989 to May 1992, copies of which are in the Library.

Separate statistics for current liability for mortgage interest were not collected for the years 1989 to 1991 and are only available for May 1992.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list by premium the deductions made from the income support of persons who receive the lower rate of income support for persons aged under 25 years.

Mr. Burt: The numbers of deductions made from the benefit of income support recipients who receive the under 25 years of age rate of income support and who are entitled to a premium are as follows:

	Number
Disability Premium	
Community Charge Deduction	1,000
Social Fund Recovery	4,000

Source:
"Income Support Annual Enquiry", May 1992.
Notes:
1. The figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. Recipients with the lower rate of Income Support for those aged under 25 have been identified on the basis that they are under 25, single and without dependents, and do not therefore qualify for the high rate of benefit.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many recipients of income support are subject to direct payment of mortgage interest for *(a)* current liability and *(b)* arrears.

Mr. Burt: The latest information in the form requested is in table 10.1 of volume 1 of "Department of Social Security—Income Support Statistics, Annual Statistical Enquiry", May 1992, a copy of which is in the Library.

Mr. Wigley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many recipients of income support are

having deductions made from their benefit *(a)* for community charge arrears, *(b)* fuel bills and *(c)* social fund repayments; and what percentage of the total number of claimants this represents.

Mr. Burt: The information requested can be obtained from the figures in tables 3.1 and 10.1 of volume 1 of the "Department of Social Security—Income Support Statistics Annual Statistical Enquiry", May 1992, a copy of which is in the Library.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many people were dependent *(a)* on supplementary benefit in 1979 and *(b)* on income support in 1993; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Burt: There were 4·4 million claimants, partners and dependants receiving supplementary benefit in 1979. The latest available income support figures are for May 1992, when there were 8·9 million claimants, partners and dependants receiving income support. Comparisons between supplementary benefit and income support are difficult, since the conditions of entitlement and the basis of assessment differ.

Notes:

1. Sources: Supplementary Benefit Annual Statistical Enquiry, November 1979. Income Support Annual Statistical Enquiry, May 1992.
2. Figures rounded to the nearest hundred thousand.

Social Fund Loans

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security in how many cases in each of the last five years civil enforcement action has been taken in either the county court or the sheriffs' court to enforce the recovery of social fund loans.

Mr. Scott: The information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will provide a breakdown of the number of deductions made for the recovery of social fund loans from social security benefits other than income support, by benefit.

Mr. Scott: The information requested is in the table.

Number of social fund awards which were repaid from social security benefits (excluding income support) 1992-93

Source of repayment	*Number of repayments*
Family credit	61,201
Industrial Disablement pension	1,564
Invalid care allowance	2,800
Invalidity benefit	233,850
Maternity allowance	1,646
Reduced earnings allowance	230
Retirement pension	40,456
Severe disability allowance	3,536
Sickness benefit	95,194
Unemployment benefit	3,488,307
War disablement pension	453
War widow's pension	149
Widow's pension	12,421
Widowed mother's allowance	3,414
Total	3,945,221

Public Bodies

Dr. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many of the public bodies for which he is responsible hold meetings in public; and if he will list them.

Mr. Hague: Of the public bodies listed in "Public Bodies 1992", a copy of which is in the Library, the following hold hearings in public, except where the appellant requests a private hearing:

Disability appeal tribunals
Medical appeal tribunals
Social security appeal tribunals
Vaccine damage tribunals
Child support appeal tribunals

Community Care Grants

Mr. Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will provide a further breakdown of the reasons for refusal of community care grants where direction 4 is not satisfied, referred to in annex 8 of the annual report of the social fund 1992-93.

Mr. Scott: The information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Residential Care Homes

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security whether the preserved rights to income support at higher level of very dependent elderly and infirm will be maintained in unregistered residential care homes of fewer than four beds established prior to 1 April; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Burt: From 1 April, small homes are no longer exempt from the provisions of the Registered Homes Act 1984, and are required to register if they are providing both board and personal care. For the residents to have preserved rights the home must be registered. If a home is not registered, the residents are no longer entitled to the higher levels of income support but can claim normal income support and housing benefit.

Reciprocal Arrangements

Mr. Churchill: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security with how many countries outside the EC Her Majesty's Government have entered into reciprocal social security agreements; and upon what criteria decisions have been taken as to which countries should be covered by such arrangements.

Mr. Hague: The United Kingdom has reciprocal social security agreements with 23 countries outside the EC.

In order to enter into an agreement with the United Kingdom the other country's social security scheme has to be sufficiently similar to provide for reciprocity. There has to be sufficient movement of workers between the two countries to justify the outlay of resources to negotiate, operate and maintain the agreement. Above all, any additional costs have to be affordable.

Mr. Clelland: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many claims for industrial disablement benefit for a prescribed industrial disease were received by the Benefits Agency's South Tyneside district, North Tyne district and Newcastle district offices in the period since

January 1991; how many of these claims resulted in medical examinations; what were the outcomes of the examinations concerned; how many appeals were received from claimants against the outcomes; and what were the results of any resultant medical appeal tribunals.

Mr. Scott: The administration of industrial injuries disablement benefit is the responsibility of Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Mr. David Clelland, dated 26 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many claims for industrial injuries disablement benefit for a prescribed industrial disease were received by the Benefits Agency's South Tyneside District, North Tyne District and Newcastle District offices in the period since January 1991; how many of these claims resulted in medical examinations; what were the outcomes of the examinations concerned; how many appeals were received from claimants against the outcomes; and what were the results of any resultant medical appeal tribunals.

Information on the number of prescribed disease claims and the subsequent outcome on such claims since January 1991 is not available in the form requested and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. Similarly information on medical examinations and appeals is not to hand. Such information as is available is shown in the tables:

Table 1
Industrial injuries disablement benefit—prescribed disease. New claims in period April 1992 to June 1993

	New claims
Newcastle district	1,293
South Tyneside	3,705
North Tyneside	1,627

The above information is based on a 100 per cent. count of claims received in benefit offices. Prescribed disease claims were not identified separately prior to April 1992.

Table 2
Industrial injuries disablement benefit—prescribed disease new assessments in period October 1992 to June 1993

	New assessments
Newcastle district	25
South Tyneside	109
North Tyneside	9

The information is based on 100 per cent. count of the number of new assessments of Disablement Benefit in benefit offices. Prescribed disease awards were not identified separately prior to October 1992. Some claims made during the period will not have been assessed yet.

I hope that this reply is helpful. A copy of this reply will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Computer Consultancies

Mr. McAllion: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security if he will list all the computer consultancies employed by his Department and agencies, since November 1991, the tasks for which they were engaged, and the total cost to his Department.

Mr. Hague: The employment of computer consultancies is a matter for Mr. Ian Magee, the chief executive of the Information Technology Services Agency. He will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ian Magee to Mr. John McAllion, dated 23 July 1993:

The Secretary of State has asked me to respond to the Parliamentary Question, tabled by you on 21 July 1993, concerning computer consultancies employed by the Department of Social Security. As Chief Executive of the Information Technology Services Agency, I have responsibility for engaging IT consultants for the Department.

There are a large number of consultancy suppliers employed within the Department of Social Security and the number of individual computer contracts runs into several hundred. If however there is a specific area of work that is of interest to you I will be happy to provide you with further details. The tasks for which they are employed covers all areas of IT including business analysis, software development, technical support and technical innovation. Individual tasks can range from the development of a specific interface between systems, to assistance with the advancement of our open systems strategy. A list of the suppliers of these services is attached.

You also refer to the total cost of this work to the Department. I am unable to provide information on the value of the individual contracts as to do so may be a breach of commercial confidentiality. However, I can say that the value of contracts let between November 1991 and July 1993 is in the region of £87M. I should also explain that some of the more recent contracts do extend beyond this financial year.

Benefits (Leicester)

Mr. Janner: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security what is the maximum waiting time for *(a)* claimants, *(b)* benefits and *(c)* consultations at each of the benefit centres serving the Leicester, West constituency.

Mr. Burt: The performance of a benefit office is the responsibility of Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. and learned Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Mr. Greville Janner, dated 26 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency, it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security, asking the maximum waiting time for *(a)* customers, *(b)* benefits, and *(c)* consultations at each of the benefit centres serving the Leicester, West constituency.

As you will be aware, your constituency is served by two Benefit Agency Districts, North Leicestershire and South Leicestershire. While there is no specific measurement of waiting times, and it is therefore not possible to answer your question in the form required, the Districts believe that customers are seen, initially, within 15 minutes. Customers waiting for a more detailed interview or payment of benefit may have to wait longer than this and they are generally advised how long this is likely to take. Every effort is made to ensure that customers do not have to wait more than two hours. Both Districts will investigate any instances where this is exceeded.

Consultations with customers are arranged at the customer's convenience, and either conducted immediately or at a place and time convenient to the customer.

I hope you find this answer useful. A copy of this letter will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

National Insurance Contributions

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many self-employed individuals have been found to be avoiding national insurance contribution payments; and what has been the value of the revenue recovered in each year since 1984-85 *(a)* in each region and *(b)* nationally.

Mr. Hague: The administration of national insurance is a matter to Miss Ann Chant, the chief executive of the Contributions Agency. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ann Chant to Mr. Alan Milburn, dated 26 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Contributions Agency I am responsible for answering questions about relevant operational matters. I have been asked to reply to your question about how many self-employed individuals have been found to be avoiding payment of National Insurance Contributions (NICs), and the value of the revenue recovered in each year since 1984-85.

In general, all self-employed people aged between sixteen and pension age are required to pay Class 2 NICs, unless they have applied for, and been granted, an exception from payment on the grounds of small earnings. Where payment is not made arrangements are in place for the contributor to be reminded and if necessary pursued for non-payment. It is the aim of the Agency to obtain current compliance and payment of any arrears at the smallest cost of public funds.

Most people commencing self-employment notify the Agency or the Inland Revenue that they have done so, but we are aware that some do not. In addition, there are some with whom the Agency loses contact if they have changed address and not reported the change. We have no reliable information as to the total numbers who are self-employed and are avoiding payment of NICs. Since April 1991, the Secretary of State has set a High Level Target to identify self-employed people not previously known to the Agency. This target has been increased each year, from 60,000 in the 1991/92 year to 70,000 in the 1992/93 year and 103,000 in 1993/94: in the first two years we have exceeded the target set. Of course, some of the newly-identified self-employed will be earning low amounts and may qualify for exception from payment on the grounds of low income. The important element is, however, that they have become known to the Agency, and may well subsequently be liable to pay Class 2 NICs.

Because of the method of recording our statistical information I cannot supply the information you have asked for in relation to the amount of money recovered from our efforts in the pursuit of unpaid National Insurance debt. However, I have supplied in annexes, which will be tabled in the Library, information on the numbers and amounts involved where proceedings have been undertaken by the Agency or instalment arrangements have been accepted.

When a contributor acknowledges that he or she owes arrears of Class 2 NICs, but is unable to settle the debt by payment of a lump sum, the Agency will consider, in appropriate circumstances, the acceptance of payment of the arrears by instalment. Such an arrangement is always conditional upon the contributor undertaking to pay future Class 2 NICs timeously. An annex to my reply gives details of the instalment arrangements accepted in the years in question.

If necessary, the Agency will pursue unpaid Class 2 NICs by either civil or criminal prosecution and a further annex gives details of the number of prosecutions undertaken and the amounts involved.

I am supplying the figures from 1984-85 (Instalments from 1985-86) on a regional basis and for the 1992-93 year on a national basis. A regional breakdown of the 1992-93 year is not yet available.

I regret that I have been unable to give you the precise information that you requested in your question but I hope that my reply has proved helpful.

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security, pursuant to his answer of 25 June, *Official Report*, columns *324-25*, how many cases of national insurance contributions avoidance have been uncovered; and how much revenue has been recovered in each year since 1984-85.

Mr. Hague: The administration of national insurance is a matter for Miss Ann Chant, the chief executive of the Contributions Agency. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ann Chant to Mr. Alan Milburn, dated 26 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Contributions agency I am responsible for answering questions about relevant operational matters. I have been asked to reply to your question about how many cases of avoidance have been uncovered and the value of the revenue recovered in each year since 1984-85.

As I explained in my reply to your earlier question, where non-compliance with National Insurance law is uncovered the Agency does not attempt to differentiate between cases involving genuine mistakes and suspected evasion or avoidance of liability.

There are several ways in which the incorrect or non-payment of National Insurance Contributions (NICs) can be discovered including survey visits made by inspectors, examining and processing employers' End of Year Returns, and enquiries made by individual contributors.

Since achieving full Executive Agency status in April 1991 the Contributions agency has been set High Level Targets on the number of surveys undertaken and their subsequent Class 1 yield and on the identification of self employed contributors previously unknown to the Department. The targets and published achievements were as follows:—

Surveys of Employers

Numbers Target
1991-92 88,000 (achieved 106,353)
1992-93 114,000 (achieved 118,032)
1993-94 123,000

Yield Target
£33·8 million (achieved £59·23 million)
£71·24 million (achieved £89·14 million)

I am attaching, as an annex, details for potential arrears going back to 1986-87, identified as a result of survey. Collection of these arrears is largely the responsibility of the Inland Revenue, and figures for the actual amounts recovered are not available.

Self Employed identified

Numbers Target
1991-92 60,000 (achieved 84,040)
1992-93 70,000 (achieved 93,981)
1993-94 110,000

Not all the self-employed identified would have been liable to pay Class 2 NICs in the years in question, so no details of the precise yield can be calculated. But once someone has been brought into the system, their future liability will be monitored.

I hope that the information that I have supplied is useful.

Arrears of NICs identified on survey

Year	£
Amount of Class 2 underpaid	
1986-87	6,542,075
1987-88	5,803,847
1988-89	4,947,683
1989-90	5,682,563
1990-91	10,482,893
1991-92	21,311,394
1992-93	19,604,506
Amount of Class 1 Underpaid	
1986-87	8,041,677
1987-88	5,949,893
1988-89	4,518,164
1989-90	6,031,229

Year	£
1990-91	25,035,006
1991-92	58,891,925
1992-93	89,670,327

Fraud

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security how many officers have been involved in investigating social security fraud in *(a)* local offices and *(b)* regional teams in each year since 1979.

Mr. Burt: The administration of fraud investigation is the responsibility of Mr. Michael Bichard, the chief executive of the Benefits Agency. He will write to the hon. Member with such information as is available and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Michael Bichard to Mr. John Battle, dated 26 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Benefits Agency, it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking how many officers have been involved in investigating social security fraud in (a) local offices and (b) regional teams in each year since 1979.

I regret that I am unable to provide you with all the information you have requested but I hope that you find the following helpful.

The Sector Fraud Organisation has only been in existence since January 1991 and prior to that date staff investigating fraud were provided by the Local Offices when required and were not counted separately. The regional fraud teams ceased to exist when the Sector Fraud Organisation was set up.

The first full year for which figures are available is the year ending 31 March 1992. The number of sector fraud staff in post at that date was 2,742. At the year ending 31 March 1993 there were 2,789 sector fraud staff in post.

In addition to the Sector Fraud Organisation the Benefits Agency also uses discrete teams to investigate organised and multiple claims fraud. In the year ending 31 March 1992 there were 227 staff involved in the prevention and detection of organised and multiple claim fraud. The figure for the year ending 31 March 1993 was 268.

I hope you find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the Official Report and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

DNA Tests

Mr. Gareth Wardell: To ask the Secretary of State for Social Security (1) what is the expected date when figures will be available from the Child Support Agency for the period 1 April 1992 to 31 March 1993 on the number of DNA tests carried out in the pursuit of declarations of paternity in child maintenance cases in England and Wales;

(2) what were the costs to the Child Support Agency of the DNA tests used to establish paternity during the pursuance of a maintenance claim for the year ending March 1992.

Mr. Burt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for Mrs. Ros Hepplewhite, the chief executive. She will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Ros Hepplewhite to Mr. Gareth Wardell, dated 27 July 1993:

As Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency it is my responsibility to answer questions about relevant operational matters. I am therefore replying to your recent Parliamentary Questions to the Secretary of State for Social Security asking what were the costs to the Agency of the DNA tests used to establish paternity during the pursuance of a maintenance claim for the year ending March 1992, and the expected date when figures will be available for the period 1 April 1992 to 31 March 1993 on the number of DNA tests carried out in pursuit of applications to a Court for a maintenance order in England and Wales. Both periods relate to the time before the Agency was launched.

We estimate that during the period from 1 April 1992 to 31 March 1993, the Department made application to the courts for a declaration of paternity which involved DNA testing in less than 100 cases.

As regards the costs to the Department of DNA tests carried out in 1991-92, my previous letter explained that in the year ending March 1992 DNA testing was an issue in less than 1 per cent. of the 1,000 cases in which the Department made application to the courts for a declaration of paternity. Recovery of the costs for DNA testing were normally sought from the court in the costs they awarded. Before the Department then, or the Agency now, would consider pursuing such a case, the weight of other evidence of paternity would be substantial and the expectation was that most of the cases would be successfully proven and that the full costs would be recovered. In the light of this, and due to their limited nature, figures were not collected on the costs involved in individual DNA testing nor on the total court costs recovered.

I hope you will find this reply helpful. A copy will appear in the *Official Report* and a copy will also be placed in the Library.

CAMBRIDGE REFERENCE LIBRARY

INDEX TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

SIXTH SERIES **VOLUME 229**

SESSION 1992–93

19th July, 1993—27th July, 1993

SCOPE OF THE INDEX, ARRANGEMENT AND ABBREVIATIONS

This index is derived from the House of Commons Library's Parliamentary On-Line Information System (POLIS), and the subject terms used are based on those used in POLIS. There are often changes in column numbering, etc, between the daily part or weekly Hansard (which simply collects together the daily parts without revision) and the bound volume. The index for the bound volume is revised to take account of these changes and cannot therefore, be used in connection with the daily part or weekly Hansard. For these versions use the Fortnightly Index.

Scope and arrangement of the Index

Oral and Written Parliamentary Questions are indexed under subject headings and the names of Members asking and Ministers replying to them. Questions are not listed under the names of Departments replying. Departmental listings can be arrived at indirectly by looking under the names of the Minister(s) of that Department. There are, however, the headings 'Northern Ireland', 'Scotland', and 'Wales' under which one can find not only most Questions answered by the Northern Ireland Office, Scottish Office, Welsh Office but also Questions about these areas of the United Kingdom which are answered by other Departments. Ministerial statements are indexed under subject headings, under 'Ministerial statements' and the names of Ministers making them and Members speaking on them. General debates are indexed under broad subject headings and under the names of all Members and Ministers taking part. Debates on legislation (Bills, Orders, Regulations etc.) are indexed under the name of the Bill, Statutory Instrument etc, under subject headings and under the names of those taking part.

Rulings and Statements by Speaker and deputies are brought together under the heading Speaker's rulings and statements.

Other contributions by Speaker and deputies appear under the heading Speaker.

Opposition Day Debates, Estimates Day Debates and Standing Order No. 10 applications are listed under those respective headings and under subject headings too.

The date of each item except Parliamentary Questions is inserted immediately before the reference.

Members' names are given in the form by which they prefer to be known and are printed in bold italics. Under their names, entries are arranged under one of the two headings *Debates etc* (to include interventions on statements, points of order and so on) or *Questions*.

Abbreviations

Bills 1R=first reading, 2R=second reading, Money res=money resolution, Com=Committee stage, Rep=Report stage, 3R=third reading, amendt/amendts=amendment/amendments, *=matter taken formally, without debate.

Column numbers followed by the letter W refer to Written Questions. These appear at the end of each daily part or volume with their own sequence of column numbers printed in italics.

A27
Worthing 75w

A205
Road works 732-3

A303
404w

A550
Road construction 401-2w
Road traffic 401-2w

Abbott, Ms Diane
Debates etc.
Drug abuse, Greater London (27:07:93) 1037-41, 1042
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 311-3

Absent parents
Disclosure of information 192-4w, 279-80w

Abu Dhabi
Prisoners 304w

Access funds
Further education 109w

Access to buildings
Handicapped 807w
Handicapped pupils 921w

Access to countryside
Forests 653-4w, 977w

Access to Parliament
Handicapped 455-6w

Access to work programme
Blind 691w

Accident & emergency departments
114w, 829w
Administrative delays 114-5w
Domestic violence 213w

Accountants
Dept of Trade inquiries 130-4w, 269w

Accounts Services Agency
Performance standards 362-3w

Action for community employment
839w

Acute beds
Greater Glasgow Health Board 43w

Adjournment debates
Speaker's rulings & statements (19:07:93) 25

Adjutant-General Corps
Relocation of employees 189, 358w

Administration of justice
Magistrates' courts 306-7w

Administrative costs
NHS internal market 213-4w

Administrative receivers
15w

Adoption
Leave (27:07:93) 991-1000

Adult education
106-7w
Finance 107w

Advanced gas-cooled reactors
Nuclear safety 972w
Radioactive waste disposal 104w, 645w
Scotland 972w

Advertising
Public appointments 759-60w, 829w

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods & Processes
Lupins 37w

Advisory Committee on the Landscape Treatment of Trunk Roads
Public appointments 918-9w

Advisory Group on Older Workers
see Older Workers' Advisory Group

Aerospace industry
127-8w, 268w
Clwyd 933w
Production 933w
Redundancy 923w, (27:07:93) 1001-10

AF Budge Contractors
Company liquidations 517w

Age of criminal responsibility
496

Agenda 21
474w

Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992
Debates etc.
(23:07:93) 624

Aggregates
692-3w, 900w
Wales 122w, 652w

Agricultural land
Set-aside schemes 156w

Agricultural marketing
Potatoes 449-50w

Agricultural production
735w
Wales 52-3w

Agricultural products
Overseas trade 888-9w

Agricultural Wages Board
Wales 474w

Agricultural workers
Suicide 328-30w

Agriculture
Expenditure 880-2w

Agriculture Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1060

Agri-environment action plan
Wales 244w

AIDS
(22:07:93) 613-20
Prisoners 143w

Aids for handicapped
Disabled workers 412w
Postal deliveries 334-5
VAT exemptions 875w

Ainger, Mr Nick
Questions
Dept of Trade & Industry, Environment 133w
EC action, Set-aside schemes 37w
Fish conservation, Spain 737w
Fisheries, Licensing 451w
Fishing catches 451w
Fishing gear 242w
Fishing vessels, Licensing 736-7w
Fishing vessels, Prosecutions 736w
Fishing vessels, Shipping registration 737w
Industrial development, West Wales 9
Nature conservation, EC law 706w
Non-fossil fuel obligation 14w
Opticians, Complaints 117-8w
Petroleum exploration, Sea pollution 518-9w
Petroleum exploration licences 518w
Special protection areas, Coastal areas 494w
THORP, Radioactive wastes 124w, 702w
Transport of radioactive materials, Safety 273w

Ainsworth, Mr Peter
Questions
M25, Road construction 739
Public inquiries, Members' correspondence 906w

Ainsworth, Mr Robert
Questions
Grant maintained schools, Voting methods 228-9w
Hams Hall power station, Planning permission 103w

Air conditioning
Aircraft 404-5w

Air force
Armed conflict 453w
Armed forces discharges 164w
Festivals & special occasions 88w

Air force bases
Nimrod aircraft 745w

Air pollution
Methyl bromide 483w
Road traffic 579w

Air pollution control
Carbon dioxide 709-10w, 934w
Coal 517-8w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons 483w
Methyl bromide 483w
Taxation 877w

Air pollution monitoring
Greater London 907w

Air routes
Birmingham Airport 737
USA 74w

Air safety
Red Arrows 354w

Air traffic control
916-7w

Air transport
284w
Competition 586w
Expenditure 283w
Gibraltar 458-9w
South West region (26:07:93) 776-8

Air travel
Germany 256w

Aircraft
Air conditioning 404-5w

Airport security
74-5w

Airports
South East region 332w

Airwork
749w
Defence contracts 747-8w
Tornado aircraft 181, 747-8w

***Aitken, Mr Jonathan**, Minister of State for Defence Procurement*
Debates etc.
Helicopters, Defence procurement (26:07:93) 919-25
Questions
Airwork, Defence contracts 747-8w
Ammunition, Uranium 245w, 453w, 739-40w, 749w, 819-20w
Armed forces, Radiation hazards 820-1w
Armed forces deployment, Contracts for services 85-6w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry, Documents 80w
Arms trade 166w, 745w, 820w
Arms trade, Indian subcontinent 745w
Arms trade, Israel 744w
Arms trade, Middle East 744w, 817w
Atomic Weapons Establishment, Industrial health & safety 821-2w
AWE Aldermaston 740w
AWE Aldermaston, Chemicals 352w
AWE Aldermaston, Crown immunity 821w
AWE Aldermaston, Decommissioning 352w
AWE Aldermaston, Fires 740w
AWE Aldermaston, Guided weapons 353w
AWE Aldermaston, Industrial health & safety 821w
AWE Aldermaston, Operating costs 740w
AWE Aldermaston, Radioactive wastes 352-3w
AWE Aldermaston, Waste disposal 79w
Ballistic missile defence 173w
Defence equipment, Uranium 750w
Defence industries 179
Defence industries, Diversification 178-9

Aitken, Mr Jonathan*—*continued
Defence industries, Manpower 178
Defence procurement 187-8
Defence procurement, Chelmsford 166w
Defence procurement, International cooperation 188
Defence research, Universities 172w, 750w
Defence Research Agency, Environment 68w
Dockyards, Radioactive wastes 353w
EH101 helicopters, Defence procurement 824w
European fighter aircraft, Defence contracts 165w
Firing ranges, Environment 79w
Harrier aircraft, Repairs & maintenance 750w
Hercules aircraft, Defence procurement 163w
HM Inspectorate of Pollution, Pollution control 353w
Identification friend foe systems 173w
Military vehicles, Motor vehicle testing 83w
Minesweepers, Defence procurement 737w, 743w
Ministry of Defence, Computers 816w
Ministry of Defence, Contracts for services 814-6w
Ministry of Defence, Data processing742w
Ministry of Defence, Departmental publications 79-80w, 817-8w
Ministry of Defence, Environment 80w
Ministry of Defence, Relocation of employees 178
Ministry of Defence, Security guards 84w
Ministry of Defence, Small businesses 742w
Nuclear submarines, Decommissioning 174w
Nuclear weapons tests 80w, 354w
Nuclear weapons tests, Defence estimates 80w
Operations West, Contracts for services 84-5w
Project Al Yamamah 84w
RAF Spadeadam, Armed forces training 747w
Rain 354-6w
Rain, Belfast Airport 355-7w
RFA Auxiliary, Shipbuilding 174w
Rosyth Dockyard, Trident submarines 358w
Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Shipbuilding 816-8w
Swan Hunter Shipbuilders, Defence contracts 752w
Theatre nuclear weapons, Defence research 83w
Tornado aircraft, Airwork 747-8w
Tornado aircraft, Defence contracts 749w
Trident 165w
Trident submarines 164-5w
Tritium, Defence procurement 751w
Uranium, Ammunition 245-6w
Uranium, Transport of radioactive materials 245w
Warships, Defence contracts 752w
Warships, Shipbuilding 86w

Alcoholic drinks
Wales 622-6w
Young people 622-6w

Alcoholism
Residential care 554w

Ali, Ghazanfer
20w

Alison, Rt Hon Michael*, *Second Church Estates Commissioner
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 752-3
Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) (Amendment) Measure 1993 (21:07:93) 469-78
Questions
Obscene Publications Act 1959 490-1

Allason, Mr Rupert
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 765
Questions
English Tourist Board 771w
Japan, Military intelligence 91w
MI5, Biography 321w

Allen, Mr Graham
Debates etc.
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 299-303, 313, 316-7
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 450-5
Questions
British citizenship 5-6w, 143-4w
British nationality, Hong Kong 620w
Centre for Information Discussion & Exchange on Asylum 391w, 393w
Citizenship of the British Dependent Territories, Hong Kong 207-8w
Computer privacy, Political activities 619w
Deportation 205-6w
Entry clearances, Foreign tourists 387w
Hong Kong, British nationality 374-86w
Illegal immigrants 137-8w
Illegal immigrants, Criminal investigation 209-10w
Immigrant detainees 373w, 405-8w, 867-9w
Immigrant detainees, Deportation 618w
Immigration appeals, Refugees 495
Immigration applications 206-7w, 865-8w
Immigration applications, Bangladesh 139-40w
Immigration applications, Blood tests 386w
Immigration applications, Foreign spouses 139-41w
Immigration applications, Foreign tourists 385-8w
Immigration applications, Immigrants' dependants 138-40w, 389-90w
Immigration applications, Medical examinations 205w, 388-9w
Immigration applications, Political refugees 142w
Immigration controls, Deportation 5w
Immigration rules 6w, 141w
Indian subcontinent, Immigration applications 138w
Naturalisation, Administrative delays 209w
Political refugees 391-3w
Right of abode 141w
Special voucher scheme, India 372-4w
Temporary immigrants 373-4w
Visas, Indian subcontinent 207-10w

Allied Irish Banks Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1060

Allitt Inquiry
289w

Alternative energy
268-9w, 641w
Research 640w, 647w
Scotland 249-50w

Alton, Mr David
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 647, 657
Questions
Fines 637-8w
Football pools, Retail trade 639w
Housing associations, Tenants 898w
Human rights, Vietnam 11-2w
Legal aid, Drug abuse 399-400w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 494
Russia, Religious freedom 93w
Tranquillisers, Drug abuse 825w
West coast railway line 918w

Ambulance services
Contracts for services 216-8w, 980w
NHS trusts 216-8w
Private health services 293w

Amess, Mr David
Debates etc.
Gender selection (26:07:93) 793-5

Ammunition
Uranium 63w, 163w, 176-7w, 179-80, 245-6w, 453w, 739-40w, 749w, 819-20w

Ancram, Mr Michael*, *Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office
Questions
Blind, Northern Ireland 324w
Concessionary fares, Elderly 532w
Directors of public health, Eastern Health & Social Services Board 527w
Eye disorders, Northern Ireland 323-4w
Eye tests, Northern Ireland 323w
Eye tests, Optical charges 323w
Handicap benefits, Social security recipients 531w
Health centres, Armagh 527w
Making Belfast work programme, Schools 39w
Northern Ireland health & social services boards 845-6w
Northern Ireland Social Security Agency, Corporate plans 525-6w
Ophthalmology, Hospitals 526w
Ophthalmology, Out-patient clinics 526-7w
Paediatrics, Hospital consultants 531-2w
Salmon, Fishing catches 256-8w
Student unions, Finance 39-40w
Student unions, Political activities 40w

Anderson, Mr Donald
Questions
Lone parent families, Wales 4-5

Angola
Armed conflict 234-5w
Overseas aid 232w

Animal breeding
Dogs 633w
Licensing 633w
Sheep 325w

Animal experiments
Chemical & Biological Defence Establishment 750w

Animal products
Imports 878w
Seized articles 878w

Animal welfare
Genetic engineering 6-7w
Slaughterhouses 735-6w
Transport of animals 736w

Anthrax
Vaccination 547-8w, 647w, 743-4w

Appeals
Sentencing 368w
Special education 252w

Appin
Mink 972w

Apprentices
68w, 161-2w

Arab boycott
1003-4w

Arable area payments scheme
156w

Architects
Professional qualifications 694w

"Architects' Registration Acts Consultation Paper"
483w, 906w

Arctic fox
972w

Argyll & Clyde Health Board
515-6

Armagh
Health centres 527w
Road accidents 849w

Armed conflict
Air force 453w
Angola 234-5w
Bosnia-Herzegovina 232-3w, 304-5w, 500, 1000-2w
Croatia 18w, 1000w, 1002w

Armed conflict—continued
Falkland Islands 9w
Kosovo 92-3w
Nagorno Karabakh 1002-3w, 1005w
Yugoslavia 1005w

Armed forces
Race relations 824w
Radiation hazards 820-1w
Redundancy 189

Armed forces casualties
Northern Ireland 186

Armed forces deployment
Bosnia-Herzegovina 166w, 246w, 359-60w
Contracts for services 85-6w
Germany 182-3
Hong Kong 88w
Navy 452-3w
Rescue services 246-7w
Western European Union 165w

Armed forces discharges
174w
Air force 164w

Armed forces housing
163w
Housing standards 184-5
Public sector housing sales 184-5

Armed forces married quarters
Empty housing 163w, 741w
Exservicemen 164w
House purchase 163-4w, 741w
Widows 741w

Armed forces medical services
Hospitals 743w

Armed forces officers
Armed forces strength 87-8w, 188, 822-3w
Bosnia-Herzegovina 1005w

Armed forces pay
824w

Armed forces recruitment
188-9

Armed forces reserves
183

Armed forces storage depots
Railway freight transport 185-6, 454w

Armed forces strength
360-1w, 822-3w
Armed forces officers 87-8w, 188, 822-3w

Armed forces training
Army 351-2w, 745w
Belize 162w
Costs 744w
Defence land 745w
Helicopters 172-3w
RAF Spadeadam 746-7w

Armenia
Diplomatic relations 234w
Economic situation 234w

Arms to Iraq Inquiry
336, 758w
Documents 80w
Evidence 273w

Arms trade
166w, 745w, 820w
Indian subcontinent 745w
Israel 744w
Middle East 744w, 817w
North Africa 817w

Army
Armed forces training 351-2w, 745w

Army Air Corps
Military aircraft 751w
RAF Dishforth 357w
RAF Wattisham 357w

Army bases
351w

Army in Northern Ireland
186
Army strength 187, 823w

Army in Northern Ireland—continued
Criminal proceedings 186

Army strength
822-3w
Army in Northern Ireland 187, 823w
Yugoslavia 304w

Arnold, Mr Jacques
Debates etc.
Angola (27:07:93) 1025
Latin America, Foreign policy (26:07:93) 819, 826-9, 834
Questions
Deregulation initiative 346-7
Parliamentary questions 557w
Post offices, Rural areas 2

Arnold, Sir Thomas
Questions
Plumbing, Contracts 898w
Trade competitiveness 343

Art works
Export licensing 26w

Arts
Merseyside 24-5w
Public appointments 24-5w
Scotland 250w

Arts Council
Ministerial statements (21:07:93) 353-64

Arts finance
Museums & galleries 970w

Asbestos
Industrial diseases 70-1w
Industrial health & safety 275w

Asbestosis
276-7w
Scotland 252-4w

Ashby, Mr David
Questions
Ammunition, Uranium 180

Ashdown, Rt Hon Paddy
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 525-6, 543, 545-8, (23:07:93) 642-6
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 500
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 191

Ashford
Railway stations 733-4

Ashton, Mr Joseph
Questions
Rape, Bail 489

Assassination
Bush, George 173w

Assaults on police
Greater London 390-2w
Injuries 493-4

Assisted areas
16w, 342-3, 518w
Bolton 340
Bradford (26:07:93) 795-8
Manchester (26:07:93) 790-3
Ministerial statements (26:07:93) 749-67
North Wales (26:07:93) 774-6
Ross-on-Wye 342-3
Wales 650w

Assisted places scheme
Expenditure 477-8w
School fees 613-7w
School population 777-81w
Wales 477-8w

Asthma
Opencast mining 476w
Wales 476w

Astra Holdings
133w

Astra Training Services
499-500, 808-9w
Employment protection 809w
Training 809w

Astronomer Royal for Scotland
973w

Astronomy
International cooperation 973w

Asylum Appeals (Procedure) Rules 1993
Debates etc.
(20:07:93) 299-321

Atkins, Mr Robert, Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 684
Questions
Air travel, Germany 256w
Belfast Airport, Fire services 851w
Belfast Airport, Privatisation 850w
Belfast Harbour 847w
Belfast Harbour, Conditions of employment 847w
British Coal Corporation, Privatisation 255w
Camlough Lake 850w
Employment schemes, Northern Ireland 839w
Foreign investment in UK, Northern Ireland 532-3w
Foreign tourists, Republic of Ireland 255w
Foreign tourists, USA 255-6w
Industrial development, Government assistance 530w
Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland 528w
Non-fossil fuel obligation, Northern Ireland 530-1w
Northern Ireland Dept of Economic Development 414w
Northern Ireland Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency 89-90w
Northern Ireland Electricity 851w
Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Cost effectiveness 529w
Northern Ireland Housing Executive, House renovation grants 849-50w
Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Temporary accommodation 529-30w
Northern Ireland Office, Contracts for services 529-30w
Northern Ireland Office, Small businesses 527-8w
Rate collection, Northern Ireland 258w
Regional selective assistance, South Down 851w
Road accidents, Armagh 849w
Rural planning, Northern Ireland 851w
Tourism, EC grants & loans 322-3w
Tourism, Northern Ireland 256w, 413w
Tourists, Northern Ireland 414w

Atkinson, Mr David
Questions
"Architects' Registration Acts Consultation Paper" 906w
Economic situation 499
Homelessness 698w
Income support, Nursing homes 1020w
Iran, Bahai sect 91-2w
Local government reform 348w
Nursing homes 830w
Railway stations, Bournemouth 581w
Russia, Religious freedom 457w
Secure accommodation, Young offenders 213w

Atomic Weapons Establishment
245w, 353w
Industrial health & safety 821-2w

Attali, Jacques
Resignations 469w

Attorney General
Small businesses 773w

Audit
Professional organisations 13w, 269w
Small businesses 347

Audit Commission for Local Authorities in England & Wales
(19:07:93) 26-167

Auditing Practices Committee
270w

Austin-Walker, Mr John
Questions
East London river crossing 921w
Palace of Westminster, Industrial health & safety 744-5

Automated credit transfer
(20:07:93) 323, (23:07:93) 623-4, (27:07:93) 982

Availability for work
675-6w

Average earnings
791-8w
Women 791w

Aviation security
74-5w

AWE Aldermaston
740w
Chemicals 352w
Crown immunity 821w
Decommissioning 352w
Fires 740w
Guided weapons 353w
Industrial health & safety 821w
Land pollution 79w
Operating costs 740w
Radioactive wastes 352-3w
Waste disposal 79w

Axle weights
Lorries 251-2w, 583-4w, 915w

Aycliffe School
Inquiries 514w

Baby care units
1-2w
Manpower 116w

Bahai sect
Iran 91-2w

Bail
370w, 491-2
Rape 489

Bail (Amendment) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323

Bail hostels
148-9w, 633-6w
Probation hostels 408-10w, 636w

Bail information schemes
145-7w

Baker, Rt Hon Kenneth
Questions
Gatwick Airport, Night flying 78w, 284w

Balance of trade
343-4
Group of Seven 270-1w

***Baldry, Mr Tony**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of the Environment*
Debates etc.
Energy conservation (26:07:93) 900-5
Gypsies, Caravan sites (26:07:93) 971-3
Local government audit (27:07:93) 105
River Wear, Environment protection (20:07:93) 327-32
Questions
Aggregates 693w
Architects, Professional qualifications 694w
"Architects' Registration Acts Consultation Paper" 483w, 906w
Bellwin scheme, Cornwall 350w
Building Regulations Advisory Committee 345w
City challenge 347w
City grants, West Midlands 343-4w
Community charge, Local government expenditure 907w
Compost, Kirklees 341w

***Baldry, Mr Tony**—continued*
Council housing, Empty housing 345w
Council housing, Rent increases 341w
Council tax, Pensioners 262-3w, 692w
Council tax, Transitional arrangements 101w
Councillors, Electorate 346w
County Hall, Property transfer 693w
Crown Office for Scotland, Buildings 351w
Dept of the Environment, Contracts for services, 694w
Direct labour departments 490w
Disabled facilities grants 341w
Farm diversification grant scheme 482w
Fire regulations 703w
Government car service 905w
Government grants to local authorities, Refugees 908w
Hams Hall power station, Planning permission 103w
Housing & handicapped 342-3w, 345w
Housing association grant 96w
Housing benefits 905w
Housing Corporation 347w
Lambeth Borough Council, Direct labour departments 490-1w
Local authorities, Companies 350w
Local authorities, Gas fuels 346w
Local authority associations 710w, 909w
Local Government Commission for England 66w, 101w, 350w, 695-6w
Local government corruption, Bolsover 97w
Local government expenditure 488w
Local government expenditure, Capital investment 99w
Local government finance 66w
Local government functions, Cemeteries 67w
Local government reform 348w, 702w
Local government reform, City of Durham 346w
Local government reform, Cleveland 348w
Local government revenue, Council house sales 493-4w
Local government services, Contracts for services 102w
Local plans, South Hams 101w
Mineral resources, Development plans 692w
Opencast mining, Planning permission 483-4w, 700w
Ordnance Survey, Computers 712-3w
Ordnance Survey, Contracts for services 694-5w
Ordnance Survey, Data processing 696w
Planning permission, Administrative delays 701w
Planning permission, Greenham Common 907w
Planning permission, Minerals 264w
Property development, Stockton on Tees 66-7w
Public inquiries, Members' correspondence 906w
Public sector housing 347w
Recycling, Construction materials 900w
Rent a room scheme 346-7w
Shared ownership schemes, Elderly 482w
Standard spending assessments 99-100w, 699w, 708w
Standard spending assessments, Educational finance 100w
Standard spending assessments, Health 100w
Standard spending assessments, Housing amenities 493w
Standard spending assessments, Lone parent families 492-3w
Standard spending assessments, School population 493w
Stockton on Tees Borough Council, Contracts for services 905w
3D, City grants 706w
Town & Country Planning (Mine[illegible]) Act 1981 693w
Uniform business rate, Rate rebates 906w
Urban development corporations, Public expenditure 901-2w
Urban programme 341w, 710w

Ballistic missile defence
173w

Bangladesh
Immigration applications 139-40w

Bank for Reconstruction & Development of Europe
see European Development Bank

Bank nurses' employment scheme
177-8w

Bank of Credit & Commerce International
304w
Company liquidations 363w

Bank of England
236w
Duty of care 873w

Banks, Mr Matthew
Questions
Armed forces strength 822w
Army in Northern Ireland, Army strength 823w
Army strength 822-3w
Drinking & driving 368w
Government buildings, Management 559-600w

Banks, Mr Robert
Debates etc.
Globe Theatre (19:07:93) 168-71, 176
Questions
Open University, Student grants 415w
Planning permission, Administrative delays 701w
RAF Leeming 357w

Banks, Mr Tony
Debates etc.
Public transport, Greater London (26:07:93) 873, 875, 881-8, 893
Unparliamentary expressions, Points of order (19:07:93) 22
Whales, Norway (26:07:93) 807
Questions
Animal products, Imports 878w
Birds, Blood sports 903w
Business questions 510
Citizen's Charter 40w
Furs, Farms 972w
Import controls, Norway 333
Parliamentary recess 748
Road closures, City of London 578w
Seized articles, Animal products 878w
10 Downing Street, Fund raising 757w

Barlow Clowes
303-4w

Barnes, Mr Harry
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 847, 866
Parliamentary recess (26:07:93) 804-5
Transferred questions, Points of order (21:07:93) 444
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 588-90
Questions
British Rail, Privatisation 735
British Telecom, Privatisation 345
Business questions 515
Citizen's Charter, EC action 41w
EC Environment Council, Voting behaviour 67w
House of Commons select committees, Northern Ireland 747-8
House of Commons staff, Disabled workers 23w
VAT, Concessionary coal 29w

Barron, Mr Kevin
Questions
Combined heat & power, Non-fossil fuel obligation 129w
EC Social Charter 502

Barrow-Carlisle railway line
586w

Bates, Mr Michael
Questions
Air force, Armed forces discharges 164w
British Telecom, Privatisation 344-5
Business start-up scheme 804w
Chartermark scheme 13

Bates, Mr Michael—continued
Greenbelt, Town & country planning 65w
National Rivers Authority, Manpower 264w
National Rivers Authority, Operating costs 264w
Regional airports 737

Battle, Mr John
Questions
Council housing, Rents 900w
Home Office, Empty housing 638w
Homelessness, Electoral register 639w
Homeworking, West Yorkshire 804w
Housing association grant 65w, 96w, 708w, 904w
Housing associations, Housing improvement 903w
New towns, Public sector housing sales 708-9w
NHS, Empty housing 553w
Private rented housing, Government grants 904w
Shared ownership schemes, Elderly 682w
Social security abuse, Civil service manpower 1025w
Tax evasion 879w
Unemployment benefits, Fraud 689-90w

Bayley, Mr Hugh
Questions
Geriatric patients, York Health Authority 510w
Hearing aids 544w
Homeowners' insurance, Pensioners 366w
Retirement pensions, Hospital patients 717w
Sugar, Production 945-6w
Sugar, Production quotas 884-6w
Sugar beet, Prices 884w
World Bank, UK contributions 534w

BBC
91w

BBC External Services
(26:07:93) 804

Beaches
Pollution monitoring 664w, 923w
Sea pollution 187w, 264-5w, 907w
Wales 664w, 923w

Beckett, Rt Hon Margaret
Questions
Business statements 505-6

Bed & breakfast accommodation
Income support 203w, 395w
Scotland 176w, 496w
Wales 653w

Beef
Botswana 734-5w

Beggs, Mr Roy
Questions
Belfast Harbour, Conditions of employment 847w
Exhibitions, Upper Waiting Hall 23w
Fishing vessels, Licensing 887-8w
International Investments, Criminal investigation 240w
Non-fossil fuel obligation, Northern Ireland 530-1w
Northern Ireland Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency 89-90w
Postal deliveries, Aids for handicapped 334-5
Rate collection, Northern Ireland 258w
Water supply industry, Bye laws 897w

Beith, Rt Hon A J
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 627
Questions
Drug crimes, Thailand 758w
House of Commons accommodation 745
House of Commons staff, Disabled workers 23w
House of Commons staff, Manpower 870-1w
Invalidity benefits, Medical examinations 199w
Palace of Westminster, Holiday play schemes 563w

Beith, Rt Hon A J—continued
Palace of Westminster, Industrial health & safety 563w, 743-5
Parliamentary data & video network 563w, 743-4
Refreshment Dept 746
Refreshment Dept, Expenditure 745-6
Refreshment Dept, Working conditions 746
Vote Office 309w

Belfast
Post offices 851-2w

Belfast Airport
Fire services 851w
Privatisation 850-1w
Rain 355-7w

Belfast Harbour
847w
Conditions of employment 847w

Belize
Armed forces training 162w

Bell, Mr Stuart
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 671-5
Questions
Industrial training 344

Bellingham, Mr Henry
Questions
Committee for Monitoring Agreements on Tobacco Advertising, Annual reports 514w
House of Commons select committees, Northern Ireland 748

Bellwin scheme
Cornwall 350w

Benefits Agency
see Social Security Benefits Agency

Benefits Agency district offices
Administrative delays 1015-6w, 1022w
Leicester 1022w

Benn, Rt Hon Tony
Debates etc.
Bill of Rights, Points of order (23:07:93) 621-2
Parliamentary privilege, Courts (21:07:93) 352
Social security (20:07:93) 245-9
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 521-2, 611, (23:07:93) 625, 627, 650-6, 661-2

Bennett, Mr Andrew F
Debates etc.
Assisted areas, Manchester (26:07:93) 790-3
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 403, 407, 409-12, 413, 417, 424, 425-6, 436, 438
Questions
Armed forces, Radiation hazards 820-1w
Atomic Weapons Establishment, Industrial health & safety 821-2w
AWE Aldermaston 740w
AWE Aldermaston, Chemicals 352w
AWE Aldermaston, Crown immunity 821w
AWE Aldermaston, Decommissioning 352w
AWE Aldermaston, Fires 740w
AWE Aldermaston, Guided weapons 353w
AWE Aldermaston, Industrial health & safety 821w
AWE Aldermaston, Radioactive wastes 352-3w
Dockyards, Radioactive wastes 353w
Dounreay, Radioactive waste disposal 129w
HM Inspectorate of Pollution, Pollution control 353w
Independent Criminal Cases Review Authority 368w
Manchester Airport 738
Maternity rights 798w
Recycling 890w
Recycling, Domestic wastes 692w
Recycling, EC action 692w
Recycling, Packaging 890w
Taxation, Packaging 874w

Bennett, Mr Andrew F—continued
Waste disposal, Fees & charges 98-9w

Bentley, Derek
Prerogative of mercy 370w

Benzodiazepines
Drug abuse 854w

Beresford, Sir Paul
Debates etc.
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 413-4, 417, 420, 431-5

Bermuda
Homosexuality 317w

Berry, Dr Roger
Questions
Balance of trade 343-4

Betting & gaming duties
Football pools 28w

Betts, Mr Clive
Questions
Local government revenue, Council house sales 493-4w
Rent a room scheme 346-7w
Standard spending assessments 99-100w
Standard spending assessments, Educational finance 100w
Standard spending assessments, Health 100w
Standard spending assessments, Housing amenities 493w
Standard spending assessments, Lone parent families 492-3w
Standard spending assessments, School population 493w
VAT, Tax yields 590w

Biddulph bypass
740-1

Biffen, Rt Hon John
Debates etc.
Standard spending assessments, Shropshire (26:07:93) 773-4

Billing
Government departments 949w
Telephone charges 950-1w

Biography
MI5 321w

Biotechnology
EC action (19:07:93) 167
Patents 124-5w

Birds
Blood sports 903w
Nature conservation 321w, 350w

Birmingham
Bombings 210w
Development areas 945w

Birmingham Airport
Air routes 737

Birmingham Prison
621-2w

Birmingham relief road
741
Road construction 585w

Bishop Auckland
Severe hardship provision 198-9w

Blackpool Airport
737

Blair, Mr Tony
Questions
Young offenders, Secure accommodation 488

Blind
Access to work programme 691w
Departmental publications 479w, 512-3w, 556w, 569w, 591w, 601-2w, 625w, 647-8w, 701w, 724-5w, 732w, 786-7w, 817-8w, 839-41w, 917-8w, 966w
Disabled workers 411-2w, 691w

Blind—continued
Employment level 411w
Northern Ireland 324w
Scotland 966-8w

Blood sports
Birds 903w
Defence land 740w

Blood tests
Immigration applications 386w

Blunkett, Mr David
Questions
Allitt Inquiry 289w
Ambulance services, Contracts for services 216-8w
Ambulance services, Private health services 293w
Astra Training Services 808-9w
Dental services, Hygiene 553-4w
Dental services, Per capita costs 293-4w
NHS review, Expenditure 5w
NHS trusts, Public appointments 537w

Boarding schools
Complaints 828w

Boateng, Mr Paul
Questions
Prosecutions, Torture 22w

Body, Sir Richard
Questions
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 732w
Crime, Dept of Trade & Industry 270w
Crime, Dept of Transport 404w
Crime, Home Office 137w
Crime, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 729-30w
Crime, Treasury 587-8w
Customs & Excise, Ethnic minorities 588w

Bolsover
Local government corruption 97w

Bolton
Assisted areas 340
Home helps 216w

Bombings
Birmingham 210w
Lockerbie 17w, 175w

Booth, Mr Hartley
Questions
Yugoslavia, Refugees 233w

Borders region
Low flying 747w

Bosnia-Herzegovina
Armed conflict 232-3w, 304-5w, 500, 1000-2w
Armed forces deployment 166w, 246w, 359-60w
Armed forces officers 1005w
Human rights 305w
Mental hospitals 566w
Mentally handicapped 304w
Military aircraft 90w, 246w
Military intervention (26:07:93) 837-72
Peace keeping operations 501
Peace negotiations 321w
Prisoners 232w, 567w
Prisons 567w
Rape 1004w

Boswell, Mr Tim, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 41-3
Questions
Adult education 106-7w
Adult education, Finance 107w
Dept for Education, Contracts for services 601w
Dept for Education, Data processing 603w
Dept for Education, Non-departmental public bodies 784w
Dept for Education, Public bodies 776w
Dept for Education, Small businesses 415w

Boswell, Mr Tim—continued
Dept Discretionary student grants 314-8w
Further education 105w
Further education, Access funds 109w
Further education corporations, Accountability 782w
Further Education Funding Council for England, Public appointments 784w
General studies, GCE A level 314w
Higher Education Funding Council for England, Government grants 230w
Medical education 602w
Open University, Student grants 415w
Postgraduate education, Speech therapy 107w
Student grants 776w
Student unions 108w
Student unions, Manpower 618w
Student unions, Ministers' domestic visits 776w
Students, Personal income 109w
Students, Social class 108-10w
Teacher training, Open university 105w
Training & enterprise councils, Conferences 450w
Youth services 416w

Botswana
Beef 734-5w

Bottomley, Mr Peter
Questions
Georgiou, Jason, Prosecutions 534w, 626w

Bottomley, Rt Hon Virginia, Secretary of State for Health
Questions
Allitt Inquiry 289w
Committee for Monitoring Agreements on Tobacco Advertising, Annual reports 514w
Family practitioner services 290w
NHS Complaints Review Committee 552w

Bougainville
Independence movements 567-8w

Boundary Commission for England
371w

Boundary Commission for Scotland
190w

Boundary Commission for Wales
371w
Public appointments 371w

Bournemouth
Railway stations 581w

Bovine spongiform encephalopathy
325w, 732w

Bowden, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 756
Questions
Medical Research Council, Environmental health 904w
Occupational pensions 302w
Pensioners, Personal income 461-4w
Pensioners, Social security benefits 460-2w
Water pollution 904-5w

Bowis, Mr John, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Health
Questions
Alcoholism, Residential care 554w
Aycliffe School, Inquiries 514w
Boarding schools, Complaints 828w
Child health 291w
Child health, Community health services 830w
Children, Homelessness 291w
Children, Migration 5w, 833w
Children Act 1989, Enforcement 828w
Children in care 543w
Children in care, Complaints 547w
Children's Residential Care Support Force 291-2w
Children's rights 510w
Community care 831w
Dept of Health, Departmental publications 512-3w
Elder abuse 215w

Bowis, Mr John—continued
Electroconvulsive therapy 215w
Government grants to voluntary organisations 212w
Handicapped, Personal social services 831w
Handicapped children 117w
Health Advisory Service, Annual reports 514w
Hearing aids 544w
HELIOS programme 215w
Home care services, Expenditure 113-4w
Home helps, Fees & charges 216w
Long stay patients, Hospital beds 546w
Medical treatments 289w
Mental Health Act Commission 827w
Mental Health Act Commission, Complaints 826-7w
Mental health services, Finance 539w
Mental hospitals, Women 213w
Mental patients, Ethnic minorities 538-40w
Mentally Disordered Offenders' Services Review 539w
Mentally ill, Respite care 513w
Nursing homes 512w, 830w
Nursing homes, Income support 831w
Nursing homes, Mental patients 830-1w
Paracetamol, Overdoses 214w
Residential care of children, Registered homes 117w
Secure accommodation, Young offenders 213w
Speech therapists, Training 512w
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 829w
Youth treatment centres, Complaints 827-8w

Bows & arrows
370w

Bradford
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 795-8
Property development 706w

Bradley, Mr Keith
Questions
Budgeting loans, Lone parents 1013w
Community care grants, Social security claims 1020w
Disability working allowance 717w
Income support, Social security benefits reductions 1016w
Invalidity benefits, Social security claims 1011w
Public expenditure 31w
Social Fund, Debt collection 1019w
Social Fund, Social security benefits reductions 1019w

Braille
479w, 512-3w, 556w, 569w, 591w, 601-2w, 625w, 647-8w, 701w, 724-5w, 732w, 786-7w, 817-8w, 839-41w, 917-8w, 966w

Brandreth, Mr Gyles
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 361
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 634
Questions
Adjutant-General Corps, Relocation of employees 358w
Foreign Investment in UK, North West region 339-40
National lottery, Licensing 766w
Tourism, Wales 49w

Brazier, Mr Julian
Questions
Children's Residential Care Support Force 291-2w
Ministry of Defence, Higher civil servants 87-8w, 822-3w
Nuclear weapons policy 181-2
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, Performance standards 941-2w

Bread
Prices 730w

Breast cancer
Surgery 121w

Brent Borough Council
Local government audit (27:07:93) 1051-8

Brewing industry
(27:07:93) 1029-36

Bridges
Greater London 77w
Repairs & maintenance 77w
River Severn 580w
Scotland 251w

British Aerospace
84w, 749w, (27:07:93) 1001-10

British citizenship
5-6w, 143-4w, 495-6

British Coal Corporation
348-9, (26:07:93) 938-47, 944w
Directors 957w
Privatisation 255w, 946w, 950w

British Gas
346w, 953w

British Legion
see Royal British Legion

British Manufacturing & Research
Defence contracts 84w

British merchant fleet
Tax allowances 579w

British national (overseas)
Hong Kong 207-8w

British nationality
Hong Kong 374-86w, 620w

British Nationality Act 1981
Questions
5-6w

British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1990
Questions
374-86w

British Nuclear Fuels
347w, 644w, 750w
Defence contracts 453w
Radioactive waste disposal 940w
Russia 942w
West Cumbria Development Agency 951w

British Orthopaedic Association
289w

British Rail
580-3w, 586w
Consultants 578w
Pension funds 158w, 283w
Privatisation 76w, 283w, 578w, 735-6, 918w
Rolling stock 76w

British Rail Maintenance
Privatisation 283-4w

British Sugar
945-6w

British Telecom
346, 950-1w
Privatisation 344-6
Shares 30-1w

British Wool Marketing Board
735w

Broadcasting (Amendment) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
IR (21:07:93) 365-7

***Brooke, Rt Hon Peter**, Secretary of State for National Heritage*
Debates etc.
Arts Council, Ministerial statements (21:07:93) 353-64
Questions
Arts, Public appointments 24-5w
BBC 91w
Bursaries to writers scheme, Scotland 48w
Bursaries to writers scheme, Wales 25-6w
Dept of National Heritage, Departmental publications 556w
English Tourist Board 771w
Fishing, Government grants 413w
Football, Ministers' domestic visits 413w

***Brooke, Rt Hon Peter**—continued*
Independent television levy 765w
National lottery, Licensing 766w
Objects in lieu of tax 245w
Sports, Finance 766-7w
Sports Council 287w
Television, Ownership 24w
Writers in residence scheme 768w

Brown, Mr Nicholas
Debates etc.
Recess motions (26:07:93) 808-10

Browning, Mrs Angela
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 237, 247, 249-54
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 637
Questions
Helicopters 166w
Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Legal Education Etc, Annual reports 212w
NHS Complaints Review Committee 552w
Research councils 235w

Bruce, Mr Ian
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 22
Questions
Army, Armed forces training 351-2w
Business questions 515
Coastal protection, Flood control 265w
Contracts for services 17
House of Commons times of sittings 557w
KONVER programme 341-2
Poole Harbour 920w
Welsh language, Languages education 5-6

Bruce, Mr Malcolm
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 753
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry, Scotland (26:07:93) 778-82
Questions
Exports 336-7

Budgeting
Prescriptions 826w

Budgeting loans
466-7w
Lone parents 1013w

Building Regulations Advisory Committee
345w

Building workers
THORP 270w

Buildings
Crown Office for Scotland 351w
Royal High School 351w

Burden, Mr Richard
Questions
City grants, West Midlands 343-4w
Computers in National Health Service, Procurement 826w
Development areas, Birmingham 945w
Drugs, Counterfeit manufacturing 544w
Health authorities, Pension rights 543w
Parkfield Sterile Supplies Unit 511w
Qa Business Services, Contracts for services 542w
Qa Business Services, West Midlands Regional Health Authority 542-3w
Retirement pensions, Social security benefits rules 466w
Thailand, Prisoners 17w
Urban programme 341w
West Midlands Regional Health Authority, Occupational pensions 510-1w

Bureaucracy
Tourist industry 768-71w

Burglary
629-30w, 632w
Crime prevention 369w

Burnley
Invalidity benefits 465w

Burnley Health Care NHS Trust
Hospital admissions 212w

Burns, Mr Simon
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 206-7
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 526
Questions
British Telecom, Shares 30-1w
Central Statistical Office, Performance standards 301w
Civil servants, Loans 879w
Defence contracts, USA 191
Defence procurement, Chelmsford 166w
EC Budget Council 596-7w
Inland Revenue 596w
Life insurance 296-300w
Securities & Investments Board, Annual reports 239w
Tax yields 879w
VAT, Tax collection 874w

Bursaries to writers scheme
768w
Scotland 48w
Wales 25-6w

***Burt, Mr Alistair**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Social Security*
Questions
Benefits Agency district offices, Administrative delays 1015-6w, 1022w
Child benefit, Expenditure 201w
Child Support Agency, Manpower 280w
Child support officers, Training 192-3w
Dept of Social Security, Data processing 726w
Disposable income 729w
Family credit, Yorkshire & Humberside 202w
Handicap benefits, Low incomes 71-2w, 1011-2w
Housing benefits 277w, 396-7w
Housing benefits, Administrative delays 713w
Housing benefits, Earnings rules 713w
Housing benefits, Expenditure 459-60w, 722-3w, 1008-9w
Housing benefits, Wales 73w, 720w
Income support, Expenditure 723w
Income support, Food 203w, 395w
Income support, Lone parents 200-1w, 203w, 395-6w
Income support, Mortgages 397-8w, 1018w
Income support, Nursing homes 1020w
Income support, Political refugees 728w
Income support, Social security benefits overpayment 720w
Income support, Social security benefits reductions 720-2w, 1016-9w
Income support, Social security claims 1016-8w
Income support, Social security recipients 1019w
Income support, Young people 718-20w
Invalidity benefits, Low incomes 1010-1w
Lone parent families 725w
Lone parents, Income support 72w
Lone parents, Newcastle upon Tyne 193-4w
Lone parents, Scotland 725-6w
Lone parents, Strathclyde 279-80w
Low incomes 460w, 714-5w, 722w, 1008w
Maintenance, Genetics 1026w
Means tested benefits, Capital rules 466w
Personal income 721-2w, 1010w
Severe hardship provision, Bishop Auckland 198-9w
Severe hardship provision, Wales 721w
Social security, Research 201-2w
Social security abuse, Civil service manpower 1025w
Social security benefits, Capital rules 393-4w
Social security benefits, Expenditure 199w
Social security benefits, Take-up 395-6w
Social security benefits, Unemployed 199w
Social security recipients, Income distribution 468w
Social security recipients, Strathclyde 1013-5w
Social security recipients, Taxpayers 726-7w
Unemployment benefits, EC countries 466w

Bus services
582w
Competition 244-5w, 580w, (27:07:93) 982
Privatisation 741
Public petitions (27:07:93) 982
Wales 244-5w

Bus stations
Canada Water 577w

Buses
Design 915-6w
Greater London 583w
Handicapped 160w

Bush, George
Assassination 173w

Business motions
(20:07:93) 323, (21:07:93) 478, 480

Business premises
Rents (26:07:93) 805-7

Business questions
506-16

Business start-up scheme
804w

Business statements
505-6

Butcher, Mr John
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 576-9

Butler, Mr Peter
Questions
Fishing vessels, Licensing 885-7w
National Collections of Industrial & Marine Bacteria, Finance 885w
Recycling, Packaging 890-2w

Bye laws
Water supply industry 897w

Byers, Mr Stephen
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 77
Questions
Assisted places scheme, School fees 613-7w
Assisted places scheme, School population 777-81w
Grant maintained schools, Government grants 609-10w
Grant maintained schools, Headteachers 609w
Grant maintained schools, Public meetings 609w
Grant maintained schools, Pupil exclusions 784w
Grant maintained schools, School admission 609w, 611w
Grant maintained schools, Voting methods 610w
RFA Auxiliary, Shipbuilding 174w
School population 611-3w
Treaty on European Union 500-1

Bypasses
403w
Road construction 579w

Cabinet committees
Environment 559w

Caborn, Mr Richard
Debates etc.
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 465
Questions
Exhibitions, Upper Waiting Hall 95-6w

Cahill, Patricia
17w

Cairns Group
888-9w

Caledonian MacBrayne
313-4w, 974w

Callaghan, Mr Jim
Questions
Aerospace industry, Production 933w
Crimes of violence, Crime prevention 634w
Debts 876w

Callaghan, Mr Jim—continued
EC Social Charter 800w
Economic situation 875w
Economic situation, North West region 932-3w
Neighbourhood watch schemes 631w
Overseas trade, Japan 932w
Prison population 630-1w
Prosecutions, Offensive weapons 633w
Tax yields, Football 876w
Victim support schemes 631-2w

Cameras
Speed limits 160w

Cammell Laird
Closures 340

Campbell, Mrs Anne
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 88, 107
Questions
Ammunition, Uranium 163w
Environmental research, Competition 362w
Grant maintained schools, Local education authorities 608-9w
Grant maintained schools, Teacher training 608w
Mentally ill, Respite care 513w
National Environmental Technology Centre 366w
National Environmental Technology Centre, Finance 932w
National Environmental Technology Centre, Public appointments 931w
NHS, Land acquisition 910-1w
Passports, Sub post offices 856w
Road tax, Post offices 405w
THORP, Employment opportunities 126w
Uranium, Exports 646-7w
Warren Spring Laboratory 361-2w
Warren Spring Laboratory, Consultants 271-2w

Campbell, Mr Menzies
Debates etc.
Scottish legal system, Points of order (22:07:93) 518
Questions
Ballistic missile defence 173w
Defence procurement, International cooperation 188
Identification friend foe systems 173w
NATO, International conferences 92w
Ukraine, START Treaty 92w

Campbell, Mr Ronnie
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 660
Questions
Business questions 511

Campbell-Savours, Mr D N
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 764
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 155
Globe Theatre (19:07:93) 174
Questions
Ammunition, Uranium 819-20w
Armed forces training, Costs 744w
Arms trade 820w

Canada Water
Bus stations 577w

Cancer
Out-patient clinics 52w
Vaccination 510w
Wales 52w

Candidates
Local government elections 958w

Capital rules
Means tested benefits 466w
Social security benefits 393-4w

Car industry
Charitable donations 341
Competition 130w

Caravan Sites Act 1968
Debates etc.
(26:07:93) 967-73

Carbon dioxide
Air pollution control 709-10w, 934w

Cardigan Bay
Marine nature reserves 666-7w

Care & repair initiative
Wales 477w

Career structure
Nurses 480w

Carers
Social security benefits 716w

Caribbean
Sterling 597w

Carlile, Mr Alex
Questions
Courts, Cleaning services 399w
General studies, GCE A level 314w
Locums, Recruitment 551-2w
Low flying, Mid Wales 359w
Military exercises, Wales 358-9w
Social Fund, Floods 467w
Welshpool bypass, Road accidents 663w
Welshpool bypass, Road safety 663w

Carlisle, Mr John
Debates etc.
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 301
M1, Roads works (27:07:93) 1044-8, 1049-50
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 524, 562-4

Carlisle, Mr Kenneth
Questions
Life insurance 296-300w

Carpets
11 Downing Street 876w

Carrington, Mr Matthew
Debates etc.
Charing Cross Hospital (27:07:93) 987-8
Questions
Public transport, Greater London 578w

Carttiss, Mr Michael
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 564, 598

Cash, Mr William
Debates etc.
EC Social Charter, Points of order (23:07:93) 622
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 549-50, (23:07:93) 629-30, 659, 679-82
Questions
Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products, Herbalism 825-6w

Category C prisoners
370-1w

Cemeteries
Local government functions 67w

Cenotaph
Fire services 858w

Central Office of Information
Annual reports 94w

Central Research & Development Committee
507-8w, 541w
Finance 508-9w

Central Statistical Office
Performance standards 301w

Central Wales railway line
735-6

Centre for Applied Microbiology & Research
548w
Manpower 548w

Centre for Information Discussion & Exchange on Asylum
391w, 393w

Cervical cancer
Screening 971w

Cetaceans
731-2w
Nature conservation 707w

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
Computers 760w
Contracts for services 761w
Data processing 597-8w
Non-departmental public bodies 762-3w
Small businesses 759-61w

Chancellor of the Exchequer
see Treasury

Channel Islands
Sterling 597w

Channel tunnel
Criminal injuries compensation 864-5w
Railway freight transport 330-1w
Railway network 405w, 734

Channel Tunnel (International Arrangements) Order 1993
Questions
864-5w

Channon, Rt Hon Paul
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 759
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 656-61
Questions
House of Commons Commission, Expenditure 563-4w
Network SouthEast, Rolling stock 735
Terrace pavilion, House of Commons catering 564w

Charing Cross Hospital
(27:07:93) 983-90

Charitable donations
Car industry 341

Charities Act 1992
Questions
210-1w

Chartermark scheme
13

Chatham Dockyard
183-4, 353w

Chelmsford
Defence procurement 166w

Chemical & Biological Defence Establishment
80-3w, 166-72w
Animal experiments 750w
Industrial accidents 86-7w

Chemical & biological warfare
Defence research 80-3w, 166-72w
Military alliances 166-72w
Transport of hazardous materials 80-3w

Chemical Industries Association
897-8w

Chemicals
AWE Aldermaston 352w

Child abuse
Wales 654w

Child benefit
Expenditure 201w

Child health
291w
Community health services 830w

Child Migrants' Trust
12w

Child patients
Mental hospitals 661-2w
Social Fund 394w

Child prostitution
Crime prevention 135-6w
Wales 135-6w

Child protection registers
Wales 474-6w

Child Support Agency
468w
Manpower 280w
Scotland 280w

Child support officers
Training 192-3w

Child workers
Manufactured imports 265w

Childbirth
835w

Children
Drugs 1w
Evidence 523-5w, 989-90w
Homelessness 291w
Migration 5w, 11-2w, 833w
Missing persons 135w
NHS complaints 828w
Pornography 490
Scottish courts 990w
Tobacco 500w

Children Act 1989
Questions
338w
Enforcement 828w

Children in care
488, 543w
Complaints 547w, 664-5w
Local government expenditure 664w
Local government social services 665w
Roxburgh 970w
Runaway children 472-3w
Telephones 970w
Wales 472-4w, 664-5w

Children's hearings
962-3w

Children's Residential Care Support Force
291-2w

Children's rights
510w

Chisholm, Mr Malcolm
Debates etc.
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 385-8
Social security (20:07:93) 254-8
Questions
Forestry Review Group 502w

Chlorofluorocarbons
487w, 937w
Dept of the Environment 485-7w, 700w
Dept of Trade & Industry 937-9w

Chromium
664-5w

Chronically sick
Independent Living 1993 Fund 200w, 728w
Independent Living Fund 200w
Social services 200w

Church of England
(21:07:93) 469-78, 556w

Churchill, Mr Winston
Questions
Deportation 857-8w
Gurkhas, Exservicemen 823-4w
Legal aid scheme, Immigration 756-7w
Ministry of Defence, Civil service manpower 823w
Organ donors, Costs 831-2w
Overseas workers 858w
Public expenditure 876w
Refugees, Immigration applications 857w
Social security reciprocal agreements 1020w
Temporary immigrants, Immigration applications 857w

Churston Grammar School
School population 781w

Citibank International Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
Rep* (20:07:93) 177

Citibank International Bill (HL) 1992/93—continued
3R order read (26:07:93) 731

Citizen's Charter
13-6, 40w, 400-1w, 762-4w, 782-3w, 832-3w, 928-9w
EC action 41w
Handicapped 94-5w
Local government reform 18-20

Citizenship of the British Dependent Territories
Hong Kong 207-8w

City challenge
347w

City grants
3D 706w
West Midlands 343-4w

City of Durham
Local government reform 346w

City of London
Road closures 578w

City technology colleges
Government grants 776-7w
School governors 781-2w

Civil Aviation Authority
916-7w

Civil defence
Government grants to local authorities 408w

Civil disorder
Nigeria 575w

Civil Rights (Disabled Persons) (Wales) Bill 1992/93
Questions
516

Civil servants
Loans 879w

Civil service agencies
Annual reports 468w
Environment protection 474w
Manpower 790-1w, 814w
Medical Devices Directorate 835w
Scotland 790-1w, 814w
Wales 474w

Civil Service College
42w

Civil service dispersal
Patent Office 134w

Civil service manpower
Enterprise & Deregulation Unit 519w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 150w
Ministry of Defence 823w
Privy Council 557-8w
Social security abuse 1025w

Clapham, Mr Michael
Debates etc.
Social security payments, Public petitions (23:07:93) 623
Questions
Disabled workers, Yorkshire & Humberside 813w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 498
Redundancy, Legislation 804-5w
Training credit, Yorkshire & Humberside 162w

Clappison, Mr James
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 280-3
Young Offenders (Increase of Maximum Sentence) Bill, 1R (20:07:93) 198-200
Questions
Defence expenditure 162w
Deregulation initiative, Small businesses 266-7w
Railway transport, Sound insulation 581w

Clark, Dr David
Questions
Armed forces strength 360-1w
Defence industries, Diversification 178-9
Desert Storm syndrome 180

Clark, Dr David—continued
KONVER programme 647w
Perifra programme 954w

Clarke, Mr Eric
Questions
Training, Young people 803w

Clarke, Rt Hon Kenneth, Chancellor of the Exchequer
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 540, (23:07:93) 636-7
Questions
Central Statistical Office, Performance standards 301w
Crown Estate Commissioners, Pay 469w
Economic situation 875w
Securities & Investments Board, Annual reports 239w
Tax yields 879w

Clarke, Mr Tom
Questions
Water supply industry, Capital investment 175-6w
Water supply industry, Public appointments 175w
Water supply industry, Scotland 175w

Cleaning services
Courts 399w

Clelland, Mr David
Questions
Defence industries, Diversification 266w
Industrial disablement benefits, Newcastle upon Tyne 1020-1w
Standard spending assessments 699w

Cleveland
Local government reform 348w

Clifton-Brown, Mr Geoffrey
Questions
Armed forces housing, Public sector housing sales 185
Compulsorily detained mental patients, Scotland 43w
Fluoridation 513w
Lands Tribunal, Tenant farmers 593-4w

Clinical wastes
Wales 53-4w
Waste disposal 53-4w

Closed circuit television
Crown courts 523-5w
Scottish courts 989w

Closures
Cammell Laird 340

Clothier Inquiry
see Allitt Inquiry

Clothing
Diplomatic service 456-7w
VAT 194

Clwyd
Aerospace industry 933w
Intimidation 476w
Redundancy 923w
Truancy 53w

Clwyd, Mrs Ann
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 354-6
Questions
Lone parent families, Wales 5

Coal
Air pollution control 517-8w

Coal mine closures
267w, 337
River pollution 348-9
Unemployment 800w
Water pollution (20:07:93) 324-32

Coal mining
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 938-47
Methane 943-4w

Coal mining—continued
Water supply (26:07:93) 938-47

Coastal areas
Oil pollution 666w
Petroleum exploration 646w
Special protection areas 494w

Coastal protection
EC action 704w
Expenditure 38w
Flood control 265w
Portland Harbour 265w

Coastal zone management
Scotland 499w

COD Donnington
185-6

Codes of practice
Water & sewerage companies 491w

Coe, Mr Sebastian
Questions
National lottery, Tourism 765-6w
Rural planning, Northern Ireland 851w
Science & technology policy 14

Cohen, Mr Harry
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 755
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 423, 435-6
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 390-2, 400
Handicapped pupils, Points of order (26:07:93) 769
Special education, Grant maintained schools (26:07:93) 802-3
War crimes, Yugoslavia (26:07:93) 798
Questions
Army Air Corps, Military aircraft 751w
British Manufacturing & Research, Defence contracts 84w
Chemical & Biological Defence Establishment, Animal experiments 750w
Chemical & biological warfare, Defence research 80-3w, 166-72w
Computer privacy 855w
Computer privacy, EC action 855w
Computer privacy, Judgments 773w
Computer privacy, Police national computer 852w
Defence equipment, Uranium 750w
Defence expenditure 183
Defence research, Universities 172w, 750w
Deregulation initiative, Data Protection Act 1984 933w
Far East, Defence procurement 571w
Far East, UN Register of Conventional Arms 568w
Genetic engineering, Animal welfare 6-7w
Heart diseases, Medical treatments 830w
Japan, Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 458w
M11, Road construction 918w
Midwives, Manpower 177-80w, 212w, 218w
Military aircraft, Low flying 749w
Military vehicles, Motor vehicle testing 83w
National Audit Office 742
Nuclear fuel reprocessing 13w
Nuclear weapons tests 80w
Open government 758-9w
Project Al Yamamah 84w
Thames Water, Disabled workers 813-4w
Theatre nuclear weapons, Defence research 83w
Treaties 990-7w
Tritium, Defence procurement 751w
US bases 817-9w

Collective bargaining
Scotland 805-6w

Collective worship
Complaints 774-5w

Colombia
Educational aid 233-4w

Colvin, Mr Michael
Debates etc.
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 441
Helicopters, Defence procurement (26:07:93) 908-12, 924

Colvin, Mr Michael—continued
Stansted Airport (27:07:93) 1012-3, 1018
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 645
Questions
Business questions 512
EH101 helicopters, Defence procurement 824w
Farm diversification grant scheme 482w
Grant maintained schools 219-28w
Minesweepers, Defence procurement 743w
RAF Kinloss, Nimrod aircraft 359w
RFA Argus 172-3w
Sellafield 645w
THORP 701w
THORP, Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 999-1000w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 888w

Combined heat & power
Non-fossil fuel obligation 129w

Commercial television
(21:07:93) 365-7

Commission for Local Administration in Wales
664w

Commission for the New Towns
708-9w, 896-7w

Commission on Social Justice
(20:07:93) 201-98

Commissioner for Local Administration in Wales
see Commission for Local Administration in Wales

Commissioner for Protection Against Unlawful Industrial Action
810-1w

Committee for Monitoring Agreements on Tobacco Advertising
Annual reports 514w

Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products
Herbalism 825-6w

Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment
292-3w

Common agricultural policy
Expenditure 193-4

Common fisheries policy
155w, 240-1w

Commonwealth Development Corporation
305-6w

Commonwealth of Independent States
Nuclear safeguards 644w

Communication engineering
RAF Northolt 819w

Community care
831w
Hospital discharges 501w
Scotland 501w, 564-5w

Community care grants
Social security claims 1020w

Community charge
Local government expenditure 907w

Community health services
Child health 830w

Companies
Local authorities 350w

Companies Act 1985
Questions
934w

Company accounts
517w

Company finance
Japan 365-6w

Company investigations
934w
Gilgate Holdings 131w
Ramor Investments 131-2w

Company liquidations
AF Budge Contractors 517w
Bank of Credit & Commerce International 363w
Holiday pay 688w
Pay 688w

Company receivers
Fees & charges 14w

Competition
Air transport 586w
Bus services 244-5w, 580w, (27:07:93) 982
Car industry 130w
Environmental research 362w

Complaints
Boarding schools 828w
Children in care 547w, 664-5w
Collective worship 774-5w
Curriculum 774-5w
Education Reform Act 1988 774-5w
Educational administration 775w
Family doctors 117w
Mental Health Act Commission 826-7w
Opticians 117-8w
Wales 664w
Water supply industry 104w
Youth treatment centres 827-8w

Complaints against police
Young people 865w

Compliance cost assessments
EC law 24w

Compost
Kirklees 341w

Comptroller & Auditor General
see National Audit Office

Compulsorily detained mental patients
Scotland 43w

Computer applications
Valuation tribunals 119-20w

Computer privacy
855w
EC action 855w
Judgments 773w
Police national computer 852w
Political activities 619w

Computers
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 760w
Crown Prosecution Service 772w
Customs & Excise 592-3w
Dept for Education 603-4w
Dept of Employment 788-90w
Dept of Health 512w
Dept of National Heritage 765w
Dept of Social Security 1021-2w
Dept of the Environment 896w
Dept of Trade & Industry 648w
Dept of Transport 401w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 569-71w
Home Office 628-9w
Inland Revenue 592w
Land Registry Office 753-4w
Lord Chancellor's Dept 753w
Ministry of Defence 816w
National Criminal Intelligence Service 629w
Northern Ireland Office 841-6w
Ordnance Survey 712-3w
Scottish Office 966w
Treasury 593w
Treasury Solicitors Dept 772-3w
Welsh Office 658-60w

Computers in National Health Service
Procurement 826w

Concessionary coal
VAT 29w

Concessionary fares
Disability living allowance 397w
Elderly 532w

Concessionary fares*—*continued
Northern Ireland 532w
Railway travel 582-3w
Social security recipients 46w
Walsall Borough Council 397w

Conditions of employment
Belfast Harbour 847w

Conference on Security & Cooperation in Europe
see European Security Conference

Conflict of interests
Non-departmental public bodies 899-900w

Congdon, Mr David
Debates etc.
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 403-9, 411, 417-8, 420, 434, 437, 439, 441
Questions
Citizen's Charter 15
Commissioner for Protection Against Unlawful Industrial Action 810-1w
NHS Pensions Agency 118-9w

Congenital abnormalities
515-6w

Connarty, Mr Michael
Debates etc.
Housing standards, Points of order (20:07:93) 195
Questions
Domestic gas appliances, Gas safety 348

Consolidated Fund (Appropriation) (No 2) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
(21:07:93) 443-4
1R (21:07:93) 444
2R* & 3R* (26:07:93) 815
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1060

Consolidated fund debates
Coal mining (26:07:93) 938-47
Domestic energy conservation (26:07:93) 894-905
Energy conservation (26:07:93) 894-905
Gypsies (26:07:93) 967-73
Helicopters (26:07:93) 906-25
Latin America (26:07:93) 816-36
Limited list prescribing (26:07:93) 948-66
London Transport (26:07:93) 873-93
Security industry (26:07:93) 926-37
Yugoslavia (26:07:93) 837-72

Construction materials
Recycling 900w

Consultants
British Rail 578w
Nuclear power 649-50w
Warren Spring Laboratory 271-2w

Consumers' Association
456w

Contracts
Information Management Group 825w
Plumbing 898w

Contracts for services
17-8
Ambulance services 216-8w, 980w
Armed forces deployment 85-6w
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 761w
Crown Prosecution Service 772w
Customs & Excise 594w
Dept for Education 601w
Dept of Employment 787w
Dept of Health 545w
Dept of National Heritage 764w
Dept of Social Security 724w
Dept of the Environment 694w
Dept of Trade & Industry 648w, 946-7w
Dept of Transport 911w
Directors 587w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 572w
Home Office 625w
Inland Revenue 594w, 877w
Land Registry Office 755w
Local government reform 927w
Local government services 16-7, 102w

Contracts for services*—*continued
Lord Chancellor's Dept 755w
Ministry of Defence 814-6w
Northern Ireland Office 529-30w
Operations West 84-5w
Ordnance Survey 694-5w
Patent Office 134w, 958w
Qa Business Services 542w
Scottish Office 967-8w
South Tyneside Borough Council 905w
Stockton on Tees Borough Council 905w
Treasury 594w
Treasury Solicitors Dept 772w
Welsh Office 480w

Contributions Agency
see Social Security Contributions Agency

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988
Questions
Deregulation initiative 686w

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
103w

Convictions
Offensive weapons 634w, 855-6w

Cook, Mr Frank
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 532, 584-6, (23:07:93) 628, 646, 659, 689, 694, 700-1
War crimes, Yugoslavia (26:07:93) 800-1
Questions
Armed forces housing, Housing standards 184-5

Cook, Mr Robin
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 751-2
Coal mining, Water supply (26:07:93) 940-4, 947
Questions
Assisted areas 343
Postal rates 335

Cook Report
489-90

Coombs, Mr Anthony
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 85-6
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 673-4
Questions
Armed forces officers, Armed forces strength 188
South Africa, Democracy 21w
Young offenders, Sentencing 492

Coombs, Mr Simon
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 24
Questions
Creutzfeldt-Jakob dementia 547w
EC Foreign Affairs Council 1006-7w
Economic policy 190
Heart diseases, Wales 8
M4, Road works 580w
Open government 40w
Overseas trade 502
Overseas trade, Russia 269w
Sudan, Foreign policy 1007-8w
Tourist industry, Bureaucracy 768-71w
Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Annual reports 999w

Cooperative Development Agency
520-2w

Cooperatives
Government assistance 520-2w

Cope, Rt Hon Sir John, Paymaster-General
Questions
Animal products, Imports 878w
Customs, Drug crimes 27w

Cope, Rt Hon Sir John—continued
Customs & Excise, Computers 592-3w
Customs & Excise, Contracts for services 594w
Customs & Excise, Data processing 469w
Customs & Excise, Ethnic minorities 588w
EC Budget Council 596-7w
11 Downing Street, Carpets 876w
Football pools, Betting & gaming duties 28w
Regional aid, EC grants & loans 28-9w
Seized articles, Animal products 878w
Tax yields, Football 876w
Taxation, Air pollution control 877w
Taxation, Packaging 874w
Tobacco duties, Tax evasion 877-8w
UK contributions to EC budget 29w
VAT, Concessionary coal 29w
VAT, Energy prices 29w, 879w
VAT, Housing construction 588-9w
VAT, Press 590w
VAT, Tax collection 874w
VAT, Tax evasion 873-4w
VAT, Tax yields 590w
VAT exemptions, Aids for handicapped 875w
VAT exemptions, Sports 303w
VAT zero rating, EC law 29-30w, 238w

Corbyn, Mr Jeremy
Debates etc.
Angola (27:07:93) 1022, 1027
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 312
Latin America, Foreign policy (26:07:93) 821-6, 829, 833-4
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 448, 452, 464
Questions
EC nationals, Income support 858-9w
Family doctors, Refugees 833w
Government grants to local authorities, Refugees 908w
Manufactured imports, Child workers 265w
Nuclear Electric 946w
Refugees, Self-mutilation 859w

Cormack, Mr Patrick
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 359
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 842-5, 850, 872
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 689, 692-3
Questions
Business questions 506
Refreshment Dept 746
Set-aside schemes, Agricultural land 156w

Cornwall
Bellwin scheme 350w

Coroners
Administrative delays 753w
Northern Ireland 753w

Corporate Affairs Intelligence Unit
118w

Corporate plans
Northern Ireland Social Security Agency 525-6w

Corporation tax
Foreign companies in UK 590w
Tax yields 590w

Corruption
Judges 523w
Trials 533w

Corston, Ms Jean
Debates etc.
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 382-5, 399
Questions
Disability living allowance, Social security appeals 201w
Disabled passengers scheme 331w
Disposable income 301w
Family income 236-8w
Handicap benefits 715-6w
Handicap benefits, Home visits 278w
Handicap benefits, Low incomes 71-2w, 1011-2w
Invalidity benefits, Low incomes 1010-1w

Corston, Ms Jean—continued
Low incomes 460w, 714-5w, 722w, 1008w
Personal income 721-2w, 1010w
Social Fund 202w
Social security, Research 201-2w

Cost effectiveness
Northern Ireland Housing Executive 529w

Couchman, Mr James
Debates etc.
Limited list prescribing (26:07:93) 948-55, 964

Council house rents
Rent arrears 102-3w
Wales 475-6w

Council house sales
Local government revenue 493-4w

Council housing
Empty housing 345w, 695w, 965-7w
Rent increases 341w
Rents 900-1w
Scotland 965-7w

Council housing finance
488w

Council housing management
Wales 475w

Council of Europe
UK delegations 94w

Council of Ministers
515

Council tax
Handicapped 313w
Pensioners 262-3w, 692w
Scotland 313w, 980-2w
Strathclyde 980-2w
Transitional arrangements 101w
Valuation 346w

Council tenants
Rent arrears 479w, 703w, 968-9w

Councillors
Electorate 346w

Councillors' allowances
Scotland 958w

Counterfeit manufacturing
Cyprus 544-5w
Drugs 544-5w

Countryside stewardship scheme
97-8w

County Hall
Operating costs 693w
Property transfer 103w, 693w

Court of Appeal
Judges 308w

Court of Auditors
38w

Courts
Cleaning services 399w
Knutsford 399w
Parliamentary privilege (21:07:93) 351-2
Prison staff 144-5w

Courts & Legal Services Act 1990
Questions
947w

Cousins, Mr Jim
Questions
Anthrax, Vaccination 547-8w, 744w
British Telecom, Privatisation 346
Centre for Applied Microbiology & Research 548w
Centre for Applied Microbiology & Research, Manpower 548w
Child support officers, Training 192-3w
Entry clearances, Indian subcontinent 8w
Environmental technology innovation scheme 956-7w
Export controls, Drugs 955w

Cousins, Mr Jim—continued
Exports, Drugs 647w
High definition television, UK contributions 125w
Iraq-Kuwait conflict, Vaccination 87w
Lone parents, Income support 72w
Lone parents, Newcastle upon Tyne 193-4w
Personal pensions 280-1w
Porton International, Public Health Laboratory Service 549w
Postal franking machines 125w
Prescriptions, Budgeting 826w
Prescriptions, North Tyneside Health Authority 826w
Regional health authorities, NHS finance 112w
Science education, GCE A level 600w
Science education, General certificate of secondary education 600-2w
Small businesses, Government assistance 953-5w
Students, Social class 108-10w
Vaccination, Anthrax 743-4w

Coventry
Peugeot Talbot 341

Cox, Mr Tom
Debates etc.
Cyprus (26:07:93) 785-7
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 447
Questions
Asbestos, Industrial health & safety 275w
Attali, Jacques, Resignations 469w
Court of Appeal, Judges 308w
Criminal appeals 308w
Cyprus, Foreign policy 990w
Deportation 411w
European Development Bank 534-5w
Hong Kong, Vietnamese refugees 457-8w
House of Commons staff, Manpower 870-1w
Judges, Dismissal 308w
Life imprisonment, Homicide 856w
Members' facilities 871w
Northern Cyprus, Members' visits abroad 990w, 998w
Parliamentary precincts 870w
Prison employment, Ethnic minorities 141w
Prison governors 389-90w
Prisoners, Racial discrimination 620w
Prisoners, Restraint equipment 387-8w
Prisons, Sanitation 372w
Vietnamese refugees, Repatriation 457w
Wandsworth Health Authority, Surgery 539-40w
Wandsworth Prison, Construction 626w

Craft design & technology
Educational assessment 217-8w

Creutzfeldt-Jakob dementia
547w

Crime
Dept of Trade & Industry 270w
Dept of Transport 404w
Firearms 370w
Greater London 135w
Harwich 143w
Home Office 137w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 729-30w
Racial conflict 975w
Treasury 587-8w

Crime prevention
367w
Burglary 369w
Child prostitution 135-6w
Crimes of violence 634w
Kerb crawling 136w
Police 630w
Private sector 7-8w
Wales 7w

Crimes against the person
135w

Crimes of violence
Crime prevention 634w

Criminal appeals
308w

Criminal injuries compensation
Channel tunnel 864-5w

Criminal Injuries Compensation Board
638w

Criminal investigation
Illegal immigrants 209-10w
International Investments 240w

Criminal Justice Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1060

Criminal Justice Royal Commission
507

Criminal proceedings
Army in Northern Ireland 186
Nadir, Asil 533w
Scotland 496-8w

Crisis loans
466-7w

Croatia
Armed conflict 18w, 1000w, 1002w
Diplomatic relations 565-6w
Peace negotiations 1001w
Sanctions 233w, 304-5w, 565w, 1000-1w

Crossrail
Land acquisition 585-6w
Railway stations 335w

Crossrail Bill 1991/92
Debates etc.
Order to proceed in next session (20:07:93) 177

Crown courts
Closed circuit television 523-5w

Crown Estate Commissioners
Pay 469w

Crown immunity
AWE Aldermaston 821w

Crown Office for Scotland
Buildings 351w

Crown Prosecution Service
Annual reports 239w
Computers 772w
Contracts for services 772w
Data processing 771w
Public interest 239-40w

Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL) 1991/92
Debates etc.
2R (21:07:93) 403-42

Cryer, Mr Bob
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 362
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 762
Assisted areas, Bradford (26:07:93) 795-8
Assisted areas, Points of order (26:07:93) 772
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 520, 522, (23:07:93) 675
Questions
Business questions 516
Educational assessment 610w
Educational assessment, Disclosure of information 610w
Industrial health & safety, Orders & regulations 802w
Lorries, Axle weights 583-4w
Members' allowances 23-4w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 497-8
3D, City grants 706w
Treaty on European Union, Rees-Mogg, Lord 747

Cultural heritage
Road construction 331w

Cumbria
Employment services 68-9w

Cummings, Mr John
Questions
Dental services, Expenditure 2w
Further education, Access funds 109w
Invalidity benefits, Seaham 39

Cummings, Mr John—continued
Local government reform, City of Durham 346w
Planning permission, Opencast mining 483-4w
Students, Personal income 109w

Cunningham, Mr Jim
Questions
Car industry, Competition 130w
Council housing, Rent increases 341w

Cunningham, Rt Hon Dr John
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 550, 592-6

Curriculum
Complaints 774-5w
Technical education 603w

Curriculum & Assessment Authority for Wales
(19:07:93) 26-167

Curriculum Council for Wales
(19:07:93) 26-167

Currie, Mrs Edwina
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 536, (23:07:93) 641, 651, 653-4, 667-71, 672, 691-2, 696

Curry, Mr David, Minister of State, Dept of the Environment
Questions
County Hall, Property transfer 103w
Greenbelt, Town & country planning 65w
Local government reform 908-9w
Planning permission, Nature conservation 491-2w
PSA Building Management, Privatisation 66-7w

Customs
Drug crimes 27w

Customs & Excise
Computers 592-3w
Contracts for services 594w
Data processing 469w
Ethnic minorities 588w
Relocation of employees 301-2w

Cyprus
Counterfeit manufacturing 544-5w
Foreign policy 990w
Peace negotiations 17-8w

D Notices
454w

Dafis, Mr Cynog
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 758
Energy conservation (26:07:93) 894-8, 901
Questions
Advisory Committee on the Landscape Treatment of Trunk Roads, Public appointments 918-9w
Aggregates 693w
Aggregates, Wales 122w, 652w
Agri-environment action plan, Wales 244w
Alternative energy 641w
Alternative energy, Research 640w
Beaches, Pollution monitoring 664w, 923w
Bed & breakfast accommodation, Wales 653w
Cardigan Bay, Marine nature reserves 666-7w
Care & repair initiative, Wales 477w
Children, Homelessness 291w
Coal, Air pollution control 517-8w
Council house rents, Wales 475-6w
Council housing management, Wales 475w
Data processing, Welsh Office 477w
Economic situation, Environment protection 469w
Educational publications, Expenditure 660w
Environment, Disclosure of information 484w
Environment protection, Civil service agencies 474w
Environment protection, Standards specifications 482w

Dafis, Mr Cynog—continued
Environmental impact assessment 484w
European Environment Agency, Wales 652w
Forest Enterprise, Wales 50w
Hazardous wastes, Wales 664-5w
Hazardous wastes, Water pollution 342w
Housing revenue accounts, Wales 477-8w, 652w
Housing subsidies, Wales 480w
Income support, Food 395w
Interim development orders 478w
KONVER programme, Fishguard 470w
Local government social services, Young people 665w
Marine animals, Fishing catches 731-2w
Merchant seamen, Training 282w
Methyl bromide 905w
Methyl bromide, Air pollution 483w
Methyl bromide, Air pollution control 483w
Methyl bromide, Health hazards 785-6w
Methyl bromide, Industrial health & safety 680w
Mineral resources, Development plans 692w
Non-fossil fuel obligation 640w
Non-fossil fuel obligation, Refuse derived fuel 641-2w
Nuclear power 271w
Oil pollution, Coastal areas 666w
Planning permission, Minerals 264w, 471-2w
Post offices, Rural areas 2-3
Pre-school education, Wales 244w
Pupil exclusions 416w
Pupil exclusions, Wales 658w, 666w
School discipline 415-6w
School meals 314w
Schools, Inspections 601w
Secondary education, School population 654-8w
Student unions, Manpower 618w
Student unions, Ministers' domestic visits 776w
Sustainable development, Research 478w
Tanker ships, Shipping safety 917w
Teachers, Recruitment 922w
Technical education, Curriculum 603w
Technical education, Finance 602-3w
Technical education, Teacher training 602w
Temporary accommodation, Housing standards 691-2w
Temporary accommodation, Wales 663w
THORP, Nature conservation 325-6w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 341w
THORP, Radioactive wastes 895w
Town & Country Planning (Minerals) Act 1981 693w
Transport of hazardous materials, Imports 663w
Uniform business rate, Rate rebates 906w
Vagrancy Act 1824 388w
Water pollution, EC law 665-6w
Welsh Economic Council 477w
Welsh Office, Environmental policy 478w
Wind power 271w, 639-40w
Wind power, Non-fossil fuel obligation 640w

Dalyell, Mr Tam
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 363-4
Iraq, Points of order (19:07:93) 21, (23:07:93) 621-2
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 641-2, 663, 665-6, 676-7, 711-2
Questions
Advisory Committee on Novel Foods & Processes, Lupins 37w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry, Evidence 273w
Astronomer Royal for Scotland 973w
Astronomy, International cooperation 973w
Bush, George, Assassination 173w
Business questions 508-9
Drugs, Counterfeit manufacturing 544-5w
House of Commons select committees, Iraq 558w
Libyan Arab Republic, Sanctions 574w
Metropolitan Police, Falkland Islands 9w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing, Russia 642-3w
Particle Physics & Astronomy Research Council, Public appointments 761w
Postgraduate education 40-1w
Sanctions, Iraq 757w

Dalyell, Mr Tam—continued
Sellafield, Industrial health & safety 804w
Taxation, Air pollution control 877w
Waste management, Licensing 707w

Darling, Mr Alistair
Questions
Insurance companies, Tax allowances 300-1w
Life insurance 877w

Darlington
Income support 395w

Data processing
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 597-8w
Crown Prosecution Service 771w
Customs & Excise 469w
Dept for Education 603w
Dept of Employment 787-8w
Dept of Health 545w
Dept of National Heritage 555w
Dept of Social Security 726w
Dept of the Environment 696-7w
Dept of Trade & Industry 648w
Dept of Transport 584-5w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 568w
Home Office 630w
Inland Revenue 591w
Land Registry Office 754-5w
Lord Chancellor's Dept 754w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 731w
Ministry of Defence 742w
Northern Ireland Office 841w
Ordnance Survey 696w
Scottish Office 967w
Treasury 590-1w
Treasury Solicitors Dept 771w
Welsh Office 477w

Data Protection Act 1984
Questions
773w
Deregulation initiative 933w

Data Protection Registrar
619w

Date marking
Drugs 43w

Davidson, Mr Ian
Questions
Export Credits Guarantee Department, Manpower 268w
Forests, Access to countryside 977w
Tenants, Scotland 504w

Davies, Mr Bryan
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 362
Questions
Trident submarines 164w

Davies, Rt Hon Denzil
Questions
Government securities, Pension funds 239w
Housing benefits, Wales 73w, 720w

Davies, Mr Quentin
Debates etc.
Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) (Amendment) Measure 1993 (21:07:93) 471
Social security (20:07:93) 258-61, 290
Questions
European fighter aircraft, Guided weapons 181

Davies, Mr Ron
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 22-3
Questions
Educational qualifications, Wales 928w
JPM Automatic Machines, Government assistance 244w
Lone parent families, Family income 122w
Lone parent families, Wales 122-3w
Lone parents, Social security recipients 123w
Lone parents, Wales 123w
Low incomes, Wales 123w
Low pay, Wales 662w
Members' correspondence, Wales 481w

Davies, Mr Ron—continued
Pensioners, Wales 338-9w
Redundancy 12
Retirement pensions, Social security benefits rates 197w
Tax yields, Social security finance 878-9w
Unemployment, Wales 480-1w
Women's employment, Wales 244w

Davis, Mr David, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of Public Service & Science
Questions
Central Office of Information, Annual reports 94w
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Computers 760w
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Contracts for services 761w
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Data processing 597-8w
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Non-departmental public bodies 762-3w
Citizen's Charter 14-6, 40w
Citizen's Charter, Handicapped 94-5w
Citizen's Charter, Local government reform 18-20
Non-departmental public bodies, Expenditure 763w
Oceanographic vessels, Ship chartering 762w
Passive smoking 41w
Privatisation 16
Public appointments, Women 41w
Science & technology 95w
Scientific & technological options assessment 598w

Davis, Mr Terry
Debates etc.
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 466
Questions
Income tax, Disclosure of information 878w
Inland Revenue, Contracts for services 877w

Day, Nicholas
(22:07:93) 613-20

Day, Mr Stephen
Questions
RailTrack 578w
Speed limits, Cameras 160w

Day care of children
EC action 675w
Scotland 189-90w

Day nurseries
Palace of Westminster 558w

Death
Feddon, Robin (26:07:93) 976-80
Fishing crews 579w
Industrial diseases 295w
Railway workers 336-7w
Steroid drugs 476w

Debt collection
Social Fund 1019w

Debts
876w
Small businesses 364-5w
SubSaharan Africa 305-6w

Debts written off
Developing countries 12-3w

Deer
852-3w

Deer Act 1991
Questions
852-3w

Defence contracts
Airwork 747-8w
British Manufacturing & Research 84w
British Nuclear Fuels 453w
European fighter aircraft 165w
RAF Institute for Aviation Medicine 749w
Swan Hunter Shipbuilders 752w

Defence contracts—continued
Tornado aircraft 749w
USA 191
Warships 752w

Defence equipment
Uranium 750w

Defence estimates
Nuclear weapons tests 80w

Defence expenditure
162w, 165w, 183-4
Military aircraft 90w
NATO countries 183

Defence Export Services Organisation
84w

Defence industries
7, 179
Diversification 178-9, 187, 266w
Manpower 178
Wales 923w

Defence land
745-6w
Armed forces training 745w
Blood sports 740w
Gun sports 741w
Hampshire 182
Land acquisition 174w, 182, 741-2w, 824-5w
Otterburn 741w
Sites of special scientific interest 360w
Wales 742w

Defence Press & Broadcasting Committee
454w

Defence procurement
7-8, 187-8
Chelmsford 166w
EH101 helicopters 824w
European fighter aircraft 180-1
Far East 571w
Hercules aircraft 163w
International cooperation 188
Minesweepers 737w, 743w
Tritium 751w

Defence research
Chemical & biological warfare 80-3w, 166-72w
Theatre nuclear weapons 83w
Universities 172w, 750w

Defence Research Agency
245w
Environment 68w

Defence review
188-9

Defence support agencies
454w

Dementia
Pension rights 394w

Democracy
South Africa 21w

Demonstrations
Northern Ireland 39w

Denham, Mr John
Questions
Building Regulations Advisory Committee 345w
Family doctors, Prescriptions 551w
Information Management Group, Contracts 825w
Mentally Disordered Offenders Services Review 539w
Minesweepers, Defence procurement 737w
Overseas aid 535-6w
UK contributions, International organisations 536-8w

Dental services
Expenditure 2w
Health hazards 193
Hygiene 515w, 553-4w
Per capita costs 293-4w

Dentists
511w
Patients 2w

Departmental forms
Income tax 90-1w, 878w
Inland Revenue 28w
Retirement pensions 197w

Departmental publications
Blind 479w, 512-3w, 556w, 569w, 591w, 601-2w, 625w, 647-8w, 701w, 724-5w, 732w, 786-7w, 817-8w, 839-41w, 917-8w, 966w
Dept for Education 601-2w
Dept of Employment 786-7w
Dept of Health 512-3w
Dept of National Heritage 556w
Dept of Social Security 724-5w
Dept of the Environment 701w
Dept of Trade & Industry 647-8w
Dept of Transport 917-8w
English language 65w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 569w
Home Office 625w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 732w
Ministry of Defence 79-80w, 817-8w
Northern Ireland Office 839-41w
Scottish Office 966w
Social security benefits rules 681-5w
Treasury 591w
Uranium 245-6w
Welsh Office 479w

Departmental records
5w, 833w

Departmental responsibilities
Technology transfer 15w

Deportation
205-6w, 411w, 857-8w
Immigrant detainees 618w
Immigration controls 5w

Dept for Education
Computers 603-4w
Contracts for services 601w
Data processing 603w
Departmental publications 601-2w
Non-departmental public bodies 783-4w
Public bodies 776w
Small businesses 415w

Dept of Employment
662w, 790-1w
Computers 788-90w
Contracts for services 787w
Data processing 787-8w
Departmental publications 786-7w
Finance 814w
Non-departmental public bodies 791w
Public bodies 791w
Small businesses 786w

Dept of Health
Computers 512w
Contracts for services 545w
Data processing 545w
Departmental publications 512-3w
Public appointments 110-2w, 119w
Public bodies 829-30w
Small businesses 511-2w

Dept of National Heritage
Computers 765w
Contracts for services 764w
Data processing 555w
Departmental publications 556w
Non-departmental public bodies 763-4w
Public bodies 763w
Small businesses 555w

Dept of Social Security
Computers 1021-2w
Contracts for services 724w
Data processing 726w
Departmental publications 724-5w
Public bodies 1020w
Small businesses 723-4w
Statistics 277-8w

Dept of the Environment
Chlorofluorocarbons 485-7w, 700w
Computers 896w
Contracts for services 694w

Dept of the Environment*—*continued
Data processing 696-7w
Departmental publications 701w
Halons 487w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons 487w
Public bodies 899w
Small businesses 710-1w

Dept of the Registers of Scotland
Annual reports 192w

Dept of the Serjeant at Arms
Manpower 870-1w

Dept of Trade & Industry
Chlorofluorocarbons 937-9w
Computers 648w
Contracts for services 648w, 946-7w
Crime 270w
Data processing 648w
Departmental publications 647-8w
Environment 133w
Halons 938w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons 937w
Public bodies 944w
Small businesses 934-6w

Dept of Trade inquiries
Accountants 130-4w, 269w
Costs 130w
Equal opportunities 132w
Ethnic minorities 132w
Legal profession 130-4w
Pay 132w
Stoy Hayward 133w

Dept of Transport
Compensation 335w
Computers 401w
Contracts for services 911w
Crime 404w
Data processing 584-5w
Departmental publications 917-8w
Public bodies 912w
Small businesses 911w

Deregulation initiative
15w, 150w, 267w, 343-4, 346-7, 500, 561-2w, 951-2w
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988 686w
Data Protection Act 1984 933w
Small businesses 266-7w, 347-8
Trade competitiveness 953-4w

Deregulation Unit
see Enterprise & Deregulation Unit

Desert Storm syndrome
179-80, 757-8w

Design
Buses 915-6w

Deva, Mr Nirj Joseph
Debates etc.
Charing Cross Hospital (27:07:93) 988
Questions
Crossrail, Land acquisition 585-6w
Magistrates' courts, Administration of justice 306-7w
Magistrates' courts, Performance standards 307-8w
Radiocommunications Agency, Performance standards 519-20w
Road construction, Property transfer 911-2w

Developing countries
Debts written off 12-3w

Development areas
Birmingham 945w

Development banks
UK contributions 16w

Development Board for Rural Wales
Public sector housing sales 339-40w

Development plans
Mineral resources 692w

Devlin, Mr Tim
Questions
Bypasses, Road construction 579w
Economic situation 500
Ministry of Defence, Relocation of employees 178

Devlin, Mr Tim*—*continued
Property development, Stockton on Tees 66-7w
Stockton on Tees Borough Council, Contracts for services 905w
Tibet, Human rights 93w

Devon & Cornwall Training & Enterprise Council
Take-up of employment 785w

Devonport Dockyard
86w, 174w

Dewar, Mr Donald
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 201-12, 216, 219-25, 232, 281, 293
Questions
Income support, Political refugees 728w
Income support, Social security benefits overpayment 720w
Income support, Social security benefits reductions 720-2w
National insurance contributions 74w
National insurance contributions, Retirement age 74w
Social security recipients, Taxpayers 726-7w

Diabetes
Prescriptions 2w

Dickens, Mr Geoffrey
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 23
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 535-6, (23:07:93) 686, 691, 696
Questions
Business questions 509
Contracts for services 18
Lonrho 268w
Nuclear power 339

Dicks, Mr Terry
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 360
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 446, 454, 459-60
Questions
British Coal Corporation, Privatisation 946w

Diesel fuel
Excise duties 402w

Diet & disease
Wales 8

Digestive system disorders
Hospital consultants 42w
Hospital waiting lists 979w

Diplomatic relations
Armenia 234w
Croatia 565-6w

Diplomatic service
Clothing 456-7w
Iran 20w, 456-7w
Land ownership & tenure 572-4w
Slovakia 21-2w

Dir92/117/EEC
451-2w

Dir92/77/EEC
238w

Dir81/851/EEC
149-50w

Dir79/409/EEC
989w

Direct labour departments
490w
Lambeth Borough Council 490-1w

Directly managed units
826w

Director General of Fair Trading
see Office of Fair Trading

Director General of Gas Supply
see Office of Gas Supply

Director General of Water Services
see Office of Water Services

Director of Public Prosecutions
239w

Directors
British Coal Corporation 957w
Contracts for services 587w
Disqualifications 130w
Ministers (26:07:93) 795-8
Office of Gas Supply 953w
Training & enterprise councils 678-9w, 807w

Directors of public health
Eastern Health & Social Services Board 527w

Disability living allowance
278w
Administrative delays 716-7w
Concessionary fares 397w
Mobility of disabled 1012w
Social security appeals 201w
Social security claims 467-8w
Take-up 1009-10w

Disability premium
1016-8w

Disability working allowance
717w
Take-up 1009w

Disabled facilities grants
341w

Disabled passengers' scheme
331w

Disabled workers
Aids for handicapped 412w
Blind 411-2w, 691w
Employment level 411w, 812-3w
House of Commons staff 23w
Personal reader service scheme 411-2w
Thames Water 813-4w
Training 807-8w
Training & enterprise councils 807-8w
Unemployment 807w
Voluntary work 726w
Yorkshire & Humberside 813w

Discretionary student grants
314-8w

Disease control
Salmonella 452w

Diseases of Animals (Therapeutic Substances) (Revocation) Order 1993
Debates etc.
(19:07:93) 25

Dismissal
Judges 308w

Disposable income
301w, 729w

Disqualifications
Directors 130w
Drinking & driving 336w

District health authorities
Accountability 832-3w
Public appointments 112w, 552w

Dobson, Mr Frank
Debates etc.
Astra Training Services, Points of order (26:07:93) 768
Questions
Average earnings 792-8w
Official engagements 71w
Young people, Scotland 188-9w

Docklands light railway
Construction 579-80w

Dockyards
Radioactive wastes 353w

Dogs
Animal breeding 633w

Domestic energy conservation
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 894-905

Domestic gas appliances
Gas safety 348

Domestic violence
Accident & emergency departments 213w
Estimates days (21:07:93) 368-402, 443

Domestic wastes
Recycling 692w

Doncaster
Mining 126w

***Dorrell, Mr Stephen**, Financial Secretary to the Treasury*
Questions
British Telecom, Shares 30-1w
Civil servants, Loans 879w
Corporation tax, Foreign companies in UK 590w
Customs & Excise, Relocation of employees 301-2w
Drug industry, Tax yields 28w
Income tax, Departmental forms 90-1w, 878w
Income tax, Disclosure of information 878w
Income tax, Overseas workers 874w
Income tax, Tax yields 27-8w
Inland Revenue 596w
Inland Revenue, Computers 592w
Inland Revenue, Contracts for services 594w, 877w
Inland Revenue, Data processing 591w
Inland Revenue, Departmental forms 28w
Insurance companies, Tax allowances 300-1w
Lands Tribunal, Tenant farmers 593-4w
Surplus land, Land acquisition 303w
Tax allowances, Pensions 27w
Tax burden, Yorkshire & Humberside 90w
Tax evasion 879w
Tax yields, Pensions 28w

Dorset
EC grants & loans 341-2

***Douglas-Hamilton, Lord James**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scottish Office*
Questions
Astronomer Royal for Scotland 973w
Astronomy, International cooperation 973w
Bed & breakfast accommodation, Scotland 176w, 496w
Caledonian MacBrayne 974w
Concessionary fares, Social security recipients 46w
Council tenants, Rent arrears 968-9w
Crime, Racial conflict 975w
Criminal proceedings, Scotland 496-8w
Edinburgh Airport 970w
Evidence, Children 989-90w
Housing associations, Housing construction 254w
Housing associations, Ombudsman 254w
Housing associations, Tenants 253-4w, 979w
Industrial diseases, Compensation 191w
Lockerbie, Bombings 175w
Miscarriages of justice, Scotland 191-2w
Parole Board, Part-time employment 502w
Police authorities, Scotland 564w
Prison staff, Social workers 190-1w
Road accidents, Scotland 494-6w
Royal Artillery Range Hebrides 977w
Scottish Secondary Education Review Committee 250w
Sea transport, Scottish Islands 313-4w
Sea transport, Subsidies 252w
Special education, Appeals 252w
Teachers, Performance appraisal 45-6w
Tenants, Scotland 504w
Tobacco, Children 500w
Young people, Scotland 188-9w

Dounreay
Decommissioning 943w
Nuclear accidents 969w
Radioactive waste disposal 129w

Dowd, Mr Jim
Questions
A205, Road works 732-3
Dogs, Animal breeding 633w
Housing benefits, Earnings rules 713w

***Dowd, Mr Jim**—continued*
Poultry, Transport of animals 733-4w

Drift nets
248w
Salmon 151-4w

Drinking & driving
368w
Disqualifications 336w

Drinking Water Inspectorate
263w
Manpower 264w
Operating costs 264w

Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency
331-2w, 405w

Drivers Vehicles & Operators' Information Technology
Privatisation 405w

Driving instruction
Lorry drivers 583w

Driving licences
EC law 914w
Goods vehicles 913-5w
Public service vehicles 913-5w

Driving offences
331-2w

Driving Standards Agency
583w

DROPS
83w

Drug abuse
559w
Benzodiazepines 854w
Greater London (27:07:93) 1037-43
Health education 784w, 860w
Legal aid 399-400w
Prisoners 639w
Residential care 554w
Steroid drugs 619w
Tranquillisers 825w
Wales 627w

Drug crimes
Customs 27w
European Police Office 205w
Harwich 27w
Prisoners' release 758w
Thailand 758w

Drug hazards
Zopiclone 827w

Drug industry
Tax yields 28w
Wales 10-1, 51w

Drug side effects
Steroid drugs 511w

Drugs
Children 1w
Counterfeit manufacturing 544-5w
Date marking 43w
Export controls 955w
Exports 647w
Misleading advertising 827w
Sanctions 955w
Scotland 43w

Dunbartonshire
Local government constituencies 959w

Duncan Smith, Mr Iain
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 106-8
Social security (20:07:93) 282, 286-8
Questions
Bus services, Privatisation 741
Young offenders 369w

Dundee
Invalidity benefits 278-9w

Dungeness B power station
Nuclear safety 128w

Dunn, Mr Bob
Questions
A205, Road works 733
Air traffic control 916-7w
Air transport 284w
Airports, South East region 332w
East London river crossing 584w
Exports, Japan 336
M25, Road construction 333-5w
Passenger transport executives 581-2w
Railway travel, Concessionary fares 582-3w
Stone Kent 93w
Vehicle Inspectorate, Annual reports 583w

Dunnachie, Mr Jimmy
Questions
Aerospace industry 268w

Dunwoody, Mrs Gwyneth
Debates etc.
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 307
Questions
Arab boycott 1003-4w
Armed forces training, Belize 162w
Average earnings, Women 791w
British Rail, Consultants 578w
Income support, Social security recipients 1019w
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Israel 1003-4w
Pre-school education 775-6w
Refreshment Dept, Working conditions 746
United Nations 1006w
United Nations, Israel 1003w
Vote Office 309w
Women's employment 690-1w

Durant, Sir Anthony
Questions
One stop shop initiative 266w

Duty of care
Bank of England 873w

Dykes, Mr Hugh
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 629, 669
Questions
County Hall, Property transfer 103w

Eagle, Ms Angela
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 213, 218
Questions
British merchant fleet, Tax allowances 579w
Cammell Laird, Closures 340
Prisons, Ships 637w

Early retirement
Teachers 230w

Earnings rules
Housing benefits 713w
Travel to interview scheme 691w

Easington colliery
348-9

East Africa
Special voucher scheme 372-4w

East Anglian Regional Health Authority
4w

East Coast Main Line (Safety) Bill 1991/92
Debates etc.
2R order read (22:07:93) 487

East London
Youth training 810w

East London river crossing
285-6w, 584w, 921w

East Lothian
Local government reform 44w

East Midlands
Hard core unemployed 799w
Prisoner escorts 148w
Prisoners' transport 9w

Eastern Europe
Nuclear power stations (26:07:93) 782-5

Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Directors of public health 527w

Eastham, Mr Ken
Questions
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 9-10w

EC action
Biotechnology (19:07:93) 167
Citizen's Charter 41w
Coastal protection 704w
Computer privacy 855w
Day care of children 675w
Mail order selling 544w
Meat (26:07:93) 815
Recycling 692w
Set-aside schemes 37w
Unemployment 70w

EC Agriculture Council
157w

EC aid
Human rights (26:07:93) 814

EC Budget Council
596-7w

EC Committee of the Regions
Public appointments 998w

EC Cons Doc 7033/93
(19:07:93) 167

EC Cons Doc 6654/93
(26:07:93) 815

EC Draft 4148/93
(19:07:93) 167

EC Draft 6744/93
(19:07:93) 167

EC Draft 9909/92
(20:07:93) 814

EC Draft 8984/88
124-5w

EC Energy Council
Nuclear power 940w

EC Environment Council
Voting behaviour 67w

EC external relations
19w

EC Foreign Affairs Council
1006-7w

EC free food scheme
736w

EC grants & loans
Dorset 341-2
Employment training 669w
Inverclyde Enterprise Zone 989w
Merseyside 945w
Northern Ireland 258-62w
Regional aid 28-9w, 947-8w
Shipbuilding 363-4w
Tourism 322-3w
Youth training 669w

EC internal trade
Standards specifications 520w

EC Labour & Social Affairs Council
806-7w

EC law
520w
Compliance cost assessments 24w
Driving licences 914w
Nature conservation 706w
Parental leave 680w
VAT zero rating 29-30w, 238w
Veterinary drugs 149-50w
Water pollution 348-50w, 665-6w

EC nationals
Income support 858-9w

EC Social Charter
192, 275-6w, 295w, 346-7, 499, 501-4, 506-7, (22:07:93) 519-611, 800w

EC Social Charter—continued
Treaty on European Union (23:07:93) 625-723

EC social policy
806w

Economic & Social Committee
Public appointments 999w

Economic policy
190, 192-3
Unemployment 876w

Economic situation
499-500, 875w
Armenia 234w
Environment protection 469w
North West region 932-3w

Edinburgh Airport
970w

Education Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Allocation of time motion & Lords amendments (19:07:93) 26-167
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1060

Education Reform Act 1988
Questions
774-5w
Complaints 774-5w

Education support grants
415-6w
Health education 604-8w

Educational administration
Complaints 775w

Educational aid
Colombia 233-4w

Educational assessment
610w
Craft design & technology 217-8w
Disclosure of information 610w
English education 217-8w
Gwent 121w

Educational finance
Paramedical staff 513w
Standard spending assessments 100w

Educational needs
Standard spending assessments 32w

Educational publications
Expenditure 660w
Wales 660w

Educational qualifications
Teachers 229-30w
Wales 928w

Efficiency scrutinies
598-9w, 819w

Eggar, Mr Tim, Minister for Energy
Questions
Advanced gas-cooled reactors, Radioactive waste disposal 104w
Alternative energy 268-9w, 641w
Alternative energy, Research 640w, 647w
British Coal Corporation, Directors 957w
British Coal Corporation, Privatisation 946w, 950w
British Nuclear Fuels, Radioactive waste disposal 940w
British Nuclear Fuels, Russia 942w
British Nuclear Fuels, West Cumbria Development Agency 951w
Coal mine closures 267w, 337
Coal mine closures, River pollution 348-9
Coal mining, Methane 943-4w
Combined heat & power, Non-fossil fuel obligation 129w
Dept of Trade & Industry, Computers 648w
Dept of Trade & Industry, Contracts for services 946-8w
Dept of Trade & Industry, Data processing 648w
Dept of Trade & Industry, Departmental publication 647-8w

Eggar, Mr Tim—continued
Dept of Trade & Industry, Public bodies 944w
Dounreay, Decommissioning 943w
Dounreay, Radioactive waste disposal 129w
Dungeness B power station, Nuclear safety 128w
EC Energy Council, Nuclear power 940w
Electricity, Imports 13w
Energy Advisory Panel 943w
Energy policy 338
Import controls, Norway 333
Mining, Redundancy 126w
Non-fossil fuel obligation 14w, 337-8, 640-2w, 646w
Non-fossil fuel obligation, Refuse derived fuel 641-2w
Nuclear accidents, Conferences 951w
Nuclear accidents, Emergency planning 645w
Nuclear Electric 946w
Nuclear Electric, Profitability 644w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing 13w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing, Japan 13w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing, Russia 642-3w
Nuclear power 14w, 130w, 271w, 338-9
Nuclear power, Consultants 649-50w
Nuclear power, Liability 644w
Nuclear safeguards 13w, 644w
Nuclear safeguards, Emergency planning 940w
Nuclear safeguards, Training 644w
Office of Gas Supply, Directors 953w
Opencast mining 268w
Overseas trade, Norway 333-4
Petroleum exploration, Coastal areas 646w
Petroleum exploration, Sea pollution 518-9w
Petroleum exploration licences 518w
Plutonium 649w
Public appointments, Merseyside 133w
Radioactive materials, Disclosure of information 644w
Radioactive waste disposal 940w
Radioactive waste disposal, Advanced gas-cooled reactors 645w
Radioactive wastes, Japan 642w
Sellafield 645w
Sellafield, Nuclear fuel reprocessing 104w
Sellafield, Transport of radioactive materials 930-1w
Sizewell C, Construction 14w
THORP 643w, 645w
THORP, Building workers 270w
THORP, Compensation 124w
THORP, Employment opportunities 124w, 126w
THORP, Plutonium 124w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 366w, 931w
THORP, Radioactive wastes 124w, 643w, 702w
THORP, Transport of radioactive materials 643w, 931w
Transport of radioactive materials, Safety 273w
Trawsfynydd power station, Decommissioning 338-9
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, Performance standards 940-2w
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, Privatisation 643w
Uranium, Exports 646-7w
Uranium, Nuclear fuel reprocessing 125-6w, 646w
Uranium, Prices 645-6w
Wind power 271w, 639-40w
Wind power, Non-fossil fuel obligation 640w

EH101 helicopters
(26:07:93) 906-25
Defence procurement 824w

Elder abuse
215w

Elderly
Concessionary fares 532w
Shared ownership schemes 482w

11 Downing Street
Carpets 876w

Elections
Nigeria 574-5w

Electoral register
Homelessness 639w
Public access 869w

Electorate
Councillors 346w

Electricity
Imports 13w

Electricity interconnectors
13w

Electroconvulsive therapy
215w

Electronic road charging
332w

Elletson, Mr Harold
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 232-3w, 1001-2w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed forces deployment 246w, 359w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mental hospitals 566w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military aircraft 246w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Prisoners 232w, 567w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Prisons 567w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rape 1004w
Croatia, Armed conflict 18w
Croatia, Diplomatic relations 565-6w
Croatia, Sanctions 233w, 565w, 1000-1w
Defence expenditure, Military aircraft 90w
Nagorno Karabakh, Armed conflict 1002-3w, 1005w
Serbia, Sanctions 232w
Yugoslavia, Armed conflict 1005w
Yugoslavia, Rape 17-8w
Yugoslavia, Refugees 231w
Yugoslavia, Sanctions 18w, 1002w

Elton Committee
see School Discipline Inquiry

Emergency planning
Nuclear accidents 645w
Nuclear safeguards 940w

Emery, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 646-50
Questions
Business questions 507
Exhibitions, Upper Waiting Hall 242w

Employment action
667-9w

Employment level
27w, 804w
Blind 411w
Disabled workers 411w, 812-3w
Manufacturing industries 803-4w
Mid Glamorgan 49w
Scotland 805w
Statistics 799w
Young people 802w

Employment opportunities
Foreign investment in UK 267w, 811-2w
THORP 124w, 126w

Employment protection
Astra Training Services 809w

Employment rehabilitation
801w

Employment schemes
European Social Fund 785w
Northern Ireland 839w

Employment Service Agency
681-5w
Performance standards 412w

Employment Service local offices
Vacancies 688-90w

Employment services
Cumbria 68-9w

Employment training
654w, 667-9w, 785w, 799w
EC grants & loans 669w

Employment training—continued
Scotland 964w
Wales 653w

Empty housing
Armed forces married quarters 163w, 741w
Council housing 345w, 695w, 965-7w
Home Office 638w
NHS 553w

Energy Advisory Panel
943w

Energy conservation
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 894-905
Industry 934w

Energy Efficiency Office
(26:07:93) 894-905

Energy policy
338

Energy prices
VAT 29w, 879w

English education
Educational assessment 217-8w

English language
Departmental publications 65w

English Nature
see Nature Conservancy Council for England

English Tourist Board
771w

Enright, Mr Derek
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 49, 55, 57, 62
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 564-6, (23:07:93) 669
Questions
Desert Storm syndrome 179
Opencast mining 268w

Enterprise & Deregulation Unit
267w, 519w, 952w
Civil service manpower 519w

Entry clearances
305w
Foreign tourists 387w
Indian subcontinent 8w

Environment
Cabinet committees 559w
Defence Research Agency 68w
Dept of Trade & Industry 133w
Disclosure of information 484w
Firing ranges 79w
Ministry of Defence 80w

Environment protection
Civil service agencies 474w
Economic situation 469w
Expenditure 906w
Forestry Commission 977w
International trade 936-7w
Legislation 519w
Overseas Development Administration 873w
Standards specifications 126-7w, 482w
THORP 889w
Urban areas 65-6w
Water & sewerage companies 491w

Environmental audit
126-7w

Environmental health
Medical Research Council 904w

Environmental impact assessment
484w
Forestry 978w
Road construction 916w

Environmental Information Regulations 1992
Questions
79-80w, 133w, 484w

Environmental management options scheme
956-7w

Environmental policy
Welsh Office 478w

Environmental research
Competition 362w

Environmental technology innovation scheme
956-7w

Environmentally sensitive areas
Road traffic 53w
Wales 53w

Equal opportunities
Dept of Trade inquiries 132w
Women's employment 803w
Young people 691w

Equal Opportunities Commission
691w

Equine viral arteritis
EC countries 732-3w
Poland 733w

Erasmus
107w

Essex
Hard core unemployed 801w

Essex County Council
(26:07:93) 793-5

Estimates days
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 368-402, 443

Etherington, Mr Bill
Debates etc.
Coal mining, Water supply (26:07:93) 938-40
River Wear, Environment protection (20:07:93) 325-6, 329
Questions
Slaughterhouses, Animal welfare 735-6w
Transport of animals, Animal welfare 736w

Ethnic cleansing
233w, 1001-2w

Ethnic minorities
Customs & Excise 588w
Dept of Trade inquiries 132w
Government grants to local authorities 628w, 979w
Mental patients 538-40w
NHS 832w
Police 136w
Prison employment 141w
Scotland 979w
Tower Hamlets 6w

EUREKA
941w

EUROENVIRON
956-7w

European Agricultural Guidance & Guarantee Fund
880-1w

European Bank for Reconstruction & Development
see European Development Bank

European Communities (Amendment) Act 1993
Debates etc.
(22:07:93) 519-611, (23:07:93) 625-723

European Communities (Amendment) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
(21:07:93) 351-2
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323
Questions
190-1

European Court of Justice
29-30w, 73w

European Development Bank
469w, 534-5w

European Development Fund
UK contributions 231w

European Environment Agency
Wales 652w

European fighter aircraft
181-2
Defence contracts 165w
Defence procurement 180-1
Guided weapons 181

European Parliament constituencies
371w

European Police Office
Drug crimes 205w

European Regional Development Fund
Wales 49w

European Security Conference
1002-3w

European Social Fund
669w
Employment schemes 785w

Evans, Mr David
Questions
Rolling stock, Investment 581w

Evans, Mr John
Questions
Manufacturing industries 265w

Evans, Mr Jonathan
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 202
Questions
Central Wales railway line 735-6
Hill farming, Farm incomes 50-1w
Lone parent families, Wales 5
Sheep premiums 882w

Evans, Mr Nigel
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 263
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 705
Questions
Assaults on police, Injuries 493-4
Civil service agencies, Annual reports 468w
Disability living allowance, Social security claims 467-8w
Gibraltar, Air transport 458w
Post offices, Rural areas 335
Public appointments, Women 41w
Salmon, Fish farming 176w
Terrorism, Northern Ireland 262w

Evans, Mr Roger
Debates etc.
Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) (Amendment) Measure 1993 (21:07:93) 472-7, 478
Questions
Employment Service Agency, Performance standards 412w

Evans Committee
see Curriculum Council for Wales

Evennett, Mr David
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 763
Questions
East London river crossing 285-6w

Ever Ready
Wolverhampton 347

Evidence
Arms to Iraq Inquiry 273w
Children 523-5w, 989-90w

Ewing, Mrs Margaret
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 763
Scottish legal system, Points of order (22:07:93) 517-8
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 661-3
Unemployment, Public petitions (20:07:93) 322
Questions
Cervical cancer, Screening 971w
EC Committee of the Regions, Public appointments 998w
GP fundholders, Laboratories 971-2w

Ewing, Mrs Margaret—continued
NHS finance, Scotland 973-4w
Non-domestic rates, Rating revaluations 979w
Rateable value, Scotland 978w

Excise duties
Diesel fuel 402w
Petrol 402w

Exhaust emission controls
159w

Exhibitions
Upper Waiting Hall 23w, 95-6w, 242-3w, 456w, 871w

Export controls
Drugs 955w

Export Credits Guarantee Department
12-3w, 268w, 305-6w
Manpower 268w

Export licensing
Art works 26w

Exports
Drugs 647w
Ford Motor Company 335-6
Furs 948w
Japan 336
Machine tools 129w
North American Free Trade Agreement 126w
Uranium 646-7w

Exservicemen
Armed forces married quarters 164w
Gurkhas 823-4w
Housing 164w

Extradition
India (21:07:93) 445-68
Terrorism (21:07:93) 445-68

Eye disorders
Medical treatments 979w
Northern Ireland 323-4w
Scotland 247-8w, 979w
Screening 543w

Eye tests
Northern Ireland 323w
Optical charges 323w, 969w
Scotland 969w

Faber, Mr David
Questions
Croatia, Armed conflict 1000w, 1002w
Croatia, Peace negotiations 1001w
Croatia, Sanctions 1000-1w

Fabricant, Mr Michael
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 21
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 301, 311-2
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 453-4
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 710
Questions
Defence procurement 7
Local government services, Contracts for services 16-7
Parliamentary data & video network 563w, 743-4

Facilities agreements
Police 369w

Factories
Listed buildings 253w

Fair Trading Act 1973
Questions
296-300w

Fairbairn, Sir Nicholas
Questions
Edinburgh Airport 970w

Falkland Islands
Armed conflict 9w
Metropolitan Police 9w

Family credit
Yorkshire & Humberside 202w

Family doctors
510w
Complaints 117w
Pay 290w
Prescriptions 551w
Refugees 833w

Family health services authorities
Accountability 832-3w
Finance 288w, 541-2w, 923-7w
Greater London 288w, 541-2w
Wales 923-7w

Family income
236-8w
Lone parent families 122w

Family practitioner services
290w
Psychology 4w

Family premium
1016w

Far East
Defence procurement 571w
UN Register of Conventional Arms 568w

Farm Animal Welfare Council
325w

Farm diversification grant scheme
482w

Farm incomes
Hill farming 50-1w

Farms
Furs 450-1w, 883-4w, 972w

Fatchett, Mr Derek
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 766
Questions
Arms to Iraq Inquiry 336
Assisted areas 16w
Dept of Trade & Industry, Contracts for services 946-7w
Deregulation initiative 15w
Higher Education Funding Council for England, Government grants 230w
Innovation, Finance 952w
PSA Building Management, Privatisation 66w
Royal Armouries, Leeds 26w
Teachers, Early retirement 230w

Faulds, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 360
Questions
Art works, Export licensing 26w
Business questions 508
Objects in lieu of tax 768w

Feddon, Robin
Death (26:07:93) 976-80

Fenner, Dame Peggy
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 753-4
Questions
Chatham Dockyard 183-4

Ferries
Shipping safety 731-2

Festivals & special occasions
Air force 88w

Fiddlers Ferry power station
Sulphur dioxide 898w

Field, Mr Barry
Questions
Hercules aircraft, Defence procurement 163w

Field, Mr Frank
Questions
Child benefit, Expenditure 201w
Northern Ireland Social Security Agency, Corporate plans 525-6w
Social security recipients, Income distribution 468w

Finance (No 2) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1060

Financial Services Act 1986
Questions
296-300w

Fine defaulters
Prison sentences 620w

Fines
637-8w
Parking offences 494w

Fire Advisory Panel
345w

Fire prevention
Vocational education 372w

Fire regulations
703w

Fire services
Belfast Airport 851w
Cenotaph 858w

Firearms
Crime 370w

Fires
AWE Aldermaston 740w
Multiple occupation 142w
Tyres 209w, 263w

Firing ranges
Environment 79w
Kirkcudbright 176-7w
Sennybridge 737-9w

Fish conservation
35-7w
Spain 737w

Fish farming
Salmon 176w

Fisher, Mr Mark
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 363
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 636
Questions
Citizen's Charter 16

Fisheries
Licensing 451w
Orders & regulations 972w
Scotland 972w

Fishguard
KONVER programme 470w

Fishing
Government grants 413w
Licensing 52w
Wales 52w

Fishing catches
451w
Marine animals 731-2w
Northern Ireland 256-8w
Salmon 151-4w, 248w, 256-8w

Fishing crews
Death 579w

Fishing gear
242w
Salmon 248w

Fishing offences
736-7w

Fishing vessels
Decommissioning 37w, 150-2w
Inspections 159w
Licensing 736-7w, 885-8w
Prosecutions 736w
Shipping accidents 744w
Shipping registration 737w
Spain 155w

Fisons
103-4w

Flood control
Coastal protection 265w

Floods
Llandudno 467w
Social Fund 467w

Fluoridation
513w
Health hazards 830w
Scotland 501w
Strathclyde 250-1w

Fluoride
Prescriptions 289-91w

Flynn, Mr Paul
Debates etc.
Ministerial statements, Points of order (22:07:93) 518
Parliamentary questions, Points of order (20:07:93) 197
Points of order (26:07:93) 768-9
Questions
Astra Training Services 809w
Astra Training Services, Employment protection 809w
Astra Training Services, Training 809w
British Orthopaedic Association 289w
Business questions 514
Congenital abnormalities 515-6w
Dental services, Hygiene 515w
Exhaust emission controls 159w
Folic acid, Pregnancy 839w
Hip replacements 118w
House of Commons Commission, Expenditure 563-4w
Local government functions, Cemeteries 67w
NHS, Procurement 289-90w
Orthopaedics, Manpower 506-7w
Patent Office 134-5w, 365w
Patent Office, Civil service dispersal 134w
Patent Office, Contracts for services 134w, 958w
Patents, EC countries 134w
Personal pensions 468w
Unemployment, Wales 9-10

Folic acid
Pregnancy 839w

Food
Income support 203w, 395w

Food prices
734w

Football
Ministers' domestic visits 413w
Tax yields 876w

Football pools
Betting & gaming duties 28w
Retail trade 639w

Ford Motor Company
Exports 335-6

Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Computers 569-71w
Contracts for services 572w
Data processing 568w
Departmental publications 569w
Non-departmental public bodies 1005w
Public bodies 1005w
Small businesses 571w

Foreign companies in UK
Corporation tax 590w

Foreign investment in UK
49-50w
Employment opportunities 267w, 811-2w
North West region 339-40
Northern Ireland 532-3w

Foreign policy
Cyprus 990w
Sudan 1007-8w

Foreign spouses
Immigration applications 139-41w, 998w

Foreign tourists
Entry clearances 387w
Immigration applications 385-8w

***Foreign tourists**—continued*
Republic of Ireland 255w
USA 255-6w

Forensic Science Service
Annual reports 864w

Forest Enterprise
977-8w
Wales 50w

Forestry
Environmental impact assessment 978w
Scotland 978w

Forestry Commission
Environment protection 977w
Land acquisition 189w, 978w
Nature conservation 977-8w

Forestry Review Group
502w

Forests
Access to countryside 653-4w, 977w
Land acquisition 928w
Land ownership & tenure 653w
Privatisation 977w
Wales 653-4w, 928w

Forman, Mr Nigel
Questions
Tax allowances, Pensions 27w

***Forsyth, Mr Michael**, Minister of State for Employment*
Questions
Access to work programme, Blind 691w
Asbestos, Industrial health & safety 275w
Asbestosis 276-7w
Availability for work 675-6w
Average earnings 791-2w
Commissioner for Protection Against Unlawful Industrial Action 810-1w
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988, Deregulation initiative 686w
Dept of Employment, Finance 814w
Disabled workers, Aids for handicapped 412w
Disabled workers, Employment level 411w
EC Labour & Social Affairs Council 806-7w
EC Social Charter 275-6w, 295w, 800w
EC social policy 806w
Employment Service Agency, Performance standards 412w
Employment services, Cumbria 68-9w
Hard core unemployed, Essex 801w
Hazardous materials, Training 67-8w
Homeworking, West Yorkshire 804w
Industrial diseases, Asbestos 70-1w
Industrial diseases, Death 295w
Industrial health & safety, Orders & regulations 802w
Job interview guarantee scheme 674-7w
Jobclubs 670-4w, 811-2w
Labour market 801-2w
Low incomes 687-8w
Low pay 686w
Maternity rights 798w
Methyl bromide, Health hazards 785-6w
Methyl bromide, Industrial health & safety 680w
Occupational deafness 274-5w
Occupational deafness, Compensation 274w
Parental leave, EC law 680w
Personal reader service scheme, Disabled workers 411-2w
Redundancy, Legislation 804-5w
Rehabilitation centres, Preston 295w
Restart programme 677-8w
Right to strike, Public service 686w
Sellafield, Industrial health & safety 804w
Sheltered placement scheme 274w
Social security benefits rules, Departmental publications 681-5w
Thames Water, Disabled workers 813-4w
Travel to interview scheme, Earnings rules 691w
Unemployed, Sickness benefits 801w
Unemployment, EC action 70w
Unemployment benefits, Fraud 689-90w
Vacancies, Employment Service local offices 688-90w

***Forth, Mr Eric**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education*
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 26-9, 31-2, 38, 41, 49-52, 63, 65-7, 73, 75-8, 94-7, 110-2
Questions
Assisted places scheme, School fees 613-7w
Assisted places scheme, School population 777-81w
City technology colleges, School governors 781-2w
Dept for Education, Computers 603-4w
Drug abuse, Health education 784w
Grant maintained schools, Government grants 776-7w
Grant maintained schools, Pupil exclusions 437w, 784w
Health education, Education support grants 604-8w
Pupil exclusions 416w
School discipline 415-6w
School meals 314w
School population 611-3w
Sex education 617-8w
Special education 32-6w, 610w
Speech therapists, Manpower 218-9w
Teachers, Early retirement 230w
Technical education, Teacher training 602w

Foster, Mr Don
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 42, 58-61, 70, 72-3, 76, 90
Questions
Housing benefits, Expenditure 459-60w
Social security benefits, Expenditure 199w
Social security benefits, Unemployed 199w
Unemployment, EC action 70w

Foulkes, Mr George
Questions
Local government reform, Strathclyde 44-5w

Fox, Dr Liam
Questions
Aerospace industry 127-8w
Aycliffe School, Inquiries 514w
Dungeness B power station, Nuclear safety 128w
Labour market 801-2w
Public records 41-2w
Sheltered housing 488-90w
Standards specifications, Environment protection 126-7w

France
Privatisation 501

Fraud
Fund raising 210-1w
National insurance contributions 1023-5w
Unemployment benefits 689-90w

***Freeman, Rt Hon Roger**, Minister for Public Transport*
Questions
A550, Road construction 402w
Barrow-Carlisle railway line 586w
British Rail, Consultants 578w
British Rail, Pension funds 158w, 283w
British Rail, Privatisation 578w
British Rail, Rolling stock 76w
British Rail Maintenance, Privatisation 283-4w
Bus services 582w
Bus services, Competition 580w
Bus services, Privatisation 741
Buses, Handicapped 160w
Channel tunnel, Railway freight transport 330-1w
Channel tunnel, Railway network 405w, 734
Dept of Transport, Departmental publications 917-8w
Network SouthEast, Rolling stock 77-8w
Passenger transport executives 581-2w
Public transport 402w
Public transport, Wirral 403w
RailTrack 578w
Railway safety, Temporary employment 335w

***Freeman, Rt Hon Roger**—continued*
Railway stations, Ashford 733-4
Railway stations, Bournemouth 581w
Railway transport, Sound insulation 581w
Railway travel, Concessionary fares 582-3w
Railway travel, Wales 918w
Railway workers, Death 336-7w
Red Star, Privatisation 282w
Road construction, Administrative delays 401w
Rolling stock, Investment 581w
West coast railway line 918w
West coast railway line, Investment 579w
West coast railway line, Joint ventures 77w
West coast railway line, Railway travel 578-9w

French, Mr Douglas
Questions
Accident & emergency departments, Administrative delays 114-5w
Employment rehabilitation 801w
Exhibitions, Upper Waiting Hall 456w
Homicide, Offensive weapons 632w
Life insurance 273w
Motor insurance 586w
Motor insurance, Prosecutions 629w
Offensive weapons, Convictions 634w, 855-6w
Police, Road traffic control 630w
Road tax, Tax evasion 586w, 631w
Road traffic offences 629-30w, 632w
Taxis, Road blocks 282-3w

Fringe benefits
NHS trusts 501w

Fry, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Leather & fur industries (21:07:93) 479-82

Fuels
VAT 191-2, (26:07:93) 778-82

Fund raising
Fraud 210-1w
10 Downing Street 757w

Funding Agency for Schools
(19:07:93) 26-167

Furs
Exports 948w
Farms 450-1w, 883-4w, 972w
Overseas trade 949w
Retail trade 947-9w

Further education
105w
Access funds 109w

Further education corporations
Accountability 782w

Further Education Funding Council for England
109w
Public appointments 784w

Fyfe, Mrs Maria
Debates etc.
Housing standards, Points of order (20:07:93) 195
Questions
Arts, Scotland 250w
Beaches, Sea pollution 187w
Bed & breakfast accommodation, Scotland 176w, 496w
Community care, Hospital discharges 501w
Council tax, Handicapped 313w
Digestive system disorders, Hospital consultants 42w
Digestive system disorders, Hospital waiting lists 979w
Eye disorders, Medical treatments 979w
Eye disorders, Scotland 247-8w
GP fundholders, Scotland 46-7w
Greater Glasgow Health Board, Acute beds 43w
Hospital admissions, Scotland 565w
Hospital waiting lists, Scotland 979w
Iran, Diplomatic service 20w, 456-7w
Maternity services, NHS trusts 187w

Fyfe, Mrs Maria—continued
Mental patients, Hospital admissions 499w
Mental welfare officers, Scotland 499w
NHS trusts, Fringe benefits 501w
Nurses, Scotland 500w
Nursing homes, Labour turnover 497w
Nursing homes, Manpower 497-9w
Nursing homes, Scotland 248-9w
Ophthalmology, Hospitals 247w
Ophthalmology, Out-patient clinics 247w
Prison staff, Social workers 190-1w
Scottish health boards, Capital investment 43-4w
Sea pollution, Scotland 186-7w
Surgery, Scotland 980w
Water pollution, Scotland 187w

Galbraith, Mr Sam
Questions
Local government constituencies, Dunbartonshire 959w

Gale, Mr Roger
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 758-9
Limited list prescribing (26:07:93) 955-8
Questions
VAT exemptions, Sports 303w

Gallie, Mr Phil
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 531
Questions
Business questions 514
Community care, Scotland 564-5w
Malawi, Overseas aid 872-3w
Scottish courts, Performance standards 309-12w

Galloway, Mr George
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 682-5

Gaming machines
National lottery 25w

Gapes, Mr Mike
Questions
Airport security 74-5w
Arab boycott 1003w
Arms trade 745w
Arms trade, Israel 744w
Arms trade, Middle East 744w
Lockerbie, Bombings 17w, 175w
Metropolitan Police 367w

Garel-Jones, Rt Hon Tristan
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 531, 534, 537

Garnier, Mr Edward
Questions
Disabled workers, Voluntary work 726w
Special constables 497

Gas fuels
Local authorities 346w

Gas safety
Domestic gas appliances 348

Gas supply industry
Monopolies & Mergers Commission 953w

GATT
734-5w, 936-7w, 943w, 1006-7w

Gatwick Airport
Night flying 78w, 284w

GCE A level
General studies 107w, 314w
Science education 600w

Gender selection
(26:07:93) 793-5

General certificate of secondary education
Science education 600-2w

General studies
GCE A level 107w, 314w

Generic prescribing
4-5w, 537-8w

Genetic engineering
Animal welfare 6-7w

Genetics
Immigration applications 20w
Maintenance 1026w

George, Mr Bruce
Debates etc.
Helicopters, Defence procurement (26:07:93) 912
Security industry (26:07:93) 926-33
Questions
Defence expenditure 184

Georgiou, Jason
Prosecutions 534w, 626w

Geriatric patients
Hospital admissions 115-6w
Hospital beds 504w
Lothian Health Board 504w
York Health Authority 510w

Germany
Air travel 256w
Armed forces deployment 182-3

Gerrard, Mr Neil
Questions
Ethnic minorities, Government grants to local authorities 628w
Pakistan, Immigration applications 20w

Ghana
Visas 207-10w

Gibraltar
Air transport 458-9w

Gilgate Holdings
Company investigations 131w

Gill, Mr Christopher
Questions
EC external relations 19w

Gill nets

Gillan, Mrs Cheryl
Debates etc.
Adoption, Leave (27:07:93) 991-4, 996, 999
Questions
EC free food scheme 736w
Mental health services, Finance 539w
Women's employment, Equal opportunities 803w

Glamorgan
Local government reform 50w

Glasgow Underground
959w

Globe Theatre
(19:07:93) 168-76

Gloucestershire Constabulary
Radio 859w

Godman, Dr Norman A
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 672-4, 687
Questions
Ambulance services, Contracts for services 980w
Child Support Agency, Manpower 280w
Concessionary fares, Elderly 532w
Concessionary fares, Social security recipients 46w
Council tax, Strathclyde 980-2w
Evidence, Children 523-5w, 989-90w
Factories, Listed buildings 253w
Fishing crews, Death 579w
Fishing vessels, Shipping accidents 744w
Handicap benefits, Social security recipients 531w
Hard core unemployed, Scotland 987w
Housing associations, Housing construction 254w
Housing associations, Ombudsman 254w

Godman, Dr Norman A—continued
Housing associations, Tenants 253-4w, 979w
Income support, Lone parents 395-6w
Invalidity benefits, Women 464-5w
Inverclyde Enterprise Zone, EC grants & loans 989w
Inverclyde Enterprise Zone, Nature conservation 989w
Judgments 73w
Lone parent families, Scotland 503-4w
Lone parents, Scotland 725-6w
Lone parents, Strathclyde 279-80w
Low incomes, Scotland 502-4w
Midwives, Manpower 984-8w
Miscarriages of justice, Scotland 191-2w
Package holidays 268w
Paediatrics, Hospital consultants 531-2w, 550-1w, 981-4w
Parole Board, Part-time employment 502w
Property development, Kelburn 253w
Scottish Arts Council 987-8w
Sewage, Waste disposal 254-5w
Shipbuilding Intervention Fund 273w
Social security recipients, Strathclyde 1013-5w
Youth unemployment, Strathclyde 981w

Godsiff, Mr Roger
Debates etc.
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 457-9

"Good Childcare Good Business"
806w

Goodlad, Rt Hon Alastair, Minister of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Questions
Armenia, Diplomatic relations 234w
Armenia, Economic situation 234w
Bougainville, Independence movements 567-8w
Diplomatic service, Land ownership & tenure 572-4w
Far East, Defence procurement 571w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Computers 569-71w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Contracts for services 572w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Data processing 568w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Non-departmental public bodies 1005w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Public bodies 1005w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Small businesses 571w
Hong Kong, Vietnamese refugees 457-8w
Iran, Diplomatic service 20w
Kosovo, Armed conflict 92-3w
NATO, International conferences 92w
Russia, Religious freedom 93w
Serbia, Military aircraft 93w
Tibet, Human rights 19-20w, 93w
Ukraine, START Treaty 92w
Vietnamese refugees, Repatriation 457w

Goods vehicles
Driving licences 913-5w

Goodson-Wickes, Dr Charles
Debates etc.
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 405
Latin America, Foreign policy (26:07:93) 816
Questions
NHS trusts 826w

Gordon, Ms Mildred
Questions
Craft design & technology, Educational assessment 217-8w
Entry clearances 305w
Jubilee line, Construction 579-80w
Social security benefits, Capital rules 393-4w

Gorman, Mrs Teresa
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 526
Questions
Energy conservation, Industry 934w

Gorman, Mrs Teresa—continued
Lone parent families, Wales 3-4
Treaty on European Union 501

Gorst, Mr John
Questions
Council tax, Transitional arrangements 101w
Motorways, Road traffic 78-9w
National lottery, Gaming machines 25w
Traffic noise, Sound insulation 79w

Gosport
Shipping accidents 587w

Government buildings
Management 559-600w

Government car service
905w

Government Communications Headquarters
1000w
Research 234w

Government departments
Billing 949w
Surplus land 303w

Government grants to local authorities
Civil defence 408w
Ethnic minorities 628w, 979w
Local government social services 654w
Refugees 908w

Government grants to voluntary organisations
212w
Youth organisations 470w, 650w

Government securities
Life insurance 239w
Pension funds 239w

Government Statistical Service
277-8w

GP fundholders
288-9w, 552w
Expenditure 509w
Hospital patients 661w
Laboratories 971-2w
Scotland 46-7w
Wales 661w

Graham, Mr Thomas
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 204, 214, 224, 241-2, 261-5
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 661, 666, 668, 670
Questions
Business questions 515-6
Hotels, Safety standards 267-8w

Grant, Sir Anthony
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 586-8
Questions
Small businesses, Debts 364-5w

Grant, Mr Bernie
Debates etc.
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 307

Grant maintained schools
191, 219-28w, 416-40w, 442-6w
Conferences 440-2w
Government grants 609-10w, 776-7w
Headteachers 609w
Inspections 441-2w
Local education authorities 608-9w
Public meetings 609w
Pupil exclusions 437w, 784w
School admission 609w, 611w
School closures 607-8w
School governors 782-3w, 928-9w
School population 446-50w
Special education (26:07:93) 802-3
Teacher training 608w
Voting methods 228-9w, 449w, 610w
Wales 928-9w

Grants for education support & training
415-6w

Great Yarmouth & Waveney District Health Authority
4w

Greater Glasgow Health Board
Acute beds 43w
Maternity services 43w

Greater London
Air pollution monitoring 907w
Assaults on police 390-2w
Bridges 77w
Buses 583w
Crime 135w
Drug abuse (27:07:93) 1037-43
Family health services authorities 288w, 541-2w
Higher education 230w
Parking offences 211w, 494w
Priority routes 158w
Prisoner escorts 147w
Public service 742-3
Public transport 578w, (26:07:93) 873-93
Racial attacks 369w
Summary trial 307w
Taxis 282-3w
Youth training 802-3w

Greenbelt
Town & country planning 65w

Greenham Common
Planning permission 907w

Greenhouse effect
Conferences 66w

Greenway, Mr Harry
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 95, 99-100
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 446, 453
Questions
Bentley, Derek, Prerogative of mercy 370w
Buses, Greater London 583w
Business questions 514-5
Foreign investment in UK, Employment opportunities 267w
Group of Seven, Balance of trade 270-1w
Horse racing, Manpower 803w
Military bands 173w
Official engagements 94w, 319w, 757w
Parking offences, Fines 494w
Parking offences, Greater London 211w
Post offices, Social security payments 336

Greenway, Mr John
Debates etc.
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 376-9
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 313-5
Questions
Business questions 513
Football pools, Betting & gaming duties 28w
Yorkshire Water, Sewage 895w

Griffiths, Mr Nigel
Questions
Business questions 516
Deregulation initiative 347
Economic & Social Committee, Public appointments 999w
Unfair trading practices, Mortgages 947w

Griffiths, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 761
Helicopters, Defence procurement (26:07:93) 906-8

Griffiths, Mr Win
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 91-2, 97-101, 109-12, 153-4
Questions
British Rail, Privatisation 578w
Local government reform, Glamorgan 50w
Oceanographic vessels, Ship chartering 762w
Recycling, Construction materials 900w
Road traffic, Air pollution 579w

Griffiths, Mr Win—continued
Special education 32-6w, 610w
Special education, Wales 54-6w
Young offenders 369w

Griffiths Committee
see Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Legal Education Etc

Grocott, Mr Bruce
Debates etc.
Broadcasting (Amendment) Bill, 1R (21:07:93) 365-7
Prime Minister's questions, Points of order (20:07:93) 195-6
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 532
Questions
Armed forces storage depots, Railway freight transport 185-6, 454w
Dept of Health, Public appointments 110-2w

Group 4 Securitas
144-5w, 499-500

Group of Seven
999w
Balance of trade 270-1w

"Growth of Social Security"
(20:07:93) 201-98

Grylls, Sir Michael
Questions
Arms trade, Indian subcontinent 745w
Audit, Small businesses 347
Business questions 509

Guard Service
84w

Guided weapons
AWE Aldermaston 353w
European fighter aircraft 181
Warships 246w

Guillotine
(19:07:93) 26-167

Gummer, Rt Hon John Selwyn, Secretary of State for the Environment
Questions
Carbon dioxide, Air pollution control 709-10w
Commission for the New Towns 896-7w
Council housing, Rents 900-1w
Council tax, Valuation 346w
County Hall, Operating costs 693w
County Hall, Property transfer 693w
Dept of the Environment, Computers 896w
Dept of the Environment, Data processing 696-7w
Dept of the Environment, Departmental publications 701w
Dept of the Environment, Public bodies 899w
Dept of the Environment, Small businesses 710-1w
Departmental publications, English language 65w
Greater London 64-5w
Local government functions 909-10w
Local government reform 708w
Non-departmental public bodies, Conflict of interests 899-900w
Public appointments 700-1w
Recycling, Packaging 890-2w
Rented housing, Property transfer 902w
Standard spending assessments 699w
Sustainable development 102w

Gun sports
Defence land 741w

Gunnell, Mr John
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 853, 869-70
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 704-6
Questions
Adult education, Finance 107w
Family doctors 510w
Further education 105w

Gunnell, Mr John—continued
Homicide, Trials 211w, 306w
Local authorities, Companies 350w
Medical education, Student numbers 290w
Technology transfer, Departmental responsibilities 15w
Young offenders, Secure accommodation 492

Gurkhas
Exservicemen 823-4w

Gwent
Educational assessment 121w

Gypsies
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 967-73

***Hague, Mr William**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept for Social Security*
Questions
Dept of Social Security, Computers 1021-2w
Dept of Social Security, Contracts for services 724w
Dept of Social Security, Public bodies 1020w
Dept of Social Security, Small businesses 723-4w
National insurance contributions 74w
National insurance contributions, Fraud 1023-5w
National insurance contributions, Retirement age 74w
Occupational pensions 468w
Pension rights, Dementia 394w
Pensioners, Personal income 281-2w, 461-4w
Pensioners, Social security benefits 460-2w
Pensions 73w
Pensions & Divorce Working Group 73w
Personal pensions 280-1w, 468w, 727w
Retirement pensions, Departmental forms 197w
Retirement pensions, Hospital patients 717w
Retirement pensions, Social security benefits rates 197w
Retirement pensions, Social security benefits rules 466w
Social security benefits, Yugoslavia 727w
Social security reciprocal agreements 1020w

Hain, Mr Peter
Questions
Business questions 513-4
Citizen's Charter 14-5
Neath & Port Talbot Hospital 50w
Post offices, Rural areas 2
Valleys initiative, Expenditure 662w

Hall, Mr Mike
Questions
Armed forces housing 163w
Disability living allowance, Take-up 1009-10w
Disability working allowance, Take-up 1009w
Fiddlers Ferry power station, Sulphur dioxide 898w
Health education, Education support grants 604-8w
Local Government Commission for England 696w

Halons
Dept of the Environment 487w
Dept of Trade & Industry 938w

***Hamilton, Mr Neil**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Corporate Affairs*
Debates etc.
Brewing industry (27:07:93) 1032-6
Questions
Accountants, Dept of Trade inquiries 269w
Administrative receivers 15w
AF Budge Contractors, Company liquidations 517w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry 336
Assisted areas, Bolton 340
Audit, Professional organisations 13w, 269w
Audit, Small businesses 347
Auditing Practices Committee 270w
Bank of Credit & Commerce International, Company liquidations 363w
Cammell Laird, Closures 340
Car industry, Competition 130w

Hamilton, Mr Neil—continued
Company accounts 517w
Company investigations 934w
Company receivers, Fees & charges 14w
Dept of Trade inquiries, Accountants 130-4w
Dept of Trade inquiries, Costs 130w
Dept of Trade inquiries, Equal opportunities 132w
Dept of Trade inquiries, Pay 132w
Deregulation initiative 15w, 267w, 346-7, 951-2w
Deregulation initiative, Data Protection Act 1984 933w
Deregulation initiative, Small businesses 266-7w, 347-8
Deregulation initiative, Trade competitiveness 953-4w
Directors, Disqualifications 130w
Economic situation, North West region 932-3w
Enterprise & Deregulation Unit, Civil service manpower 519w
Ever Ready, Wolverhampton 347
Exports 335-7
Exports, Japan 336
Foreign investment in UK, North West region 339-40
Gilgate Holdings, Company investigations 131w
Homeowners' insurance, Pensioners 366w
Insolvency Service 363w
Legislation, Pollution control 519w
Life insurance 273w
Monopolies & Mergers Commission, Gas supply industry 953w
Ramor Investments, Company investigations 131-2w
Redundancy, Merseyside 340
Stoy Hayward, Dept of Trade inquiries 133w
Sugar, Production 945-6w

Hampshire
Defence land 182

Hampson, Dr Keith
Questions
Air force, Armed conflict 453w
Local authorities, Gas fuels 346w

Hams Hall power station
Planning permission 103w

Handicap benefits
715-6w
Home visits 278w
Low incomes 71-2w, 1011-2w
Northern Ireland 531w
Social security recipients 531w

Handicapped
Access to buildings 807w
Access to Parliament 455-6w
Buses 160w
Citizen's Charter 94-5w
Council tax 313w
Information 470w
Personal social services 831w
Standards specifications 518w
Wales 470w

Handicapped children
117w
Wales 122w, 337w, 470w

Handicapped drivers
Parking 921w
Wales 921w

Handicapped pupils
Access to buildings 921w
Wales 921w

***Hanley, Mr Jeremy**, Minister for the Armed Forces*
Debates etc.
Feddon, Robin, Death (26:07:93) 976-80
Questions
Adjutant-General Corps, Relocation of employees 358w
Air force, Armed conflict 453w
Air force, Armed forces discharges 164w
Air force, Festivals & special occasions 88w
Ammunition, Uranium 163w, 180

Hanley, Mr Jeremy—continued
Anthrax, Vaccination 744w
Armed forces, Race relations 824w
Armed forces, Redundancy 189
Armed forces deployment, Bosnia-Herzegovina 166w, 246w, 359-60w
Armed forces deployment, Germany 182-3
Armed forces deployment, Hong Kong 88w
Armed forces discharges 174w
Armed forces housing 163w
Armed forces housing, Housing standards 184-5
Armed forces housing, Public sector housing sales 184-5
Armed forces married quarters, Empty housing 163w, 741w
Armed forces married quarters, Exservicemen 164w
Armed forces married quarters, House purchase 163-4w, 741w
Armed forces married quarters, Widows 741w
Armed forces medical services, Hospitals 743w
Armed forces officers, Armed forces strength 188
Armed forces pay 824w
Armed forces recruitment 188-9
Armed forces storage depots, Railway freight transport 185-6, 454w
Armed forces strength 360-1w, 822w
Armed forces training, Belize 162w
Armed forces training, Costs 744w
Armed forces training, Defence land 745w
Army, Armed forces training 351-2w
Army Air Corps, Military aircraft 751w
Army Air Corps, RAF Wattisham 357w
Army bases 351w
Army in Northern Ireland, Army strength 823w
Army strength 822-3w
British Manufacturing & Research, Defence contracts 84w
Bush, George, Assassination 173w
Chemical & Biological Defence Establishment, Animal experiments 750w
Chemical & Biological Defence Establishment, Industrial accidents 86-7w
Chemical & biological warfare, Defence research 80-3w, 166-72w
D Notices 454w
Defence expenditure 165w
Defence land 745-6w
Defence land, Blood sports 740w
Defence land, Gun sports 741w
Defence land, Land acquisition 174w, 182, 741w, 824-5w
Defence land, Otterburn 741w
Defence land, Sites of special scientific interest 360w
Defence land, Wales 742w
Desert Storm syndrome 179-80
Firing ranges, Sennybridge 737-9w
Fishing vessels, Shipping accidents 744w
Gurkhas, Exservicemen 823-4w
Helicopters 166w
Iraq-Kuwait conflict, Vaccination 87w
Joint Maritime Communications Centre, RAF St Mawgan 746w
Low flying, Borders region 747w
Low flying, Mid Wales 359w
Military aircraft, Bosnia-Herzegovina 246w
Military aircraft, Low flying 749w
Military bands 173w
Military exercises, Wales 358-9w
Military Survey, Performance standards 454w
Ministry of Defence, Civil service manpower 823w
Ministry of Defence, Higher civil servants 87-8w, 822-3w
Ministry of Defence, Non-departmental public bodies 453w
NATO, Standardisation 749w
Naval Aircraft Repair Organisation, Performance standards 455w
Navy, Armed forces deployment 452-3w
Nimrod aircraft, Air force bases 745w
Nuclear weapons policy 189
Public bodies, Ministry of Defence 752w
RAF Institute for Aviation Medicine, Defence contracts 749w

Hanley, Mr Jeremy—continued
RAF Kinloss, Nimrod aircraft 359w
RAF Leeming 357w
RAF Northolt, Communication engineering 819w
RAF Spadeadam, Armed forces training 746w
RAF Stornoway, Construction 88w
Red Arrows, Netherlands 354w
RFA Argus 172-3w
Sea Harrier aircraft, Low flying 749w
Submarines, Shipping accidents 453w
Trident submarines 746w
US bases 817-9w
Vaccination, Anthrax 743-4w
Warships, Guided weapons 246w
Western European Union, Armed forces deployment 165w
Yugoslavia, Military aircraft 357w

Hannam, Sir John
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 103-5
Questions
Bows and arrows 370w
Regional aid, EC grants & loans 947-8w

Hanson, Mr David
Debates etc.
Aerospace industry, Redundancy (27:07:93) 1002
Questions
Biotechnology, Patents 124-5w
Coal mine closures 267w
Lone parent families, Wales 4, 51w
Palace of Westminster, Holiday play schemes 563w

Hard core unemployed
East Midlands 799w
Essex 801w
Scotland 987w

Hardy, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) (Amendment) Measure 1993 (21:07:93) 472-3, 474
Questions
Business questions 511
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species 103w

Harman, Ms Harriet
Questions
Community charge, Local government expenditure 907w

Harmondsworth Detention Centre
867-9w

Harrier aircraft
Repairs & maintenance 750w

Harris, Mr David
Questions
Bellwin scheme, Cornwall 360w
Warehouse parties 371w

Harris Tweed Bill (HL) 1990/91
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323

Harrogate Borough Council
701w

Hartlepool
Youth training 802w

Harvey, Mr Nick
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 649
Questions
Alternative energy, Research 647w
Coastal protection, EC action 704w
Deer 852-3w
Electoral register, Public access 869w
Oil pollution, Offshore structures 703w
Petroleum exploration, Coastal areas 646w
Road construction 739-40
Road construction, Cultural heritage 331w
Stonehenge bypass, Road works 404w

Harwich
Crime 143w
Drug crimes 27w

Haselhurst, Mr Alan
Debates etc.
Stansted Airport (27:07:93) 1011-6

Haslar Prison
867-9w

Hastings-Ashford railway line
733-4

Haverfordwest
KONVER programme 470w

Hawkins, Mr Nick
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 754-5
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 404
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 50
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 601
Questions
Blackpool Airport 737
Unemployment, Wales 11-2

Hayes Inquiry
see River Safety Inquiry

Hazardous materials
Training 67-8w

Hazardous wastes
56-64w
Scotland 180-6w
Wales 663-5w
Waste disposal 180-6w
Water pollution 342w

Headteachers
Grant maintained schools 609w

Heald, Mr Oliver
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 75
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 450
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 674, 696
Questions
Council house rents, Rent arrears 102-3w
European fighter aircraft, Defence procurement 180-1
Health Advisory Service, Annual reports 514w
Road tolls, EC countries 580-1w

Health
Standard spending assessments 100w

Health Advisory Service
Annual reports 514w

Health aid
872w

Health & Safety at Work Etc Act 1974
Questions
743

Health & Safety Executive
686w

Health authorities
Pension rights 543w

Health centres
Armagh 527w

Health education
Drug abuse 784w, 860w
Education support grants 604-8w
Local education authority training grant scheme 604-8w
Smoking 500-1w

Health hazards
Dental services 193
Fluoridation 830w

Health hazards—continued
Methyl bromide 785-6w
Pesticides 326w
Sellafield 292-3w
Water supply disconnections 546w

"Health of the Nation White Paper"
513-4w

Health physics
Radioactive waste disposal 694w

Health service staff
Expenditure 120-2w
Inner London boroughs 505-6w
Managers 4w, 835-8w
Manpower 1w
Racial discrimination 546w
Wales 120-2w

Health services
294w
Hospitals 293w

Hearing Aid Council
Public appointments 362w

Hearing aids
544w

Heart diseases
Medical treatments 830w
Surgery 9
Wales 8-9

Heath, Rt Hon Sir Edward
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 702-4

Heathcoat-Amory, Mr David, Minister of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Debates etc.
Latin America, Foreign policy (26:07:93) 833-6
Questions
Cyprus 458w
Cyprus, Foreign policy 990w
Cyprus, Peace negotiations 17-8w
EC Committee of the Regions, Public appointments 998w
EC external relations 19w
Economic & Social Committee, Public appointments 999w
Gibraltar, Air transport 458-9w
Northern Cyprus, Members' visits abroad 990w, 998w
Parliamentary recess 999w
Treaty on European Union, Judicial review 1005w

Heathrow Airport
587w, 867-9w, 906w

Heating
Northern Ireland 255w

Helicopters
166w
Armed forces training 172-3w
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 906-25

HELIOS programme
215w

Helpston
Water pollution 55-6w

Henderson, Mr Doug
Questions
Grant maintained schools, School closures 607-8w
Income support, Lone parents 203w
Industrial investment 517w
Machine tools 361w
Machine tools industry, Investment 129w

Hendon School
191

Hendron, Dr Joe
Questions
Directors of public health, Eastern Health & Social Services Board 527w

Hendry, Mr Charles
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 205-6, 234, 238-44
Questions
Armed forces discharges 174w
Armed forces married quarters, Empty housing 163w, 741w
Armed forces married quarters, Exservicemen 164w
Armed forces married quarters, House purchase 163-4w, 741w
Armed forces married quarters, Widows 741w
Council housing, Empty housing 345w, 965-7w
Council tenants, Rent arrears 479w, 703w, 968-9w
Crime prevention 367w
Defence land, Land acquisition 174w, 741w
Hearing Aid Council, Public appointments 362w

Heppell, Mr John
Debates etc.
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 446, 464
Questions
Hard core unemployed, East Midlands 799w

Herbalism
Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products 825-6w

Hercules aircraft
Defence procurement 163w

Hernia operations
212w

Hertford County Hospital
Hospital closures (27:07:93) 981
Public petitions (27:07:93) 981

Hicks, Mr Robert
Debates etc.
Water charges, South West region (26:07:93) 776-8

Higgins, Rt Hon Sir Terence
Questions
A27, Worthing 75w

High definition television
UK contributions 125w

Higher civil servants
Ministry of Defence 87-8w, 822-3w

Higher education
Greater London 230w
Wales 9999w

Higher education corporations
775w

Higher Education Funding Council for England
Government grants 230w

Highland Regional Council (Wester Bridge) Order Confirmation Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Rep* (20:07:93) 177
3R* (21:07:93) 335
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1060

Highlands of Scotland
Special education 252w
Veterinary services 970w

Hill, Mr James
Questions
Rape, Bail 489

Hill, Mr Keith
Debates etc.
Public transport, Greater London (26:07:93) 877-81, 890-1
Questions
Development banks, UK contributions 16w
European Development Fund, UK contributions 231w
Prisoners, AIDS 143w

Hill farming
Farm incomes 50-1w
Wales 50-1w

Hinchliffe, Mr David
Debates etc.
Limitation (Amendment) Bill, 1R (21:07:93) 364
Questions
Children, Migration 5w, 12w, 833w
Community care 831w
EC Social Charter 499
NHS, Ethnic minorities 832w
Nursing homes, Income support 831w
Nursing homes, Mental patients 830-1w
Sports, Finance 766-7w

Hip replacements
118w

Historic Scotland
Annual reports 192w

HM Inspectorate of Pollution
264w, 481-2w
Pollution control 353w

HM Inspectorate of Schools
441-2w

HMS Gillingham
353w

Hoey, Ms Kate
Debates etc.
Angola (27:07:93) 1021-5
Questions
Bridges, Repairs & maintenance 77w

Hogg, Rt Hon Douglas, Minister of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 848, 851, 867, 870-2
Questions
Arab boycott 1003-4w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 1001-2w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mental hospitals 566w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Prisoners 567w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Prisons 567w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rape 1004w
Croatia, Armed conflict 18w, 1000w, 1002w
Croatia, Diplomatic relations 565-6w
Croatia, Peace negotiations 1001w
Croatia, Sanctions 565w, 1000-1w
Far East, UN Register of Conventional Arms 568w
Iran, Diplomatic service 456-7w
Japan, Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 19w, 458w
Kosovo, Peace keeping operations 18-9w
Libyan Arab Republic, Sanctions 574w
Lockerbie, Bombings 17w
Nagorno Karabakh, Armed conflict 1002-3w, 1005w
Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, THORP 999-1000w
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Israel 1003-4w
Russia, Religious freedom 457w
Slovakia, Diplomatic service 21-2w
Sudan, Foreign policy 1007-8w
United Nations 1006w
United Nations, Israel 571w, 1003w
Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Annual reports 999w
Yugoslavia, Armed conflict 1005w
Yugoslavia, Rape 17-8w
Yugoslavia, Sanctions 18w, 566w, 1002w

Hogg, Mr Norman
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 698

Holiday pay
Company liquidations 688w

Holiday play schemes
Palace of Westminster 563w

Home Affairs Select Committee
(21:07:93) 368-402, 443

Home care services
Expenditure 113-4w

Home energy efficiency scheme
(26:07:93) 894-905

Home helps
Bolton 216w
Fees & charges 216w

Home Office
Computers 628-9w
Contracts for services 625w
Crime 137w
Data processing 630w
Departmental publications 625w
Empty housing 638w
Public bodies 853w
Small businesses 626-7w

Home Robertson, Mr John
Questions
Army Air Corps, RAF Wattisham 357w
Local government reform, East Lothian 44w
Local government reform, Scotland 190w
Lothian Health Board, Geriatric patients 504w
Rosyth Dockyard, Trident submarines 358w
Yugoslavia, Military aircraft 357w

Home visits
Handicap benefits 278w

Homelessness
698w
Children 291w
Electoral register 639w
Northern Ireland 529-30w
Tower Hamlets 705-6w

Homeowners' insurance
Pensioners 366w

Homeworking
West Yorkshire 804w

Homicide
Jones, Fiona 860w
Life imprisonment 856w
Offensive weapons 632w
Trials 211w, 306w

Homosexuality
Bermuda 317w

Hong Kong
Armed forces deployment 88w
British national (overseas) 207-8w
British nationality 374-86w, 620w
Citizenship of the British Dependent Territories 207-8w
Vietnamese refugees 457-8w

Hood, Mr Jimmy
Questions
AF Budge Contractors, Company liquidations 517w
Councillors allowances, Scotland 958w
Fluoridation, Scotland 501w
Local government elections, Candidates 958w
Local government reform, Scotland 958-9w
Uranium, Nuclear fuel reprocessing 125-6w

Hoon, Mr Geoffrey
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 568-71
Questions
Alternative energy 268-9w
Prison staff, Courts 144-5w

Hordern, Rt Hon Sir Peter
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 692-5
Questions
National Audit Office 22-3w, 742-3

Horse racing
Manpower 803w

Hospital admissions
Burnley Health Care NHS Trust 212w
Geriatric patients 115-6w
Mental patients 499w
North Western Regional Health Authority 212w
Poisoning 337w
Scotland 565w

Hospital beds
Geriatric patients 504w
Long stay patients 546w

Hospital closures
Hertford County Hospital (27:07:93) 981
Queen Mary's University Hospital (23:07:93) 724-30

Hospital consultants
Digestive system disorders 42w
Orthopaedics 929w
Paediatrics 531-2w, 550-1w, 981-4w
Scotland 42w

Hospital discharges
Community care 501w

Hospital length of stay
Wales 53w

Hospital patients
GP fundholders 661w
Retirement pensions 717w

Hospital waiting lists
Digestive system disorders 979w
Scotland 979w
South East region 215w
Wales 338w

Hospitals
Armed forces medical services 743w
Health services 293w
Ophthalmology 247w, 526w
Trafford (26:07:93) 787-90

Hotels
Safety standards 267-8w

House of Commons accommodation
745

House of Commons catering
Terrace pavilion 564w

House of Commons Commission
Expenditure 563-4w

House of Commons committees
Ministers 870w

House of Commons divisions
Speaker's rulings & statements (22:07:93) 606

House of Commons select committees
Iraq 558w
Northern Ireland 747-8
Sustainable development 869-70w

House of Commons staff
Disabled workers 23w
Manpower 870-1w

House of Commons times of sittings
557w

House purchase
Armed forces married quarters 163-4w, 741w

House renovation grants
Northern Ireland Housing Executive 849-50w

Housing
Exservicemen 164w

Housing action trusts
899-902w

Housing amenities
Standard spending assessments 493w

Housing & handicapped
342-3w, 345w, 702w

Housing association grant
65w, 96-7w, 277w, 483w, 708w, 904w

Housing associations
Finance 96-7w
Housing construction 254w
Housing improvement 903w
Liverpool 898w
Northern Ireland 529w
Ombudsman 254w
Public expenditure 901-2w
Rents 900-1w
Right to buy 97w
Scotland 253-4w
Tenants 253-4w, 898w, 979w

Housing associations*—*continued
Wales 481w

Housing benefits
277w, 396-7w, 905w
Administrative delays 713w
Earnings rules 713w
Expenditure 459-60w, 722-3w, 1008-9w
Scotland 979w
Wales 73w, 720w

Housing construction
Housing associations 254w
VAT 588-9w

Housing Corporation
347w, 708w

Housing for Wales
Expenditure 51w
North Wales 51w

Housing improvement
Housing associations 903w

Housing investment programmes
Tower Hamlets 705w

Housing revenue accounts
488-90w, 900w
Wales 477-8w, 652w

Housing standards
Armed forces housing 184-5
Temporary accommodation 691-2w

Housing stock
Wales 51w

Housing subsidies
Wales 480w

Howard, Rt Hon Michael*, *Secretary of State for the Home Department
Questions
Age of criminal responsibility 496
Assaults on police, Injuries 493-4
Bombings, Birmingham 210w
Children in care 488
Criminal injuries compensation, Channel tunnel 864-5w
Forensic Science Service, Annual reports 864w
Home Office, Data processing 630w
Home Office, Departmental publications 625w
Home Office, Public bodies 853w
Home Office, Small businesses 626-7w
Intelligence services, Accountability 371w
Life imprisonment, Judgments 861-4w
Merseyside Fire & Civil Defence Authority, Finance 854w
Police Complaints Authority, Public appointments 865w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 494, 497-9
Secure training orders 367w
Special constables 497-8
Young offenders 496-7
Young offenders, Secure accommodation 487-8

Howarth, Mr Alan
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 360
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 32-8, 41
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 708
Questions
Car industry, Charitable donations 341
Independent Living 1993 Fund 727-8w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Accountability 728w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Chronically sick 728w
Local history, Finance 555-6w
Sex education 617-8w

Howarth, Mr George
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 678-9
Questions
Public appointments, Arts 24-5w

Howarth, Mr George*—*continued
Public appointments, Dept of Health 119w
Public appointments, Merseyside 133w

Howell, Rt Hon David
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 843, 848-53
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 552-5
Questions
Business questions 510
Motorways, Road tolls 332w

Howell, Sir Ralph
Questions
Agricultural production 735w
Agriculture, Expenditure 880-2w
Food prices 734w
North Norfolk Action 809-10w
Overseas trade, Agricultural products 888-9w
Wheat, Prices 730-1w

Howells, Dr Kim
Questions
Channel tunnel, Railway network 734
Contracts for services 17

Howie Committee
see Scottish Secondary Education Review Committee

Hoyle, Mr Doug
Questions
THORP 889-90w
THORP, Uranium 889w

Hughes, Mr Kevin
Questions
Geriatric patients, Hospital admissions 115-6w
Mining, Redundancy 126w
Peat bogs, Nature conservation 103-4w
Travel to interview scheme, Earnings rules 691w

Hughes, Mr Robert
Questions
Air force, Festivals & special occasions 88w
South Africa, Sanctions 20w

Hughes, Mr Roy
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 24
Questions
Defence industries 7
Defence procurement 187
Educational assessment, Gwent 121w
Employment level, Statistics 799w
River Severn, Bridges 580w
Unemployment, Wales 49w
VAT, Fuels 191-2

Hughes, Mr Simon
Debates etc.
Globe Theatre (19:07:93) 171-2
Questions
Bus stations, Canada Water 577w
Business questions 506-7
Cetaceans, Nature conservation 707w
Council tax, Pensioners 262-3w, 692w
County Hall, Property transfer 693w
Crimes against the person 135w
Defence land, Land Acquisition 182
Employment level 27w
National Audit Office 742-3
National Loans Fund, Nuclear power 595w
Nature conservation, EC law 706w
Nuclear Electric, Profitability 644w
Nuclear power, Liability 644w
Nurses' training, Finance 549w
Nurses' training, South East region 550w
Radioactive wastes, Imports 96w
Sellafield, Transport of radioactive materials 930-1w
Social Fund, Southwark 72-3w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 366w
THORP, Transport of radioactive materials 931w

Human rights

Human rights—continued
Bosnia-Herzegovina 305w
EC aid (26:07:93) 814
India 997-8w
Iran 92w
Tibet 19-20w, 93w
Vietnam 11-2w

Humberside
Prisoner escorts 148w
Prisoners' transport 9w

Hume, Mr John
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 560-2, (23:07:93) 633
Questions
Terrorism, Northern Ireland 192

Hunt, Rt Hon David, Secretary of State for Employment
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 531-3, 545, 597-602

Hunter, Mr Andrew
Questions
Company finance, Japan 365-6w
Corporation tax, Foreign companies in UK 590w
Councillors, Electorate 346w
Nigeria, Civil disorder 575w
Nigeria, Elections 574-5w
Nigeria, Politics & government 575w
Nigeria, Prisoners 574w
Training for work 785w

Hunting-Brae
353w, 821-2w

Hurd, Rt Hon Douglas, Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 643, 650, 652, 684, 687, 711-4
Questions
EC Foreign Affairs Council 1006-7w
Government Communications Headquarters, Research 234w
Japan, Military intelligence 91w
MI6, Disclosure of information 1000w
South Africa, Democracy 21w
Yugoslavia, Refugees 233w

Hutton, Mr John
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 573-6
Questions
Barrow-Carlisle railway line 586w
Coastal protection, Expenditure 38w
District health authorities, Public appointments 112w
Industrial diseases, Asbestos 70-1w
Prisons, Ships 370-1w
Shipbuilding, EC grants & loans 363-4w
Shipbuilding Intervention Fund 129-30w

Hydrochlorofluorocarbons
486-7w, 937w
Air pollution control 483w
Dept of the Environment 487w
Dept of Trade & Industry 937w

Hygiene
Dental services 515w, 553-4w

Hypnosis
Training 554-5w

Identification friend foe systems
173w

Illegal immigrants
137-8w
Criminal investigation 209-10w

Illsley, Mr Eric
Questions
Family credit, Yorkshire & Humberside 202w
Family doctors, Complaints 117w
Further Education Funding Council for England, Public appointments 784w

Illsley, Mr Eric—continued
Iran, Bahai sect 91-2w
Iran, Human rights 92w
National income, Yorkshire & Humberside 239w
Sheltered placement scheme 274w
Tax burden, Yorkshire & Humberside 90w

Immigrant detainees
373w, 405-8w, 867-9w
Deportation 618w
Vietnamese refugees 457-8w

Immigrant doctors
Work permits 408w, 509-10w, 617-9w

Immigrants' dependants
Immigration appeals 10-1w
Immigration applications 138-40w, 389-90w

Immigration
370w
Legal aid scheme 756-7w

Immigration Appeal Tribunal
(20:07:93) 299-321

Immigration appeals
Immigrants dependants 10-1w
Indian subcontinent 10-1w
Refugees 495

Immigration Appeals (Procedure) (Amendment) Rules 1993
Debates etc.
(20:07:93) 299-321

Immigration applications
206-7w, 495, 865-8w
Bangladesh 139-40w
Blood tests 386w
Foreign spouses 139-41w, 998w
Foreign tourists 385-8w
Genetics 20w
Immigrants' dependants 138-40w, 389-90w
Indian subcontinent 138-41w
Medical examinations 205w, 388-9w
Pakistan 20w, 139-40w
Political refugees 142w
Refugees 857w
Temporary immigrants 857w

Immigration controls
Deportation 5w

Immigration (Restricted Right of Appeal against Deportation) (Exemption) Order 1993
Debates etc.
(20:07:93) 299-321

Immigration rules
6w, 141w
Enforcement 209-10w

Import controls
Norway 333

Imports
Animal products 878w
Electricity 13w
Radioactive wastes 96w
Transport of hazardous materials 663w
Tyres 272w

Income distribution
Social security recipients 468w

Income support
Bed & breakfast accommodation 203w, 395w
Darlington 395w
EC nationals 858-9w
Expenditure 723w
Food 203w, 395w
Lone parents 72w, 200-1w, 203w, 395-6w, 725-6w
Mortgages 397-8w, 1018w
Nursing homes 831w, 1020w
Political refugees 728w
Scotland 395-6w
Social security benefits overpayment 720w
Social security benefits reductions 720-2w, 1016-9w
Social security claims 1016-8w
Social security recipients 1019w

Income support—continued
Voluntary unemployment 720-2w
Wales 397-8w
Yorkshire & Humberside 202w
Young people 718-21w, 1017-8w

Income tax
Departmental forms 90-1w, 878w
Disclosure of information 878w
Overseas workers 874w
Tax yields 27-8w

Incontinence aids
Wales 928w

Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) (Amendment) Measure 1993
Debates etc.
(21:07:93) 469-78
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1061

Independence movements
Bougainville 567-8w

Independent Criminal Cases Review Authority
368w

Independent Living 1993 Fund
727-8w
Accountability 728w
Chronically sick 200w, 728w

Independent Living Extension Fund
Accountability 728w

Independent Living Fund
Chronically sick 200w

Independent television levy
765w

Independent Tribunal Service
204w

India
Extradition (21:07:93) 445-68
Human rights 997-8w
Special voucher scheme 372-4w

Indian subcontinent
Arms trade 745w
Entry clearances 8w
Immigration appeals 10-1w
Immigration applications 138-41w
Visas 207-10w

Indicative prescribing incentive scheme
551w

Industrial accidents
Chemical & Biological Defence Establishment 86-7w

Industrial development
Government assistance 530w
Northern Ireland 530w
West Wales 9

Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland
528w

Industrial disablement benefits
Newcastle upon Tyne 1020-1w
South Tyneside 1020-1w

Industrial diseases
Asbestos 70-1w
Compensation 91w, 191w
Death 295w
Scotland 191w

Industrial health & safety
Asbestos 275w
Atomic Weapons Establishment 821-2w
AWE Aldermaston 821w
Methyl bromide 680w
Orders & regulations 802w
Palace of Westminster 563w, 743-5
Sellafield 804w

Industrial investment
517w

Industrial research
349-50
Small businesses 953-5w

Industrial training
344

Industry
Energy conservation 934w

Infant mortality
Wales 478w

Information
Handicapped 470w

Information Management Group
Contracts 825w

Information Technology Services Agency
468w

Injuries
Assaults on police 493-4
Surgery 833-4w, 927w

Inland Revenue
596w
Computers 592w
Contracts for services 594w, 877w
Data processing 591w
Departmental forms 28w
Relocation of employees 301-2w

Inner London boroughs
Health service staff 505-6w

Innovation
Finance 952w

Insolvency Service
363w

Insurance companies
Tax allowances 300-1w

Integrated administration & control system
150w

Intelligence services
Accountability 371w

Interest rates
12

Interim development orders
478w

International Atomic Energy Agency
128w

International conferences
Local government staff 470w
NATO 92w
Wales 470w

International cooperation
Astronomy 973w
Defence procurement 188

International Investments
Criminal investigation 240w

International Monetary Fund
535-6w

International organisations
UK contributions 536-8w

International trade
Environment protection 936-7w
Sustainable development 936w

INTERREG programme
Northern Ireland 849w

Intimidation
Clwyd 476w
Schools 476w

Invalid care allowances
Wales 394w

Invalidity benefits
Burnley 465w
Dundee 278-9w
Expenditure 200w
Low incomes 1010-1w
Medical examinations 199w
Peterlee 394w
Scotland 46w, 464-5w

Invalidity benefits*—*continued
Seaham 394w
Social security claims 1011w
Social security recipients 278-9w, 463-4w
Women 464-5w

Inverclyde Enterprise Zone
253w
EC grants & loans 989w
Nature conservation 989w

Inward
339-40

Iran
Bahai sect 91-2w
Diplomatic service 20w, 456-7w
Human rights 92w

Iraq
House of Commons select committees 558w
Sanctions 757w

Iraq-Kuwait conflict
11w, 179
Vaccination 87w

Iron & steel industry
Wales 243-4w

Israel
Arms trade 744w
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons 1003-4w
United Nations 571w, 1003w

J Sainsbury
75w

Jack, Mr Michael*, *Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Questions
Agricultural production 735w
Agriculture, Expenditure 880-2w
Beef, Botswana 734-5w
British Wool Marketing Board 735w
Coastal protection, Expenditure 38w
Coastal protection, Flood control 265w
Common fisheries policy 155w, 240-1w
EC action, Set-aside schemes 37w
EC free food scheme 736w
European Agricultural Guidance & Guarantee Fund 880w
Fish conservation 35-7w
Fish conservation, Spain 737w
Fisheries, Licensing 451w
Fishing catches 451w
Fishing gear 242w
Fishing vessels, Decommissioning 37w, 150-2w
Fishing vessels, Licensing 736-7w, 885-8w
Fishing vessels, Prosecutions 736w
Fishing vessels, Spain 155w
Food prices 734w
Marine animals, Fishing catches 731-2w
Milk, Production quotas 38w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food, Civil service manpower 150w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, Crime 729-30w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, Data processing 731w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, Departmental Publications 732w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, Public bodies 882-3w
National Collections of Industrial & Marine Bacteria, Finance 885w
North Moor pumping station 735w
North Moor pumping station, Nature conservation 887-9w
Potatoes, Agricultural marketing 449-50w
Salmon 324-5w
Salmon, Fishing catches 151-4w
Sheep premiums 882w
Sugar, Production quotas 884-6w
Sugar beet, Prices 884w
THORP, Nature conservation 325-6w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 888w
Wheat, Prices 730-1w

Jackson, Ms Glenda
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 361
National Health Service Trusts (Public Service) Bill, 1R (20:07:93) 199

Jackson, Ms Glenda*—*continued
Questions
British Rail, Pension funds 158w

Jackson, Mrs Helen
Questions
Deregulation initiative 952w
Enterprise & Deregulation Unit, Civil service manpower 519w
Legislation, Pollution control 519w
Palace of Westminster, Day nurseries 558w
Water supply industry, Complaints 104w

Jackson, Mr Robert
Questions
European Police Office, Drug crimes 205w

Jaguar aircraft
357w

Jamieson, Mr David
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 79, 87-8

Janner, Mr Greville
Questions
Armed forces, Redundancy 189
Benefits Agency district offices, Administrative delays 1015-6w, 1022w
Business questions 512

Japan
Company finance 365-6w
Exports 336
Military intelligence 91w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing 13w
Nuclear non proliferation 559w
Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 19w, 458w
Overseas trade 932w
Radioactive wastes 642w

Jarvis, Mark
Prisoners' home leave 621-2w

Jenkin, Mr Bernard
Questions
Arms trade 166w

Jenkins Committee
see NHS Management Functions & Manpower Review

Jenkins Review
see Royal Parks Review

Jessel, Mr Toby
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 358
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 461-2, 464
Questions
Sentencing, Appeals 368w

Job interview guarantee scheme
674-7w

Jobclubs
670-4w, 811-2w

Johnson Smith, Sir Geoffrey
Questions
Defence procurement 187-8

Johnston, Sir Russell
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 845-8
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 520, 587, 611

Joint Maritime Communications Centre
RAF St Mawgan 746w

Joint replacements
212w

Joint ventures
West coast railway line 77w

Jones, Mr Barry
Debates etc.
Aerospace industry, Redundancy (27:07:93) 1001-7, 1009
Assisted areas, North Wales (26:07:93) 774-6

Jones, Mr Barry—continued
Social security (20:07:93) 222
Questions
Aerospace industry, Clwyd 933w
Aerospace industry, Redundancy 923w
Agricultural Wages Board, Wales 474w
Apprentices 68w
Business questions 516
Defence land, Wales 742w
Iron & steel industry, Wales 243-4w
Manufacturing industries, Wales 50w
Redundancy, Wales 11

Jones, Fiona
Homicide 860w

***Jones, Mr Gwilym**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Welsh Office*
Questions
Aggregates, Wales 122w, 652w
Beaches, Pollution monitoring 664w, 923w
Bed & breakfast accommodation, Wales 653w
Breast cancer, Surgery 121w
Cancer, Out-patient clinics 52w
Child protection registers, Wales 474-6w
Children in care, Complaints 664-5w
Children in care, Local government expenditure 664w
Children in care, Local government social services 665w
Children in care, Runaway children 472-3w
Children in care, Wales 472-4w
Clinical wastes, Waste disposal 53-4w
Council house rents, Wales 475-6w
Council housing management, Wales 475w
Council tenants, Rent arrears 479w
Family health services authorities, Finance 923-7w
Fishing, Licensing 52w
Government grants to local authorities, Local government social services 654w
GP fundholders, Hospital patients 661w
Handicapped, Information 470w
Handicapped children, Wales 122w, 337w, 470w
Handicapped drivers, Parking 921w
Hazardous wastes, Wales 664-5w
Health service staff, Expenditure 120-2w
Heart diseases, Surgery 9
Heart diseases, Wales 8
Hospital consultants, Orthopaedics 929w
Hospital length of stay, Wales 53w
Hospital waiting lists, Wales 338w
Housing associations, Wales 481w
Housing revenue accounts, Wales 477-8w, 652w
Housing stock, Wales 51w
Housing subsidies, Wales 480w
Incontinence aids, Wales 928w
Industrial development, West Wales 9
Infant mortality, Wales 478w
Injuries, Surgery 927w
Local government social services, Young people 665w
Lone parent families, Wales 51w
Mental hospitals, Child patients 661-2w
Neath & Port Talbot Hospital 50w
NHS internal market, Wales 927-8w
Nurses, Career structure 480w
Oil pollution, Coastal areas 666w
Opencast mining, Asthma 476w
Planning permission, Minerals 471-2w
Poisoning, Hospital admissions 337w
Respite care, Wales 338w
Secure accommodation, Wales 339w
Steroid drugs, Death 476w
Temporary accommodation, Wales 663w
Transport of hazardous materials, Imports 663w
Trauma centres, Wales 927w
Unemployment, Wales 49w
Valuation tribunals, Computer applications 119-20w
Welsh Office, Data processing 477w

Jones, Mr Ieuan Wyn
Questions
Alcoholic drinks, Young people 622-6w
Boarding schools, Complaints 828w
Bursaries to writers scheme, Scotland 48w

Jones, Mr Ieuan Wyn—continued
Bursaries to writers scheme, Wales 25-6w
Child health 291w
Children Act 1989, Enforcement 828w
Children in care 543w
Children in care, Complaints 547w, 664-5w
Children's rights 510w
Complaints against police, Young people 865w
Curriculum, Complaints 774-5w
Day care of children, EC action 675w
Drug abuse, Wales 627w
Education Reform Act 1988, Complaints 774-5w
Educational administration, Complaints 775w
Equal opportunities, Young people 691w
Equine viral arteritis, EC countries 732-3w
Equine viral arteritis, Poland 733w
Government grants to local authorities, Local government social services 654w
Health service staff, Expenditure 120-2w
Infant mortality, Wales 478w
Mental Health Act Commission 827w
Mental Health Act Commission, Complaints 826-7w
Mental hospitals, Child patients 661-2w
NHS complaints, Children 828w
NHS complaints, Young people 547w
Nurses, Career structure 480w
Parental leave, EC law 680w
Potatoes, Agricultural marketing 449-50w
Private education, Residential care of children 666w
Racial discrimination, Young people 855w
Sick leave, Wales 244w
Social Fund, Child patients 394w
Suicide, Agricultural workers 328-30w
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 828-9w
Village halls, Wales 338w
Wales Youth Agency 650-2w
Writers in residence scheme 768w
Youth organisations, Government grants to voluntary organisations 470w, 650w
Youth services 416w
Youth services, Wales 652w
Youth treatment centres, Complaints 827-8w

Jones, Mr Jon Owen
Questions
Defence industries, Manpower 178
Dental services, Health hazards 193

Jones, Dr Lynne
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed forces deployment 166w
Discretionary student grants 314-8w
Housing association grant 96w
Industrial research 349-50
Jarvis, Mark, Prisoners' home leave 621-2w
Pharmacists, Pay 2-3w
Young offenders, Secure accommodation 487-8, 861-2w
Young offenders, Supervision orders 857w
Youth training 69-70w

Jones, Mr Martyn
Questions
Mass Media, Finance 27w
Nuclear power 338
Post offices, Rural areas 1-2
THORP, Plutonium 124w
THORP, Radioactive wastes 124w
Uranium, Nuclear fuel reprocessing 646w
Uranium, Prices 645-6w

Jones, Mr Nigel
Questions
Fire services, Cenotaph 858w
Gloucestershire Constabulary, Radio 859w
Housing benefits 396-7w
Housing Corporation 347w
Police, Radio 860w
Public sector housing 347w
Standard spending assessments 699w, 708w

Jones, Mr Robert B
Questions
Commission for the New Towns 896-7w
Forestry Commission, Environment protection 977w

Jones, Mr Robert B—continued
Forestry Commission, Nature conservation 977-8w
Recruitment & Assessment Services Agency, Annual reports 287w

Jones Committee
see Children's Residential Care Support Force

Jopling, Rt Hon Michael
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 758
Questions
Criminal Injuries Compensation Board 638w

JPM Automatic Machines
Government assistance 244w
Wales 244w

Jubilee line
Construction 404w, 579-80w

Judges
Corruption 523w
Court of Appeal 308w
Dismissal 308w

Judgments
73w
Computer privacy 773w
Life imprisonment 861-4w

Judicial review
Treaty on European Union 1005w

"Juliette"
489-90

Junior hospital doctors
Working hours 514w

Justices' clerks
Magistrates' courts 307w

Kaufman, Rt Hon Gerald
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 359
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 756

Kelburn
Property development 253w

Kellett-Bowman, Dame Elaine
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 57
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 301
Social security (20:07:93) 274, 277, 289-90
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 535

Kennedy, Mr Charles
Debates etc.
Social security payments, Public petitions (27:07:93) 982

Kerb crawling
Crime prevention 136w
Wales 136w

***Key, Mr Robert**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Transport*
Debates etc.
M1, Roads works (27:07:93) 1048-50
Questions
A27, Worthing 75w
A550, Road construction 401-2w
A550, Road traffic 401-2w
Advisory Committee on the Landscape Treatment of Trunk Roads, Public appointments 918-9w
Biddulph bypass 740-1
Birmingham relief road, Road construction 585w
Buses, Design 915-6w
Bypasses 403w
Dept of Transport, Compensation 335w
Disabled passengers scheme 331w
Drinking & driving, Disqualifications 336w
Drivers' Vehicles & Operators' Information Technology, Privatisation 405w
Driving instruction, Lorry drivers 583w
Driving licences, EC law 914w
Driving offences 331-2w

Key, Mr Robert—continued
Exhaust emission controls 159w
Lorries, Axle weights 583-4w, 915w
M4, Road works 580w
M25, Road construction 333w
M25, Road traffic 75-6w, 332-3w
M53, Road construction 403w
M65, Road works 329w
Motor insurance 586w
Motorways, Road tolls 332w
Motorways, Road traffic 78-9w
Motorways, Road works 160w, 912-3w
Motorways, Tourist attractions 914w
National parks, Tourists 912w
Orange badge scheme 76-7w
Petrol, Excise duties 402w
Public service vehicles, Driving licences 913-5w
River Severn, Bridges 580w
Road construction, Cultural heritage 331w
Road construction, Environmental impact assessment 916w
Road construction, Property transfer 911-2w
Road safety 403w
Road tax, Post offices 405w
Road tax, Tax evasion 586w
Road tolls, EC countries 580-1w
Road traffic 282w
Road traffic control 916w
Road works, Motorways 157-8w
Severn bridge, Road traffic 331w
Speed limits, Cameras 160w
Street Works Advisory Committee, Public appointments 917w
Traffic noise, Sound insulation 79w
Tyres, Road accidents 159w
Tyres, Safety standards 159w
Vehicle Inspectorate, Annual reports 583w

Khabra, Mr Piara S
Questions
Immigration appeals, Immigrants' dependants 10-1w

Kilfedder, Sir James
Questions
Business questions 508

Kilfoyle, Mr Peter
Questions
Crime, Harwich 143w
Customs, Drug crimes 27w

King, Rt Hon Tom
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 638-41

Kinnock, Rt Hon Neil
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 754
Questions
Drug industry, Wales 10-1, 51w

Kirkcudbright
Firing ranges 176-7w

Kirklees
Compost 341w

Kirkwood, Mr Archy
Questions
Children in care, Telephones 970w
Local government reform, Scotland 190w
Low flying, Borders region 747w
Ministerial policy advisors 318-20w
Personal pensions 727w
RAF Spadeadam, Armed forces training 746-7w

Knight, Mrs Angela
Questions
Central Office of Information, Annual reports 94w
Civil Service College 42w

Knight, Dame Jill
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 660, 683, 685-8
Questions
Children in care 488

Knight, Dame Jill—continued
EC Social Charter 502-4

Know-how Fund
871-2w

Knox, Sir David
Questions
Biddulph bypass 740-1
European Regional Development Fund, Wales 49w
Manufacturing industries 265w

Knutsford
Courts 399w

KONVER programme
266w, 341-2, 647w, 649w
Fishguard 470w
Haverfordwest 470w

Kosovo
Armed conflict 92-3w
Peace keeping operations 18-9w

Kynoch, Mr George
Questions
Alternative energy, Scotland 249-50w
Blind, Scotland 966-8w
D Notices 454w
Eye tests, Optical charges 969w
Military Survey, Performance standards 454w
Naval Aircraft Repair Organisation, Performance standards 455w
Ophthalmology, Out-patient clinics 968w
Police 368w
Rescue services, Armed forces deployment 246-7w
Scottish Agricultural Science Agency, Annual reports 309w

Laboratories
GP fundholders 971-2w
Scotland 971-2w

Labour market
801-2w
Scotland 805w

Labour turnover
Nursing homes 497w

Lait, Mrs Jacqui
Questions
Citizen's Charter, Local government reform 18-20
Deregulation initiative, Small businesses 266-7w, 347-8
Railway stations, Ashford 733-4

Lambeth Borough Council
Direct labour departments 490-1w

Land acquisition
Compensation 335w
Crossrail 585-6w
Defence land 174w, 182, 741-2w, 824-5w
Forestry Commission 189w, 978w
Forests 928w
NHS 910-1w
Surplus land 303w

Land Compensation Act 1973
Questions
335w

Land ownership & tenure
Diplomatic service 572-4w
Forests 653w

Land pollution
AWE Aldermaston 79w

Land Registry Office
959w
Computers 753-4w
Contracts for services 755w
Data processing 754-5w

Lands Tribunal
Tenant farmers 593-4w

Landscape Advisory Committee
see Advisory Committee on the Landscape Treatment of Trunk Roads

Lang, Rt Hon Ian, Secretary of State for Scotland
Questions
Alternative energy, Scotland 249-50w
Community care, Scotland 564-5w
Dept of the Registers of Scotland, Annual reports 192w
Fisheries, Orders & regulations 972w
Historic Scotland, Annual reports 192w
Local government reform, Scotland 959w, 963-4w
Lorries, Axle weights 251-2w
Museums & galleries, Arts finance 970w
MV Braer, Shipping accidents 970w
Public appointments, Scotland 975w
Scottish Agricultural Science Agency, Annual reports 309w
Scottish courts, Performance standards 309-12w
Scottish Office, Computers 966w
Scottish Office, Contracts for services 967-8w
Scottish Office, Data processing 967w
Scottish Office, Non-departmental public bodies 974-5w
Scottish Office, Public appointments 975-7w
Scottish Office, Public bodies 975w
Shetland Islands Council 46w
Veterinary services, Highlands of Scotland 970w
Water supply industry, Capital investment 175-6w
Water supply industry, Public appointments 175w
Water supply industry, Scotland 175w

Langlands Review
see NHS Management Functions & Manpower Review

Languages education
Welsh language 5-6

Latin America
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 816-36

Lawrence, Sir Ivan
Debates etc.
Brewing industry (27:07:93) 1029-32
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 368-72, 401-2
Questions
Boundary Commission for Wales, Public appointments 371w
Criminal injuries compensation, Channel tunnel 864-5w
European Parliament constituencies 371w
Fire prevention, Vocational education 372w
Forensic Science Service, Annual reports 864w
Life imprisonment, Judgments 861-4w
Police Complaints Authority, Public appointments 865w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 498-9

Lazarus Committee
see Committee for Monitoring Agreements on Tobacco Advertising

LEADER programme
Northern Ireland 849w

Leaseback arrangements
Rolling stock 580w

Leasehold Reform Housing & Urban Development Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323

Leather & fur industries
(21:07:93) 479-86, 948w

Leave
Adoption (27:07:93) 991-1000

Leeds
Royal Armouries 26w

Leeds Supertram Bill 1991/92
Debates etc.
Lords amendts* (26:07:93) 731
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1061

Legal aid

***Legal aid**—continued*
Drug abuse 399-400w

Legal aid scheme
Immigration 756-7w

Legal profession
Dept of Trade inquiries 130-4w

Legislation
Environment protection 519w
Pollution control 519w
Redundancy 804-5w

Leicester
Benefits Agency district offices 1022w

Leighton, Mr Ron
Questions
Apprentices 161-2w
London East Training & Enterprise Council, Newham 161w, 686-7w
Police, Newham 631w
Youth training, East London 810w
Youth training, Take-up 160-1w

***Lennox-Boyd, Mr Mark**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office*
Debates etc.
Angola (27:07:93) 1025-8
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 465-7
Questions
Abu Dhabi, Prisoners 304w
Ali, Ghazanfer 20w
Angola, Armed conflict 234-5w
Angola, Overseas aid 232w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 232-3w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Human rights 305w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mentally handicapped 304w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Prisoners 232w
Children, Migration 11w
Croatia, Sanctions 233w, 304-5w
Development banks, UK contributions 16w
Educational aid, Colombia 233-4w
Entry clearances 305w
European Development Bank 534-5w
European Development Fund, UK contributions 231w
Foreign Commonwealth Office, Departmental publications 569w
Health aid 872w
Immigration applications, Foreign spouses 998w
India, Human rights 997-8w
Indian subcontinent, Immigration applications 138w
Iran, Bahai sect 91-2w
Iran, Human rights 92w
Malawi, Overseas aid 872-3w
Nigeria, Civil disorder 575w
Nigeria, Elections 574-5w
Nigeria, Politics & government 575w
Nigeria, Prisoners 574w
Overseas aid 231-2w, 535-6w
Overseas aid, Expenditure 232w
Overseas aid, Privatisation 871-2w
Overseas aid, Russia 536w
Overseas Development Administration, Environment protection 873w
Pakistan, Immigration applications 20w
Serbia, Sanctions 232w
South Africa, Sanctions 20w
Thailand, Prisoners 17w
Treaties 990-7w
UK contributions, International organisations 536-8w
World Bank, UK contributions 534w
Yugoslavia, Army strength 304w
Yugoslavia, Refugees 231w

Lester, Mr Jim
Questions
Road safety 403w
Street Works Advisory Committee, Public appointments 917w

Lestor, Miss Joan
Debates etc.
AIDS (22:07:93) 613-6
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 695-7
Questions
Assisted areas 342
Income support, Lone parents 200-1w
Youth unemployment 802w

Level 5 Group
Privatisation 283-4w

Lewis, Mr Terry
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 546, (23:07:93) 648
Questions
Pornography, Telephone services 490
Tornado aircraft, Airwork 181
Unemployed, Sickness benefits 801w
VAT, Clothing 194

Lewisham Borough Council
732-3

Liability
Nuclear power 644w

Libyan Arab Republic
Sanctions 574w

Lidington, Mr David
Questions
Local government services, Contracts for services 102w
Road construction, Environmental impact assessment 916w
Secured by design scheme 633w

Life Assurance & Unit Trust Regulatory Organisation
296-300w

Life imprisonment
855w
Homicide 856w
Judgments 861-4w

Life insurance
273w, 296-300w, 877w
Government securities 239w

***Lilley, Rt Hon Peter**, Secretary of State for Social Security*
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 203, 211, 212-25
Questions
Civil service agencies, Annual reports 468w
Dept of Social Security, Statistics 277-8w
Pensioners, Personal income 194-8w

Limitation (Amendment) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
1R (21:07:93) 364

Limitation of actions
Personal injury compensation (21:07:93) 364

Limited list prescribing
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 948-66

Listed buildings
Factories 253w
Scotland 253w

Liverpool
Housing associations 898w

Livingstone, Mr Ken
Debates etc.
Local government audit (27:07:93) 1051-5, 1057
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 688-92
Questions
Business questions 512-3
Chemical & Biological Defence Establishment, Industrial accidents 86-7w
Crossrail, Railway stations 335w
Disability living allowance, Mobility of disabled 1012w
Government Communications Headquarters, Research 234w

***Livingstone, Mr Ken**—continued*
Tibet, Human rights 19-20w

Llandudno
Floods 467w

***Lloyd, Mr Peter**, Minister of State, Home Office*
Questions
Boundary Commission for Wales, Public appointments 371w
Civil defence, Government grants to local authorities 408w
Computer privacy 855w
Computer privacy, EC action 855w
Computer privacy, Political activities 619w
Electoral register, Public access 869w
Ethnic minorities, Government grants to local authorities 628w
Ethnic minorities, Tower Hamlets 6w
European Parliament constituencies 371w
Fine defaulters, Prison sentences 620w
Football pools, Retail trade 639w
Fund raising, Fraud 210-1w
Georgiou, Jason, Prosecutions 626w
Home Office, Empty housing 638w
Homelessness, Electoral register 639w
Immigrant detainees 405-8w
Jarvis, Mark, Prisoners' home leave 621-2w
Life imprisonment 855w
Life imprisonment, Homicide 856w
Lotteries, Prize money 8w
Manchester Prison 9w, 147-8w
Obscene Publications Act 1959 489-91
Osman, Lorrain Esme, Prisoners on remand 142w
Parole Board, Public appointments 11w
Pornography, Children 490
Pornography, Telephone services 490
Prison employment, Ethnic minorities 141w
Prison governors 389-90w
Prison population 630-1w
Prison staff, Courts 144-5w
Prisoner escorts, Greater London 147w
Prisoner escorts, Humberside 148w
Prisoners, AIDS 143w
Prisoners, Drug abuse 639w
Prisoners, Racial discrimination 620w
Prisoners, Restraint equipment 387-8w
Prisoners' transport, East Midlands 9w
Prisons, Sanitation 372w
Prisons, Ships 370-1w, 637w
Racial discrimination, Young people 855w
Refugees, Self-mutilation 859w
Terrorism, Prisoners' transfers 859-60w
Wandsworth Prison, Construction 626w
Warehouse parties 371w
Young offenders, Prison population 853w
Young offenders, Remand in custody 853-4w

Lloyd, Mr Tony
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 80-4, 86, 89, 92
Questions
Disabled workers, Unemployment 807w
Training & enterprise councils, Directors 807w
Training & enterprise councils, Disabled Workers 807-8w
Training & enterprise councils, Public meetings 807w
Training & enterprise councils, Quota of disabled workers 808w
Trials 774w
Youth employment 802w

Llwyd, Mr Elfyn
Debates etc.
Local government reform, Meirionnydd (22:07:93) 612
Questions
Bus services, Competition 244-5w
Children in care, Local government expenditure 664w
Children in care, Local government social services 665w
Hospital waiting lists, Wales 338w
Housing for Wales, Expenditure 51w
Housing stock, Wales 51w
Post offices, Rural areas 54w

Llwyd, Mr Elfyn—continued
Railway travel, Wales 918w
Teacher training, Wales 929w
Teachers, Redundancy 51-2w
Valuation tribunals, Computer applications 119-20w
Young offenders, Prison population 853w
Young offenders, Remand in custody 853-4w

Loans
Civil servants 879w

Local authorities
Companies 350w
Gas fuels 346w
Rent arrears 105w

Local authority associations
696w, 710w, 909w

Local education authorities
Grant maintained schools 608-9w
Speech therapists 338w

Local education authority training grant scheme
Health education 604-8w

Local enterprise companies
785w

Local Government (Amendment) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323

Local government audit
Brent Borough Council (27:07:93) 1051-8
Westminster City Council (27:07:93) 1051-8

Local Government Commission for England
66w, 101w, 350w, 695-6w

Local government constituencies
Dunbartonshire 959w

Local government corruption
Bolsover 97w

Local government elections
Candidates 958w
Scotland 188w

Local government expenditure
488w
Capital investment 99w
Children in care 664w
Community charge 907w

Local government finance
66w

Local government functions
909-10w
Cemeteries 67w

Local Government (Overseas Assistance) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323

Local government reform
348w, 702w, 708w, 908-9w
Citizen's Charter 18-20
City of Durham 346w
Cleveland 348w
Contracts for services 927w
East Lothian 44w
Glamorgan 50w
Local government staff 929w
Meirionnydd (22:07:93) 612
Scotland 190w, 958-64w
Strathclyde 44-5w
Wales 927w, 929-30w

Local government revenue
Council house sales 493-4w

Local government services
Contracts for services 16-7, 102w
Public transport 564w
Recycling 890w, 892w

Local government social services
Children in care 665w
Government grants to local authorities 654w
Wales 665w

Local government social services—continued
Young people 665w

Local government staff
International conferences 470w
Local government reform 929w
Scotland 958w

Local Government Staff Commission Wales Advisory Committee
929w

Local history
Finance 555-6w

Local plans
South Hams 101w

Lockerbie
Bombings 17w, 175w

Locums
Recruitment 551-2w

Lome Convention
735w

London Buses
(26:07:93) 873-93

London East Training & Enterprise Council
Newham 161w, 686-7w

London Forum
64-5w

London Local Authorities Bill (HL) 1991/92
Debates etc.
2R* (22:07:93) 489

London Regional Transport
(21:07:93) 403-42, (26:07:93) 873-93

London Transport
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 873-93

London Underground
(26:07:93) 873-93

Londons Health Service Medical Education & Research Inquiry
(23:07:93) 724-30

Lone parent families
725w
Family income 122w
Scotland 503-4w
Standard spending assessments 492-3w
Wales 3-5, 51w, 122-3w

Lone parent premium
1016w

Lone parents
Budgeting loans 1013w
Income support 72w, 200-1w, 203w, 395-6w, 725-6w
Newcastle upon Tyne 72w, 193-4w
Scotland 725-6w
Social security recipients 123w
Standard spending assessments 100w
Strathclyde 279-80w
Wales 123w

Long stay patients
Hospital beds 546w

Lonrho
268w

Lord, Mr Michael
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 523, 582-4
Questions
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food, Civil service manpower 150w
Veterinary drugs, EC law 149-50w

Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Legal Education Etc
Annual reports 212w

Lord Chancellor's Dept
Computers 753w
Contracts for services 755w

Lord Chancellor's Dept—continued
Data processing 754w
Non-departmental public bodies 400-1w
Small businesses 755w

Lord President of the Council
Small businesses 324w

Lorries
Axle weights 251-2w, 583-4w, 915w

Lorry drivers
Driving instruction 583w

Lothian Health Board
Geriatric patients 504w

Lotteries
Prize money 8w

Low flying
Borders region 747w
Mid Wales 359w
Military aircraft 749w
Sea Harrier aircraft 749w

Low incomes
460w, 687-8w, 714-5w, 722w, 1008w
Handicap benefits 71-2w, 1011-2w
Invalidity benefits 1010-1w
Scotland 502-4w
Wales 123w

Low pay
686w
Wales 662w

Loyden, Mr Eddie
Questions
Redundancy, Merseyside 340
Warships, Shipbuilding 86w

Luff, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 273-8
Questions
Air routes, USA 74w
Air transport, Expenditure 283w
European fighter aircraft, Defence contracts 165w
Railway travel, Worcestershire 740

Lupins
Advisory Committee on Novel Foods & Processes 37w

Lyell, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas, Attorney-General
Questions
Attorney General, Small businesses 773w
Computer privacy, Judgments 773w
Computers, Crown Prosecution Service 772w
Crown Prosecution Service, Annual reports 239w
Crown Prosecution Service, Contracts for services 772w
Crown Prosecution Service, Data processing 771w
Crown Prosecution Service, Public interest 239-40w
Georgiou, Jason, Prosecutions 534w
Nadir, Asil, Criminal proceedings 533w
Prosecutions, Torture 22w
Treasury Solicitors' Dept, Computers 772-3w
Treasury Solicitors' Dept, Contracts for services 772w
Treasury Solicitors' Dept, Data processing 771w
Trials 774w

Lynne, Ms Liz
Debates etc.
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 379-82
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 461
Questions
Business questions 514
Dentists, Patients 2w
Generic prescribing 4-5w
Hospital consultants, Orthopaedics 929w
Injuries, Surgery 927w
NHS trusts, Political parties 549w, 834w

Lynne, Ms Liz—continued
Orthopaedics 833-4w
Orthopaedics, Manpower 834-5w
Pornography, Children 490
Sellafield, Health hazards 292-3w
Take-up of employment, Rochdale 799w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 347w
Trauma centres, Expenditure 834w
Trauma centres, Wales 927w

M1
Road works (27:07:93) 1044-50

M4
Road works 580w

M6
Road works 329w

M11
Road construction 918w

M25
509, 906w
Road construction 75-6w, 332-5w, 739-40
Road traffic 75-6w, 332-3w

M53
Road construction 403w

M56
403w

M65
Road works 329w

McAllion, Mr John
Debates etc.
Latin America, Foreign policy (26:07:93) 826-7
Timex, Public petitions (27:07:93) 981
Questions
Armed forces deployment, Contracts for services 85-6w
Assisted places scheme, Expenditure 477-8w
Civil service agencies, Manpower 790-1w, 814w
Computers, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 760w
Computers, Crown Prosecution Service 772w
Computers, Customs & Excise 592-3w
Computers, Dept for Education 603-4w
Computers, Dept of Employment 788-90w
Computers, Dept of Health 512w
Computers, Dept of National Heritage 765w
Computers, Dept of Social Security 1021-2w
Computers, Dept of the Environment 896w
Computers, Dept of Trade & Industry 648w
Computers, Dept of Transport 401w
Computers, Foreign & Commonwealth Office 569-71w
Computers, Home Office 628-9w
Computers, Inland Revenue 592w
Computers, Land Registry Office 753-4w
Computers, Lord Chancellor's Dept 753w
Computers, Ministry of Defence 816w
Computers, Northern Ireland Office 841-6w
Computers, Ordnance Survey 712-3w
Computers, Scottish Office 966w
Computers, Treasury 593w
Computers, Treasury Solicitors' Dept 772-3w
Computers, Welsh Office 658-60w
Contracts for services 17-8
Contracts for services, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 761w
Contracts for services, Crown Prosecution Service 772w
Contracts for services, Customs & Excise 594w
Contracts for services, Dept for Education 601w
Contracts for services, Dept of Employment 787w
Contracts for services, Dept of Health 545w
Contracts for services, Dept of National Heritage 764w
Contracts for services, Dept of Social Security 724w
Contracts for services, Dept of the Environment 694w
Contracts for services, Dept of Trade & Industry 648w
Contracts for services, Dept of Transport 911w

McAllion, Mr John—continued
Contracts for services, Foreign & Commonwealth Office 572w
Contracts for services, Home Office 625w
Contracts for services, Inland Revenue 594w
Contracts for services, Land Registry Office 755w
Contracts for services, Lord Chancellor's Dept 755w
Contracts for services, Ministry of Defence 814-6w
Contracts for services, Northern Ireland Office 529-30w
Contracts for services, Operations West 84-5w
Contracts for services, Ordnance Survey 694-5w
Contracts for services, Scottish Office 967-8w
Contracts for services, Treasury 594w
Contracts for services, Treasury Solicitors' Dept 772w
Contracts for services, Welsh Office 480w
Data processing, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 597-8w
Data processing, Crown Prosecution Service 771w
Data processing, Customs & Excise 469w
Data processing, Dept for Education 603w
Data processing, Dept of Employment 787-8w
Data processing, Dept of Health 545w
Data processing, Dept of National Heritage 555w
Data processing, Dept of Social Security 726w
Data processing, Dept of the Environment 696-7w
Data processing, Dept of Trade & Industry 648w
Data processing, Dept of Transport 584-5w
Data processing, Foreign & Commonwealth Office 568w
Data processing, Home Office 630w
Data processing, Inland Revenue 591w
Data processing, Land Registry Office 754-5w
Data processing, Lord Chancellor's Dept 754w
Data processing, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 731w
Data processing, Ministry of Defence 742w
Data processing, Northern Ireland Office 841w
Data processing, Ordnance Survey 696w
Data processing, Scottish Office 967w
Data processing, Treasury 590-1w
Data processing, Treasury Solicitors' Dept 771w
Dept of Employment, Finance 814w
Invalidity benefits, Expenditure 200w
Invalidity benefits, Social security recipients 278-9w
Ministry of Defence, Security guards 84w
Overseas aid, Privatisation 871-2w
Public transport, Local government services 564w
Right to strike, Public service 686w

McAvoy, Mr Thomas
Questions
Local government reform, Scotland 959w

McCartney, Mr Ian
Debates etc.
Limited list prescribing (26:07:93) 958-63, 964

Macdonald, Mr Calum
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 837-41, 868
Questions
Caledonian MacBrayne 974w
Coastal zone management, Scotland 499w
Crime, Racial conflict 975w
Kosovo, Armed conflict 92-3w
Kosovo, Peace keeping operations 18-9w
Offshore supply vessels 920w
PSA Building Management, Privatisation 67w
RAF Stornoway, Construction 88w

Macdonald, Mr Calum—continued
Retirement pensions, Departmental forms 197w
Royal Artillery Range Hebrides 977w
Serbia, Military aircraft 93w

McFall, Mr John
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 760-1
Questions
Ammunition, Uranium 749w
Forestry, Environmental impact assessment 978w
Police authorities, Scotland 564w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 619w

McGrady, Mr Eddie
Questions
Coroners, Administrative delays 753w
Foreign investment in UK, Northern Ireland 532-3w
Industrial development, Government assistance 530w
Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland 528w
Northern Ireland Dept of Economic Development 414w
Northern Ireland Electricity 851w
Northern Ireland health & social services boards 845-6w
Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Cost effectiveness 529w
Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Temporary accommodation 529-30w
Regional selective assistance, South Down 851w
Rural areas, Poverty 848-9w

***MacGregor, Rt Hon John**, Secretary of State for Transport*
Questions
Air traffic control 916-7w
Air transport 284w
Airports, South East region 332w
Birmingham Airport, Air routes 737
Blackpool Airport 737
British Rail, Privatisation 735-6
Central Wales railway line 735-6
Ferries, Shipping safety 731-2
M25, Road construction 333-5w, 739-40
Manchester Airport 738
Network SouthEast, Rolling stock 735
Plymouth Airport 738
Railway travel, Worcestershire 740
Regional airports 737
Road construction 739-40
Road construction, Expenditure 738-9
Road traffic, Air pollution 579w
Rolling stock, Leaseback arrangements 580w
West coast railway line, Investment 735

Machine tools
361w
Exports 129w

Machine tools industry
Investment 129w

McKelvey, Mr William
Questions
Fund raising, Fraud 210-1w

Mackinlay, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 415-20, 423-5
Ministers, Directors (26:07:93) 797
Questions
Church of England 556w

***Maclean, Mr David**, Minister of State, Home Office*
Debates etc.
Brewing industry (27:07:93) 1036
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 396-401
Drug abuse, Greater London (27:07:93) 1041-3
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 445-50
Questions
Alcoholic drinks, Young people 622-6w

Maclean, Mr David*—*continued
Assaults on police, Greater London 390-2w
Bail 370w, 491-2
Bail hostels 148-9w, 633-6w
Bail hostels, Probation hostels 408-10w, 636w
Bail information schemes 145-7w
Bentley, Derek, Prerogative of mercy 370w
Benzodiazepines, Drug abuse 854w
Crime, Greater London 135w
Crime, Harwich 143w
Crime, Home Office 137w
Crimes against the person 135w
Criminal Injuries Compensation Board 638w
Drug abuse, Health education 860w
Drug abuse, Wales 627w
Fines 637-8w
Firearms, Crime 370w
Homicide, Offensive weapons 632w
Independent Criminal Cases Review Authority 368w
Kerb crawling, Wales 136w
Miscarriages of justice 138w
Missing persons, Children 135w
Motor insurance, Prosecutions 629w
Offensive weapons, Convictions 634w, 855-6w
Parking offences, Greater London 211w
Police cautions 144w
Police national computer, Computer privacy 852w
Prosecutions, Offensive weapons 633w
Rape, Bail 489
Rape, Sentencing 488-90
Remand in custody 367-8w
Road tax, Tax evasion 631w
Road traffic offences 629-30w
Runaway children, Wales 619w
Sentencing, Appeals 368w
Steroid drugs, Drug abuse 619w
Vagrancy Act 1824 388w
Victim support schemes 631-2w
Young offenders 149w, 369w, 856-7w
Young offenders, Secure accommodation 492, 861-2w
Young offenders, Secure training orders 493
Young offenders, Sentencing 492-3
Young offenders, Supervision orders 857w

McLeish, Mr Henry
Questions
Public appointments, Scottish Office 975-7w
Sea transport, Scottish Islands 313-4w
Sea transport, Subsidies 252w

Maclennan, Mr Robert
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 358
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 304, 315-6
Social security payments, Public petitions (23:07:93) 623-4
Questions
Special education, Appeals 252w

***McLoughlin, Mr Patrick**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Trade & Industry*
Debates etc.
Coal mining, Water supply (26:07:93) 944-7
Questions
Arms to Iraq Inquiry, Evidence 273w
Billing, Government departments 949w
Biotechnology, Patents 124-5w
British Telecom, Privatisation 344-6
Chlorofluorocarbons, Dept of Trade & Industry 937-9w
Coal, Air pollution control 517-8w
Cooperatives, Government assistance 520-2w
Dept of Trade & Industry, Environment 133w
Domestic gas appliances, Gas safety 348
Energy conservation, Industry 934w
Environmental research, Competition 362w
Environmental technology innovation scheme 956-7w
EUREKA 941w
Export Credits Guarantee Department 268w
Group of Seven, Balance of trade 270-1w
Halons, Dept of Trade & Industry 938w
Hearing Aid Council, Public appointments 362w

McLoughlin, Mr Patrick*—*continued
High definition television, UK contributions 125w
Hotels, Safety standards 267-8w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons, Dept of Trade & Industry 937w
Imports, Tyres 272w
Industrial research 349-50
Innovation, Finance 952w
Machine tools, Exports 129w
Manufactured imports, Child workers 265w
Manufacturing industries 265w
Mercury Communications 346
National Environmental Technology Centre 366w
National Environmental Technology Centre, Finance 932w
National Environmental Technology Centre, Public appointments 931w
North American Free Trade Agreement, Exports 126w
One stop shop initiative 266w
Overseas trade, Russia 269w
Package holidays 268w
Patent Office 134-5w, 365w
Patent Office, Civil service dispersal 134w
Patent Office, Contracts for services 134w, 958w
Patents, EC countries 134w
Post Office 334
Post offices, Rural areas 335
Post offices, Social security payments 336
Postal deliveries, Aids for handicapped 334-5
Postal franking machines 125w
Postal rates 335
Price Marking Order 1991 16w
Recycling 949-50w
Small businesses, Debts 364-5w
Small businesses, Dept of Trade & Industry 934-6w
Small businesses, Government assistance 953-5w
Standards specifications, Environment protection 126-7w
Standards specifications, Handicapped 518w
Technology transfer, Departmental responsibilities 15w
Telephone charges, Billing 950-1w
Unfair trading practices, Mortgages 947w
Warren Spring Laboratory 361-2w
Warren Spring Laboratory, Consultants 271-2w

McNamara, Mr Kevin
Questions
Terrorism, Prisoners' transfers 859-60w

Madden, Mr Max
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 852, 862-4
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 304-5, 308
Local government audit (27:07:93) 1058
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 445, 462-4
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 666-7
Questions
Ali, Ghazanfer 20w
Bail 491-2
Immigration applications, Foreign spouses 998w
India, Human rights 997-8w

Maginnis, Mr Ken
Questions
Mercury Communications 346

Magistrates
Training 211w

Magistrates' courts
Administration of justice 306-7w
Justices' clerks 307w
Performance standards 307-8w

Magistrates' courts committees
306w, 756w

Mahon, Mrs Alice
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 50-1, 69-71, 76
Social security (20:07:93) 278-80
Questions
Employment services, Cumbria 68-9w
Fine defaulters, Prison sentences 620w
Junior hospital doctors, Working hours 514w
Life imprisonment 855w
National Criminal Intelligence Service, Computers 629w
THORP 643w
THORP, Building workers 270w
THORP, Employment opportunities 124w

Mail order selling
EC action 544w

Maintenance
Genetics 1026w
Social security benefits rules 200-1w

Maitland, Lady Olga
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 855-9
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 75, 87, 89-90

Major, Rt Hon John, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 519-28, 610-1 (23:07:93) 625-31
Questions
Abu Dhabi 321w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry 758w
Birds, Nature conservation 321w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed conflict 500
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Peace keeping operations 501
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Peace negotiations 321w
Cabinet committees, Environment 559w
Children, Migration 12w
Common agricultural policy, Expenditure 193-4
Council of Europe, UK delegations 94w
Debts written off, Developing countries 12-3w
Defence contracts, USA 191
Dental services, Health hazards 193
Deregulation initiative 500, 561-2w
Desert Storm syndrome 757-8w
Drug abuse 559w
Drug crimes, Thailand 758w
EC Social Charter 499, 502-4
Economic policy 190, 192-3
Economic situation 499-500
European Communities (Amendment) Bill 1992/93 190-1
Grant maintained schools 191
Homosexuality, Bermuda 317w
Human rights, Vietnam 11-2w
MI5, Biography 321w
Ministerial policy advisors 318-20w
Nuclear non proliferation, Japan 559w
Official engagements 94w, 319w, 502, 757w
Official visits 560-2w
Olympic Games, Manchester 319-20w
Overseas trade 502
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 191
Privatisation, France 501
Privatisation, Skillcentres 499-500
Sanctions, Iraq 757w
Senior Salaries Review Body 559-60w
State visits 413w
Stone Kent 93w
10 Downing Street, Fund raising 757w
Terrorism, Northern Ireland 192
Treaty on European Union 192, 500-1
VAT, Clothing 194
VAT, Fuels 191-2
War widows, Members' correspondence 11w

Making Belfast work programme
Schools 39w

Malawi
Overseas aid 872-3w

Mallon, Mr Seamus
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 629
Questions
Camlough Lake 850w
LEADER programme, Northern Ireland 849w
Northern Ireland Housing Executive, House renovation grants 849-50w
Road accidents, Armagh 849w

Managers
Health service staff 4w, 835-8w

Manchester
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 790-3
Olympic Games 319-20w
Urban railways (26:07:93) 787-90

Manchester Airport
738

Manchester Prison
9w, 147-8w

Mandelson, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 579-82
Questions
Air transport, Competition 586w
Income tax, Departmental forms 90-1w, 878w
Income tax, Overseas workers 874w
Inland Revenue, Departmental forms 28w
Local Government Commission for England 350w
Local government reform 348w
Local government reform, Cleveland 348w
Offshore funds 597w
Sterling, Caribbean 597w
Sterling, Switzerland 303w
Tax yields, Pensions 28w
Television, Ownership 24w
Training, Young people 802w

Mans, Mr Keith
Questions
Road traffic control 916w

Manufactured imports
Child workers 265w

Manufacturing industries
265w
Employment level 803-4w
Wales 50w
West Midlands 803w

Marek, Dr John
Questions
Bougainville, Independence movements 567-8w
National income 875w
Work permits, St Helena 680-1w

Marine Accident Investigation Branch
78w

Marine animals
Fishing catches 731-2w
Nature conservation 731-2w

Marine nature reserves
Cardigan Bay 666-7w

Marland, Mr Paul
Questions
Assisted areas, Ross-on-Wye 342-3

Marlow, Mr Tony
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 64-5
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 563, 580-1, (23:07:93) 627

Marshall, Mr David
Questions
Criminal proceedings, Scotland 496-8w
Imports, Tyres 272w
Local government elections, Scotland 188w
Road accidents, Scotland 494-6w
Smoking, Health education 500-1w
Tobacco, Children 500w

Marshall, Mr David*—*continued
Tyres, Road accidents 159w
Tyres, Safety standards 159w

Marshall, Mr Jim
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 850
Questions
Western European Union, Armed forces deployment 165w
Young offenders 496

Marshall, Mr John
Debates etc.
Post offices, Pitsea (26:07:93) 795
Public transport, Greater London (26:07:93) 873-7, 883
Questions
Defence industries 7
Foreign investment in UK 49-50w
Foreign investment in UK, Employment opportunities 267w
Grant maintained schools 191
Local government corruption, Bolsover 97w
Social security finance, EC countries 726w
Unemployment benefits, EC countries 466w

Martin, Mr Michael J
Questions
Exhibitions, Upper Waiting Hall 23w, 95-6w, 242-3w, 456w, 871w
Palace of Westminster, Day nurseries 558w

Martlew, Mr Eric
Debates etc.
Energy conservation (26:07:93) 901-2
Feddon, Robin, Death (26:07:93) 974-5, 977
Helicopters, Defence procurement (26:07:93) 918-9, 921-2
Questions
Armed forces training, Defence land 745w
Countryside stewardship scheme 97-8w
Defence land 745-6w
Defence land, Land acquisition 824-5w
Defence land, Sites of special scientific interest 360w
Diplomatic service, Land ownership & tenure 572-4w
Joint Maritime Communications Centre, RAF St Mawgan 746w
Nimrod aircraft, Air force bases 745w
Surplus land, Land acquisition 303w
Trident submarines 746w
West coast railway line, Investment 579w

Mass media
Finance 27w

Maternity rights
690-1w, 798w

Maternity services
Costs 832w
Greater Glasgow Health Board 43w
NHS trusts 187w
Scotland 187w
South Western Regional Health Authority 515-7w
West Midlands Regional Health Authority 515-7w

Mates, Mr Michael
Questions
Judges, Corruption 523w
Nadir, Asil, Criminal proceedings 533w

Mawhinney, Dr Brian, Minister for Health
Questions
Dental services, Expenditure 2w
Dentists, Patients 2w
Diabetes, Prescriptions 2w
Family practitioner services, Psychology 4w
Generic prescribing 4-5w
Health service staff, Managers 4w
Health service staff, Manpower 1w
NHS review, Expenditure 5w
Pharmacists, Pay 2-3w

Mayhew, Rt Hon Sir Patrick, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Questions
Demonstrations, Northern Ireland 39w
Select committees, Northern Ireland 323w

Meacher, Mr Michael
Questions
Angola, Armed conflict 234-5w
Angola, Overseas aid 232w
City technology colleges, School governors 781-2w
Debts, SubSaharan Africa 305-6w
Debts written off, Developing countries 12-3w
District health authorities, Accountability 832-3w
Further education corporations, Accountability 782w
Grant maintained schools, Government grants 776-7w
Grant maintained schools, School governors 782-3w, 928-9w
Local government expenditure 488w
Non-departmental public bodies, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 762-3w
Non-departmental public bodies, Conflict of interests 899-900w
Non-departmental public bodies, Dept for Education 783-4w
Non-departmental public bodies, Dept of Employment 791w
Non-departmental public bodies, Dept of National Heritage 763-4w
Non-departmental public bodies, Expenditure 763w
Non-departmental public bodies, Foreign & Commonwealth Office 1005w
Non-departmental public bodies, Lord Chancellor's Dept 400-1w
Non-departmental public bodies, Ministry of Defence 453w
Non-departmental public bodies, Scottish Office 974-5w
Non-departmental public bodies, Welsh Office 923w
Overseas Development Administration, Environment protection 873w
Regional health authorities, Expenditure 516w
Training & enterprise councils, Expenditure 799w
Urban development corporations, Public expenditure 901-2w

Meale, Mr Alan
Questions
Defence land, Blood sports 740w
Defence land, Gun sports 741w

Means tested benefits
Capital rules 466w

Measurement
Non-ionizing radiation 697-8w

Meat
EC action (26:07:93) 815

Meat & Livestock Commission (Levy) (Variation) Scheme (Confirmation) Order 1993
Debates etc.
(19:07:93) 167

Medical appeal tribunals
1020-1w

Medical Devices Directorate
Civil service agencies 835w

Medical education
602w
Paediatrics 550w
Postgraduate students 121-2w
Student numbers 290w

Medical examinations
Immigration applications 205w, 388-9w
Invalidity benefits 199w

Medical research
Surgery 540-1w

Medical Research Council
Environmental health 904w

Medical treatments
289w
Eye disorders 979w
Heart diseases 830w

Meirionnydd
Local government reform (22:07:93) 612

Melatonin
Sheep 325w

Mellor, Rt Hon David
Debates etc.
Queen Mary's University Hospital (23:07:93) 724-8, 729-30

Members' allowances
23-4w

Members' correspondence
Public inquiries 906w
Wales 481w
War widows 11w

Members' facilities
871w

Members' visits abroad
Northern Cyprus 990w, 998w

Mental Health Act 1983
Questions
43w

Mental Health Act Commission
827w
Complaints 826-7w

Mental health services
Finance 539w

Mental hospitals
Bosnia-Herzegovina 566w
Child patients 661-2w
Women 213w

Mental patients
Ethnic minorities 538-40w
Hospital admissions 499w
Nursing homes 830-1w
Scotland 499w

Mental welfare officers
Scotland 499w

Mentally Disordered Offenders Services Review
539w

Mentally handicapped
Bosnia-Herzegovina 304w

Mentally ill
Respite care 513w
Scotland 188w
Wales 661-2w

Merchant, Mr Piers
Debates etc.
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 404, 406, 410, 412, 419, 426, 430, 434, 436-41

Merchant seamen
Training 282w

Mercury Communications
346

Merseyside
Arts 24-5w
EC grants & loans 945w
Public appointments 133w
Redundancy 340

Merseyside Fire & Civil Defence Authority
Finance 854w
Inspections 860w

Methane
Coal mining 943-4w
Disclosure of information 944w
Petroleum exploration licences 944w

Methyl bromide
905w
Air pollution 483w
Air pollution control 483w
Health hazards 785-6w
Industrial health & safety 680w

Metropolitan Police
367w, 390-2w, 631w
Falkland Islands 9w

Metropolitan Police—continued
Manpower 142-3w

MFV Lupina C
744w

MI5
Biography 321w

MI6
Disclosure of information 1000w

Michael, Mr Alun
Questions
Bail 370w
Bail hostels 148-9w, 633-6w
Bail hostels, Probation hostels 408-10w, 636w
Bail information schemes 145-7w
Magistrates, Training 211w
Young offenders 149w

Michie, Mr Bill
Questions
Export Credits Guarantee Department 268w
Young people, Employment level 802w

Michie, Mrs Ray
Questions
Day care of children, Scotland 189-90w
Hypnosis, Training 554-5w
Local government reform, Scotland 962-3w
Teachers, Performance appraisal 45-6w

Mid Glamorgan
Employment level 49w

Mid Kent Water
Water charges 348w

Mid Staffordshire Health Authority
Finance 215w

Mid Wales
Low flying 359w

Middle East
Arms trade 744w, 817w

Midwives
Manpower 177-80w, 212w, 218w, 541w, 984-8w
Scotland 177-80w, 984-8w

Migration
Children 5w, 11-2w, 833w

Milburn, Mr Alan
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 756-7
Bus services, Public petitions (27:07:93) 982
Questions
District health authorities, Public appointments 552w
Furs, Exports 948w
Furs, Farms 883-4w, 972w
Furs, Overseas trade 949w
Furs, Retail trade 947-9w
GP fundholders 552w
Health service staff, Managers 4w, 835-8w
Holiday pay, Company liquidations 688w
Income support, Lone parents 395-6w
Leather & fur industries 948w
Low incomes 687-8w
Manufacturing industries, Employment level 803-4w
National insurance contributions, Fraud 1023-5w
NHS trusts, Expenditure 112w, 552w
NHS trusts, Government grants 826w
Regional selective assistance 15w
Regional selective assistance, Northern region 367w
Severe hardship provision, Bishop Auckland 198-9w
Social security benefits, Expenditure 395w
Social security benefits, Take-up 395-6w
Vacancies, Employment Service local offices 688-90w
VAT, Energy prices 29w

Military aircraft
Army Air Corps 751w
Bosnia-Herzegovina 90w, 246w

Military aircraft—continued
Defence expenditure 90w
Low flying 749w
Serbia 93w
Yugoslavia 357w

Military alliances
Chemical & biological warfare 166-72w

Military bands
173w

Military exercises
Wales 358-9w

Military intelligence
Japan 91w

Military intervention
Bosnia-Herzegovina (26:07:93) 837-72

Military Survey
Performance standards 454w

Military vehicles
Motor vehicle testing 83w

Milk
Production quotas 38w

Millennium Fund
765-6w

Miller, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 42, 71-2, 108-9, 111
Questions
A550, Road construction 401-2w
A550, Road traffic 401-2w
Bypasses 403w
M53, Road construction 403w
Petrol, Excise duties 402w
Public transport 402w
Public transport, Wirral 403w
Science & technology policy 14

Milligan, Mr Stephen
Questions
British Rail, Pension funds 283w
British Rail Maintenance, Privatisation 283-4w

Mills, Mr Iain
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 556
Questions
EC Social Charter 275-6w

Mineral resources
Development plans 692w

Minerals
Planning permission 264w, 471-2w
Wales 471-2w

Minesweepers
Defence procurement 737w, 743w

Mining
Doncaster 126w
Redundancy 126w

Ministerial policy advisors
318-20w

Ministerial statements
Arts Council (21:07:93) 353-64
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 749-67

Ministers
Directors (26:07:93) 795-8
House of Commons committees 870w

Ministers' domestic visits
Football 413w
Student unions 776w

Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food
Civil service manpower 150w
Crime 729-30w
Data processing 731w
Departmental publications 732w
Public bodies 882-3w

Ministry of Defence
Civil service manpower 822w
Computers 816w
Contracts for services 814-6w
Data processing 742w
Departmental publications 79-80w, 817-8w
Environment 80w
Higher civil servants 87-8w, 822-3w
Non-departmental public bodies 453w
Public bodies 752w
Relocation of employees 178
Security guards 84w
Small businesses 742w

Mink
Appin 972w
Scotland 972w

Miscarriages of justice
138w
Scotland 191-2w

Misleading advertising
Drugs 827w

Missing persons
Children 135w

Mitchell, Mr Austin
Questions
Accountants, Dept of Trade inquiries 269w
Audit, Professional organisations 13w, 269w
Auditing Practices Committee 270w
Bank of England 236w
Bank of England, Duty of care 873w
Barlow Clowes 303-4w
Children, Migration 11w
Common fisheries policy 155w, 240-1w
Company accounts 517w
Company receivers, Fees & charges 14w
Contracts for services, Directors 587w
Dept of Trade inquiries, Accountants 130-4w
Dept of Trade inquiries, Costs 130w
Dept of Trade inquiries, Equal opportunities 132w
Dept of Trade inquiries, Pay 132w
Directors, Disqualifications 130w
Fish conservation 35-7w
Fishing vessels, Decommissioning 37w, 150-2w
Fishing vessels, Inspections 159w
Fishing vessels, Spain 155w
Gilgate Holdings, Company investigations 131w
Ramor Investments, Company investigations 131-2w
Stoy Hayward, Dept of Trade inquiries 133w

Mitchell, Sir David
Debates etc.
Gypsies, Caravan sites (26:07:93) 967-71

Moate, Sir Roger
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 763
Questions
Billing, Government departments 949w
Overseas trade, Norway 333-4
Recycling 949-50w
Treaty on European Union 192

Mobility of disabled
Disability living allowance 1012w

Monofilament gill nets
Scotland 502w

Monopolies & Mergers Commission
Gas supply industry 953w

Monro, Sir Hector, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scottish Office
Questions
Beaches, Sea pollution 187w
Coastal zone management, Scotland 499w
Factories, Listed buildings 253w
Forestry, Environmental impact assessment 978w
Forestry Commission, Environment protection 977w
Forestry Commission, Land acquisition 189w, 978w
Forestry Commission, Nature conservation 977-8w

Monro, Sir Hector—continued
Forestry Review Group 502w
Forests, Access to countryside 977w
Furs, Farms 972w
Hazardous wastes, Waste disposal 180-6w
Monofilament gill nets, Scotland 502w
Salmon 309w
Salmon, Fish farming 176w
Salmon, Fishing catches 248w
Salmon, Fishing gear 248w
Scottish Arts Council 987-8w
Sea pollution, Scotland 186-7w
Sewage, Waste disposal 254-5w
Water pollution, Scotland 187w
Water supply industry, Scotland 44w

Montgomery, Sir Fergus
Debates etc.
Hospitals, Trafford (26:07:93) 787-90
Questions
Business questions 507

Moray
Unemployment (20:07:93) 322

Morgan, Mr Rhodri
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 758
Questions
Airwork, Defence contracts 747-8w
Heart diseases, Surgery 9
Housing associations, Wales 481w
Incontinence aids, Wales 928w
NHS internal market, Wales 927-8w
Road construction, South Glamorgan 481w
Secure training orders 367w
Tornado aircraft, Airwork 181, 747-8w
Tornado aircraft, Defence contracts 749w
Youth organisations 410-1w

Morley, Mr Elliot
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 761
Public transport, Greater London (26:07:93) 873-4
Questions
European Agricultural Guidance & Guarantee Fund 880w
Forestry Commission, Land Acquisition 189w, 978w
Forests, Land acquisition 928w
Furs, Farms 450-1w
North Moor pumping station 735w
North Moor pumping station, Nature conservation 887-9w
Sheep, Melatonin 325w
Transport of animals, Netherlands 241w

Morris, Rt Hon Alfred
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 225-9
Questions
Access to Parliament, Handicapped 455-6w
Access to work programme, Blind 691w
Disabled workers, Aids for handicapped 412w
Disabled workers, Employment level 411w, 812-3w
Handicapped, Personal social services 831w
National Audit Office 22-3w
Personal reader service scheme, Disabled workers 411-2w

Morris, Ms Estelle
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 81-2, 84-5, 89
Questions
Post Office 334

Morris, Rt Hon John
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 765
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 63-4
Questions
Crown Prosecution Service, Annual reports 239w
Crown Prosecution Service, Public interest 239-40w
Police cautions 137w, 144w

Mortgages
Income support 397-8w, 1018w
Unfair trading practices 947w

Moss, Mr Malcolm
Questions
Armed forces housing, Public sector housing sales 184
Non-fossil fuel obligation 337
Sentencing, Appeals 368w

Motability
1012w

Motor insurance
586w
Prosecutions 629w

Motor vehicle testing
Military vehicles 83w

Motorways
Road tolls 332w
Road traffic 78-9w
Road works 157-8w, 160w, 912-3w
Tourist attractions 914w

Mowlam, Ms Marjorie
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 230, 240-1, 288-91
Questions
Chartermark scheme 13
Company investigations 934w
Road works, Motorways 157-8w
Science & technology 95w

Mullin, Mr Chris
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 852, 859-62, 867
River Wear, Environment protection (20:07:93) 324-7, 330
Questions
Bombings, Birmingham 210w
Business questions 507
Coal mine closures, River pollution 348-9
Miscarriages of justice 138w
Road construction, Expenditure 738-9

Multifibre arrangement
943w

Multiple occupation
Fires 142w
Standard spending assessments 493w

Murphy, Mr Paul
Questions
Defence procurement 8

Museums & galleries
Arts finance 970w
Scotland 970w

Mustow Committee
see Street Works Advisory Committee

MV Avon
Shipping accidents 587w

MV Bowbelle
78w

MV Braer
Shipping accidents 970w

MV Marchioness
Shipping accidents 78w

Nadir, Asil
Criminal proceedings 533w

Nagorno Karabakh
Armed conflict 1002-3w, 1005w

National Accreditation Council for Certification Bodies
126-7w

National Asthma Campaign
242w

National Audit Office
22-3w, (19:07:93) 26-167, 742-8

National Collections of Industrial & Marine Bacteria
Finance 885w

National Criminal Intelligence Service
Computers 629w

National debt
302-3w

National Environmental Technology Centre
366w
Finance 932w
Public appointments 931w

National Health Service Trusts (Public Service) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
1R (20:07:93) 199

National income
875w
Yorkshire & Humberside 239w

National insurance contributions
74w, 202w
Fraud 1023-5w
Retirement age 74w

National Insurance Contributions Unit
see Social Security Contributions Agency

National Loans Fund
Nuclear power 595w

National lottery
8w, 25w, 987-8w
Gaming machines 25w
Licensing 766w
Tourism 765-6w

National Lottery Etc Bill 1992/93
Questions
509

National Museum of Science & Industry
see Science Museum

National parks
Tourists 912w

National Rivers Authority
55w
Manpower 264w
Operating costs 264w
Shipping accidents 919w

National Trust
404w

National Union of Mineworkers
508-9

National vocational qualifications
653w, 964w

NATO
93w, (26:07:93) 837-72
International conferences 92w
Standardisation 749w

NATO countries
Defence expenditure 183

Naturalisation
Administrative delays 209w

Nature Conservancy Council for England
103-4w

Nature conservation
Birds 321w, 350w
Cetaceans 707w
EC law 706w
Forestry Commission 977-8w
Inverclyde Enterprise Zone 989w
Marine animals 731-2w
North Moor pumping station 887-9w
Peat bogs 103-4w
Planning permission 491-2w
THORP 325-6w

Naval Aircraft Repair Organisation
Performance standards 455w

Navy
Armed forces deployment 452-3w

Neath & Port Talbot Hospital
50w, 513-4

***Needham, Mr Richard**, Minister for Trade*
Questions
Arab boycott 1003w
EC law 520w
Export controls, Drugs 955w

***Needham, Mr Richard**—continued*
Exports, Drugs 647w
Furs, Exports 948w
International trade, Environment protection 936-7w
International trade, Sustainable development 936w
Overseas trade, Agricultural products 888-9w
Overseas trade, Japan 932w
Sanctions, Drugs 955w
Standards specifications, EC internal trade 520w
Textiles, Trade agreements 943w

Neighbourhood watch schemes
631w

***Nelson, Mr Anthony**, Economic Secretary to the Treasury*
Debates etc.
Consolidated Fund (Appropriation) (No 2) Bill, 1R (21:07:93) 444
Questions
Attali, Jacques, Resignations 469w
Bank of England 236w
Bank of England, Duty of care 873w
Barlow Clowes 303-4w
Contracts for services, Directors 587w
Debts 876w
Disposable income 301w
Economic policy, Unemployment 876w
Economic situation, Environment protection 469w
Employment level 27w
Family income 236-8w
Government securities, Pension funds 239w
Life insurance 877w
Mass media, Finance 27w
National debt 302-3w
National income 875w
National income, Yorkshire & Humberside 239w
Occupational pensions 302w
Offshore funds 597w
Personal income 236w
Sanctions, Yugoslavia 595w
Sterling, Caribbean 597w
Sterling, Switzerland 303w
Treasury, Computers 593w
Treasury, Contracts for services 594w
Treasury, Crime 587-8w
Treasury, Data processing 590-1w
Treasury, Departmental publications 591w

Nepal
823-4w

Netherlands
Red Arrows 354w
Slaughterhouses 241w
Transport of animals 241w

Network SouthEast
Rolling stock 77-8w, 735

Neubert, Sir Michael
Questions
Bus services 582w
Jubilee line, Construction 404w
MV Marchioness, Shipping accidents 78w

"New Framework for Local Justice White Paper"
306-7w

New horizons for women campaign
803w

New towns
Public sector housing sales 708-9w

Newcastle Health Authority
Prescriptions 826w

Newcastle upon Tyne
Industrial disablement benefits 1020-1w
Lone parents 72w, 193-4w

Newham
London East Training & Enterprise Council 161w, 686-7w
Police 631w

***Newton, Rt Hon Tony**, Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons*
Debates etc.
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (23:07:93) 621
Post office closures (26:07:93) 792
Recess motions (26:07:93) 810-2
Questions
Business questions 506-16
Business statements 505-6
Church of England 556w
EC law, Compliance cost assessments 24w
House of Commons committees, Ministers 870w
House of Commons select committees, Iraq 558w
House of Commons select committees, Northern Ireland 747-8
House of Commons select committees, Sustainable development 869-70w
House of Commons times of sittings 557w
Lord President of the Council, Small businesses 324w
Members' allowances 23-4w
Parliamentary questions 557w
Parliamentary recess 748
Privy Council, Civil service manpower 557-8w
Sub judice 746-7
Treaty on European Union, Rees-Mogg, Lord 747

NHS
Empty housing 553w
Ethnic minorities 832w
Land acquisition 910-1w
Procurement 289-90w

NHS complaints
Children 828w
Young people 547w

NHS Complaints Review Committee
552w

NHS finance
Regional health authorities 112w
Scotland 973-4w

NHS Health Advisory Service
see Health Advisory Service

NHS internal market
Administrative costs 213-4w
Patient's Charter 112w
Wales 927-8w

NHS Management Executive
506w, 825w, 832w
Railway travel 506w

NHS Management Functions & Manpower Review
505-6w

NHS Pensions Agency
118-9w

NHS review
Expenditure 5w

NHS treatment centres
Surgery 212w

NHS Trust Federation
546w

NHS trusts
826w
Ambulance services 216-8w
Expenditure 112w, 552w
Fringe benefits 501w
Government grants 826w
Maternity services 187w
Political parties 549w, 834w
Public appointments 112w, 537w
Scotland 501w, 980w

Nicholls, Mr Patrick
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 764
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 681

Nicholls, Mr Patrick—continued
Questions
Rape, Sentencing 488-90

Nicholson, Mr David
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 684
Questions
Electricity, Imports 13w
Lorries, Axle weights 915w
Taxation, Single people 875w
Treaty on European Union, Judicial review 1005w

Nicholson, Miss Emma
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 635
Questions
Exhibitions, Upper Waiting Hall 871w

Nigeria
Civil disorder 575w
Elections 574-5w
Politics & government 575w
Prisoners 574w

Night flying
Gatwick Airport 78w, 284w

Nimrod aircraft
Air force bases 745w
RAF Kinloss 359w
RAF Wyton 359w

Non-departmental public bodies
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 762-3w
Conflict of interests 899-900w
Dept for Education 783-4w
Dept of Employment 791w
Dept of National Heritage 763-4w
Expenditure 763w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 1005w
Lord Chancellor's Dept 400-1w
Ministry of Defence 453w
Scottish Office 974-5w
Welsh Office 923w

Non-domestic rates
Rating revaluations 979w
Scotland 979w

Non-fossil fuel obligation
14w, 337-8, 640-2w, 646w
Combined heat & power 129w
Northern Ireland 530-1w
Refuse derived fuel 641-2w
Wind power 640w

Non-governmental organisations
559w

Non-ionizing radiation
Measurement 697-8w

Norman Shaw buildings
563w, 743-4

Norris, Mr Steve, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Transport
Debates etc.
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 421-7, 436
Public transport, Greater London (26:07:93) 879-80, 887-93
Stansted Airport (27:07:93) 1016-20
Questions
A205, Road works 732-3
Air routes, USA 74w
Air transport, Competition 586w
Air transport, Expenditure 283w
Aircraft, Air conditioning 404-5w
Airport security 74-5w
Bridges, Repairs & maintenance 77w
British merchant fleet, Tax allowances 579w
Bus stations, Canada Water 577w
Buses, Greater London 583w
Bypasses, Road construction 579w
Crossrail, Land acquisition 585-6w
Crossrail, Railway stations 335w
Dept of Transport, Computers 401w
Dept of Transport, Contracts for services 911w

Norris, Mr Steve—continued
Dept of Transport, Crime 404w
Dept of Transport, Data processing 584-5w
Dept of Transport, Public bodies 912w
Dept of Transport, Small businesses 911w
East London river crossing 285-6w, 584w, 921w
Fishing crews, Death 579w
Fishing vessels, Inspections 159w
Fishing vessels, Shipping registration 737w
Gatwick Airport, Night flying 78w, 284w
Heathrow Airport 587w
Jubilee line, Construction 404w, 579-80w
M11, Road construction 918w
Merchant seamen, Training 282w
MV Avon, Shipping accidents 587w
MV Marchioness, Shipping accidents 78w
National Rivers Authority, Shipping accidents 919w
North Sea, Radioactive waste disposal 920-1w
Offshore supply vessels 920w
Parking offences, Fines 494w
Passenger ships, Shipping safety 920w
Poole Harbour 920w
Priority routes, Parking 158w
Public transport, Greater London 578w
Road closures, City of London 578w
Stonehenge bypass, Road works 404w
Tanker ships, Shipping safety 917w
Taxis, Road blocks 282-3w

North Africa
Arms trade 817w

North American Free Trade Agreement
Exports 126w

North Moor pumping station
735w
Nature conservation 887-9w

North Norfolk Action
809-10w

North Sea
Radioactive waste disposal 920-1w

North Tyneside Health Authority
Prescriptions 826w

North Wales
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 774-6
Housing for Wales 51w

North West region
695w
Economic situation 932-3w
Foreign investment in UK 339-40
Opencast mining 700w
Temporary accommodation 487w

North Western Regional Health Authority
Hospital admissions 212w

North Yorkshire Education Authority
Student grants 415w

Northern Cyprus
Members' visits abroad 990w, 998w
Armed forces casualties 186
Blind 324w
Concessionary fares 532w
Coroners 753w
Demonstrations 39w
EC grants & loans 258-62w
Employment schemes 839w
Eye disorders 323-4w
Eye tests 323w
Fishing catches 256-8w
Foreign investment in UK 532-3w
Handicap benefits 531w
Heating 255w
Homelessness 529-30w
House of Commons select committees 747-8
Housing associations 529w
Industrial development 530w
INTERREG programme 849w
LEADER programme 849w
Non-fossil fuel obligation 530-1w
Ophthalmology 323-4w, 526-7w
Paediatrics 531-2w
Post offices 38-9w
Prisoners' transfers 859-60w

Northern Cyprus—continued
Rate collection 258w
Rural areas 848-9w
Rural planning 851w
Select committees 323w
Student unions 39-40w
Terrorism 192, 262w
Tourism 255-6w, 322-3w, 413w
Tourists 414w

Northern Ireland Dept of Economic Development
414w

Northern Ireland Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency
89-90w

Northern Ireland Electricity
851w

Northern Ireland health & social services boards
845-6w

Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Cost effectiveness 529w
House renovation grants 849-50w
Temporary accommodation 529-30w

Northern Ireland Industrial Development Board
see Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Office
Computers 841-6w
Contracts for services 529-30w
Data processing 841w
Departmental publications 839-41w
Public bodies 847-8w
Small businesses 527-8w

Northern Ireland Rural Development Council
848-9w

Northern Ireland Social Security Agency
Corporate plans 525-6w
Performance standards 525-6w

Northern Ireland Tourist Board
413w

Northern region
Regional selective assistance 367w

Northumberland
Opencast mining 483-4w

Northumbrian Water
511

Norway
Import controls 333
Overseas trade 333-4
Whales 333, (26:07:93) 807

Nuclear accidents
Conferences 951w
Dounreay 969w
Emergency planning 645w

Nuclear Electric
644w, 946w
Profitability 644w

Nuclear fuel reprocessing
13w
Japan 13w
Russia 642-3w
Sellafield 104w
Uranium 125-6w, 646w

Nuclear Industry Radioactive Waste Executive
see United Kingdom NIREX

Nuclear Installations Inspectorate
804w, 821w

Nuclear non proliferation
Japan 559w

Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty
Japan 19w, 458w
THORP 999-1000w

Nuclear power
14w, 130w, 271w, 338-9
Consultants 649-50w
EC Energy Council 940w
Liability 644w
National Loans Fund 595w

Nuclear power stations
Eastern Europe (26:07:93) 782-5
Radioactive waste disposal 895w

Nuclear safeguards
13w, 644w
Commonwealth of Independent States 644w
Emergency planning 940w
Training 644w

Nuclear safety
Advanced gas-cooled reactors 972w
Dungeness B power station 128w

Nuclear submarines
Decommissioning 174w

Nuclear weapons policy
181-2, 189

Nuclear weapons tests
80w, 162w, 354w
Defence estimates 80w

Nurses
Career structure 480w
Scotland 500w
Wales 480w

Nurses' homes
553w

Nurses' training
Finance 549w
Paediatrics 214w
South East region 550w

Nursing homes
512w, 830w
Income support 831w, 1020w
Labour turnover 497w
Manpower 497-9w
Mental patients 830-1w
Scotland 248-9w, 497-9w

Objects in lieu of tax
245w, 768w

O'Brien, Mr Mike
Debates etc.
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 388-90

O'Brien, Mr William
Questions
Air travel, Germany 256w
Belfast Harbour 847w
Belfast Harbour, Conditions of employment 847w
Blind, Northern Ireland 324w
Eye disorders, Northern Ireland 323-4w
Eye tests, Northern Ireland 323w
Eye tests, Optical charges 323w
Foreign tourists, Republic of Ireland 255w
Foreign tourists, USA 255-6w
Tourism, EC grants & loans 322-3w
Tourism, Northern Ireland 256w, 413w
Tourists, Northern Ireland 414w
Training & enterprise councils, Annual reports 679w
Training & enterprise councils, Disclosure of information 680w
Training & enterprise councils, Pay 679-80w
Unemployment, Coal mine closures 800w

Obscene Publications Act 1959
Questions
489-91

Occupational deafness
274-5w
Compensation 274w
Personal injury compensation 523w

Occupational pensions
302w, 468w
West Midlands Regional Health Authority 510-1w

Oceanographic vessels
Ship chartering 762w

Offensive weapons
Convictions 634w, 855-6w
Homicide 632w
Prosecutions 633w

Office of Fair Trading
296-300w

Office of Gas Supply
Directors 953w

Office of Science & Technology
15w, 235w

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees
see UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Office of Water Services
104w, 264w

Official engagements
71w, 94w, 319w, 502, 757w

Official visits
560-2w

Offshore funds
597w

Offshore structures
Oil pollution 703w

Offshore supply vessels
920w

O'Hara, Mr Edward
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 38-40
Questions
Merseyside Fire & Civil Defence Authority, Finance 854w

Oil pollution
Coastal areas 666w
Offshore structures 703w
Wales 666w

Older Workers' Advisory Group
161w

Olner, Mr Bill
Questions
Local authority associations 909w
Local Government Commission for England 695w
Parliamentary data & video network 744
Peugeot Talbot, Coventry 341
West coast railway line, Railway travel 578-9w

Olympic Games
Manchester 319-20w

Ombudsman
Housing associations 254w

One stop shop initiative
266w

O'Neill, Mr Martin
Questions
Nuclear power 339

Onslow, Rt Hon Sir Cranley
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 530, 548-50
Questions
EC law 520w
Fishing, Government grants 413w
Salmon 309w, 324-5w
Standards specifications, EC internal trade 520w

Open government
40w, 758-9w

Open University
Student grants 415w
Teacher training 105w

Opencast mining
268w
Asthma 476w

Opencast mining*—*continued
North West region 700w
Northumberland 483-4w
Planning permission 483-4w, 700w

Operation Boxer
209-10w

Operations West
Contracts for services 84-5w

Ophthalmology
Hospitals 247w, 526w
Northern Ireland 323-4w, 526-7w
Out-patient clinics 247w, 526-7w, 968w
Scotland 247-8w, 968w

Oppenheim, Mr Phillip
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 633, 668, 697-700
Questions
Energy policy 338

Opportunity 2000
803w

Opposition days
(20:07:93) 201-98

Optical charges
Eye tests 323w, 969w

Opticians
Complaints 117-8w

Orange badge scheme
76-7w, 921w

Orange Order
39w

Orders & regulations
Fisheries 972w
Industrial health & safety 802w

Ordinary residence
874w

Ordnance Survey
Computers 712-3w
Contracts for services 694-5w
Data processing 696w

Organ donors
Costs 831-2w

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
Israel 1003-4w

Organophosphorous pesticides
507w
Sheep dipping 150w

Orkney
Sea transport 252w

Orkney Islands Council
46w

Orme, Rt Hon Stanley
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 757

Orthopaedics
833-4w
Hospital consultants 929w
Manpower 506-7w, 834-5w
Wales 929w

Osman, Lorrain Esme
Prisoners on remand 142w

Ottaway, Mr Richard
Debates etc.
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 412-5, 419, 430, 440
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 599
Questions
Trident submarines 164-5w

Otterburn
Defence land 741w

Out of school childcare grant scheme
690-1w

Out-patient clinics
Cancer 52w
Ophthalmology 247w, 526-7w, 968w

Overdoses
Paracetamol 214w

Overseas aid
231-2w, 535-6w
Angola 232w
Expenditure 232w
Malawi 872-3w
Privatisation 871-2w
Russia 536w

Overseas Development
see Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Overseas Development Administration
305-6w
Environment protection 873w

Overseas trade
502
Agricultural products 888-9w
Furs 949w
Japan 932w
Norway 333-4
Russia 269w

Overseas workers
858w
Income tax 874w

Ownership
Television 24w

Oxleas Wood
584w, 738-9, 921w

P & O
252w

Package holidays
268w

Packaging
Recycling 890-2w
Taxation 874w

Paediatrics
Hospital consultants 531-2w, 550-1w, 981-4w
Manpower 550w
Medical education 550w
Northern Ireland 531-2w
Nurses' training 214w
Scotland 981-4w
Vacancies 551w

Page, Mr Richard
Debates etc.
Business premises, Rents (26:07:93) 805-7
Questions
EC law, Compliance cost assessments 24w
Independent television levy 765w

Paice, Mr James
Questions
Efficiency scrutinies 598-9w

Paisley, Rev Ian
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 571-3
Questions
EC grants & loans, Northern Ireland 258-62w

Pakistan
Immigration applications 20w, 139-40w

Palace of Westminster
455-6w
Day nurseries 558w
Holiday play schemes 563w
Industrial health & safety 563w, 743-5
Water supply 309w

Panorama
193

Paracetamol
Overdoses 214w

Paramedical staff
Educational finance 513w

Parental leave
EC law 680w

Parent's Charter
781-2w

Parkfield Sterile Supplies Unit
511w

Parking
Handicapped drivers 921w
Priority routes 158w

Parking offences
Fines 494w
Greater London 211w, 494w

Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration
962-3w

Parliamentary data & video network
563w, 743-4

Parliamentary precincts
870w

Parliamentary privilege
Courts (21:07:93) 351-2
Speaker's rulings & statements (21:07:93) 351-2

Parliamentary questions
557w

Parliamentary recess
748, (26:07:93) 804-5, 999w

Parole Board
Part-time employment 502w
Public appointments 11w

Particle Physics & Astronomy Research Council
Public appointments 761w

Part-time employment
Parole Board 502w

Passenger ships
Shipping safety 920w

Passenger transport executives
581-2w

Passive smoking
41w

Passports
Sub post offices 856w

Patchett, Mr Terry
Questions
Official engagements 502

Patent Office
134-5w, 365w
Civil service dispersal 134w
Contracts for services 134w, 958w

Patents
Biotechnology 124-5w
EC countries 134w

Patients
115-6w
Dentists 2w
Scotland 188w

Patient's Charter
114-5w, 979w
NHS internal market 112w

Pawsey, Mr James
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 40, 54-9

Peace keeping operations
Bosnia-Herzegovina 501
Kosovo 18-9w

Peace negotiations
Bosnia-Herzegovina 321w
Croatia 1001w
Cyprus 17-8w

Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth
Questions
British Coal Corporation, Privatisation 950w
Health services 294w
Hospitals, Health services 293w

Peacock, Mrs Elizabeth—continued
Surgery, Training 294w

Peat bogs
Nature conservation 103-4w

Peckham Committee
see Central Research & Development Committee

Pendry, Mr Tom
Questions
BBC 91w
Sports Council 287w

Penicillin
955w

Pension funds
British Rail 158w, 283w
Government securities 239w

Pension rights
Dementia 394w
Health authorities 543w

Pensioners
Council tax 262-3w, 692w
Homeowners' insurance 366w
Personal income 194-8w, 281-2w, 461-4w
Social security benefits 460-2w
Wales 338-9w
Yorkshire & Humberside 366w

Pensions
73w
Tax allowances 27w
Tax yields 28w

Pensions & Divorce Working Group
73w

Performance appraisal
Teachers 45-6w

Performance standards
Accounts Services Agency 362-3w
Central Statistical Office 301w
Employment Service Agency 412w
Magistrates' courts 307-8w
Military Survey 454w
Naval Aircraft Repair Organisation 455w
Northern Ireland Social Security Agency 525-6w
Radiocommunications Agency 519-20w
Scottish courts 309-12w
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority 940-2w
Welsh Office 470w

Perifra programme
954w

Personal income
236w, 721-2w, 1010w
Pensioners 194-8w, 281-2w, 461-4w
Students 109w

Personal injury compensation
Limitation of actions (21:07:93) 364
Occupational deafness 523w

Personal pensions
280-1w, 468w, 727w

Personal reader service scheme
Disabled workers 411-2w

Personal social services
Handicapped 831w

Pesticide Exposure Group of Sufferers
326w

Pesticides
Health hazards 326w
Poisoning 507w
Sheep dipping 326-8w

Peterlee
Invalidity benefits 394w

Petrol
Excise duties 402w

Petroleum exploration
Coastal areas 646w
Sea pollution 518-9w

Petroleum exploration licences
518w
Methane 944w

Peugeot Talbot
Coventry 341

Pharmaceutical price regulation scheme
(26:07:93) 948-66

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee
3w

Pharmacists
Pay 2-3w

Pickles, Mr Eric
Questions
Accounts Services Agency, Performance standards 362-3w
Assisted areas 518w
Exports 335-6
Insolvency Service 363w

Pickthall, Mr Colin
Questions
Local Government Commission for England 66w
Local government finance 66w
Terrace pavilion, House of Commons catering 564w

Pike, Mr Peter L
Debates etc.
Gypsies, Caravan sites (26:07:93) 968
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 448, 451
Questions
Adult education 106-7w
Bus services, Competition 580w
Buses, Design 915-6w
Citizen's Charter, Handicapped 94-5w
Council housing, Empty housing 695w
Council housing finance 488w
Football, Ministers' domestic visits 413w
Hospital admissions, North Western Regional Health Authority 212w
Housing benefits 905w
Local government expenditure, Capital investment 99w
Local government reform 702w
Lone parent families 725w
Low pay 686w
M65, Road works 329w
Opencast mining, Planning permission 700w
Private rented housing 695w
Public appointments 700-1w
Recycling, Government grants 892-5w
Recycling, Local government services 890w, 892w
Remand in custody 367-8w
Temporary accommodation, North West region 487w
Yugoslavia, Sanctions 566w

Pitsea
Post offices (26:07:93) 793-5

Planning permission
Administrative delays 701w
Greenham Common 907w
Hams Hall power station 103w
Minerals 264w, 471-2w
Nature conservation 491-2w
Opencast mining 483-4w, 700w

Plumbing
Contracts 898w

Plutonium
649w
THORP 124w

Plymouth Airport
738

Pneumoconiosis
Social security claims 204w

Poisoning
Hospital admissions 337w
Pesticides 507w

Poisoning—continued
Sheep dipping 470-1w
Wales 337w

Poland
Equine viral arteritis 733w

Police
368w
Crime prevention 630w
Ethnic minorities 136w
Facilities agreements 369w
Newham 631w
Radio 860w
Road traffic control 630w
Wales 136w

Police authorities
Scotland 564w

Police cautions
137w, 144w, 622-6w

Police Complaints Authority
Public appointments 865w

Police equipment
493-4

Police national computer
Computer privacy 852w

Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry
9-10w, 191, 410w, 494, 497-9, 507, 514, 619w
Scotland (26:07:93) 778-82

POLIS
563w, 743-4

Political activities
Computer privacy 619w
Student unions 40w

Political parties
NHS trusts 549w, 834w

Political refugees
391-3w
Immigration applications 142w
Income support 728w

Politics & government
Nigeria 575w

Pollution control
HM Inspectorate of Pollution 353w
Legislation 519w

Pollution Inspectorate
see HM Inspectorate of Pollution

Pollution monitoring
Beaches 664w, 923w
Uranium 63w

Polly Peck
533w

Poole Harbour
920w

Pope, Mr Greg
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 90, 102-3
Questions
Assisted areas, Wales 650w
Unemployment, Scotland 42-3w

Pornography
Children 490
Telephone services 490

Porpoises
731-2w

Porter, Mr Barry
Questions
Dept of Social Security, Statistics 277-8w

Porter, Mr David
Questions
Administrative receivers 15w
Driving instruction, Lorry drivers 583w
Great Yarmouth & Waveney District Health Authority 4w

Porter, Mr David—continued
Nuclear power 14w
Overseas aid, Russia 536w
Salmonella, Compensation 451-2w
Salmonella, Disease control 452w
Sizewell C, Construction 14w
UK contributions to EC budget 29w
Water supply 704-5w

Portillo, Rt Hon Michael, Chief Secretary to the Treasury
Questions
Debts, SubSaharan Africa 305-6w
Defence expenditure, Military aircraft 90w
National Loans Fund, Nuclear power 595w
Public expenditure 31w, 876w
Tax yields, Social security finance 878-9w
Taxation, Single people 875w
Treasury, Public bodies 875-6w
Treasury, Small businesses 594-5w

Portland Harbour
Coastal protection 265w

Porton Down
80-3w, 750w

Porton International
Public Health Laboratory Service 549w

Post Office
334

Post offices
Belfast 851-2w
Northern Ireland 38-9w
Pitsea (26:07:93) 793-5
Road tax 405w
Robbery 38-9w, 851-2w
Rural areas 1-3, 54w, 335
Social security payments (20:07:93) 323, 336, (23:07:93) 623-4, (27:07:93) 982
Wales 1-3, 54w

Postal deliveries
Aids for handicapped 334-5

Postal franking machines
125w

Postal rates
335

Postgraduate education
40-1w
Psychiatry 107w
Speech therapy 107w

Postgraduate students
Medical education 121-2w
Wales 121-2w

Potatoes
Agricultural marketing 449-50w

Poultry
Transport of animals 733-4w

Poverty
Rural areas 848-9w

Powell, Mr Ray
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 21
Questions
Access to Parliament, Handicapped 455-6w
Members' facilities 871w
Palace of Westminster, Water supply 309w
Parliamentary precincts 870w

Powell, Mr William
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 755
Drug crimes, Prisoners' release (26:07:93) 778
War crimes, Yugoslavia (26:07:93) 798-802

Pregnancy
Folic acid 839w
Ultrasonics 554w

Prentice, Mrs Bridget
Questions
Assaults on police, Greater London 390-2w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Chronically sick 200w

Prentice, Mrs Bridget—continued
Independent Living Fund, Chronically sick 200w
Metropolitan Police, Manpower 142-3w
Social services, Chronically sick 200w

Prentice, Mr Gordon
Questions
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 325w
Invalidity benefits, Burnley 465w
Invalidity benefits, Social security recipients 463-4w
Sellafield, Nuclear fuel reprocessing 104w

Prerogative of mercy
Bentley, Derek 370w

Pre-school education
775-6w
Wales 244w

Prescott, Mr John
Questions
M25, Road construction 740

Prescriptions
Budgeting 826w
Diabetes 2w
Family doctors 551w
Fluoride 289-91w
Newcastle Health Authority 826w
North Tyneside Health Authority 826w

Press
VAT 590w

Preston
Rehabilitation centres 295w

Price Marking Order 1991
Questions
16w

Price Waterhouse
(21:07:93) 353-64

Primarolo, Ms Dawn
Questions
Accident & emergency departments 114w, 829w
Accident & emergency departments, Domestic violence 213w
Armed forces medical services, Hospitals 743w
Baby care units 1-2w
Baby care units, Manpower 116w
Central Research & Development Committee 507-8w
Central Research & Development Committee, Finance 508-9w
Child health, Community health services 830w
Corporate Affairs Intelligence Unit 118w
Drug industry, Tax yields 28w
Drugs, Children 1w
Drugs, Date marking 43w
Electroconvulsive therapy 215w
Family doctors, Pay 290w
Family health services authorities, Finance 288w, 541-2w
Family practitioner services 290w
Family practitioner services, Psychology 4w
Fluoride, Prescriptions 289-91w
Generic prescribing 537-8w
GP fundholders 288-9w
GP fundholders, Expenditure 509w
Health hazards, Water supply disconnections 546w
"Health of the Nation White Paper" 513-4w
Health service staff, Inner London boroughs 505-6w
Health service staff, Manpower 1w
Health service staff, Racial discrimination 546w
Home care services, Expenditure 113-4w
Immigrant doctors, Work permits 408w, 509-10w, 617-9w
Industrial diseases, Death 295w
Medical treatments 289w
Mental hospitals, Women 213w
Mental patients, Ethnic minorities 538-40w
Mentally ill, Scotland 188w
Midwives, Manpower 541w

Primarolo, Ms Dawn—continued
NHS internal market, Administrative costs 213-4w
NHS Management Executive, Railway travel 506w
NHS Management Functions & Manpower Review 505-6w
NHS Trust Federation 546w
Nurses' training, Paediatrics 214w
Paracetamol, Overdoses 214w
Patients 115-6w
Patients, Scotland 188w
Psychiatry, Manpower 213w
Surgery 117w
Surgery, Medical research 540-1w
Surgery, Research finance 509w
Surgery, Working hours 546w
Water supply disconnections 906-8w

Primary education
Teacher training 781w

Primary purpose rule
8w

Princess Mary's RAF Hospital
743w

Princess of Wales' RAF Hospital Ely
743w

Priority routes
Greater London 158w
Parking 158w

Prison employment
Ethnic minorities 141w

Prison governors
389-90w

Prison population
630-1w
Young offenders 853w

Prison sentences
Fine defaulters 620w

Prison staff
Courts 144-5w
Scotland 190-1w
Social workers 190-1w

Prisoner escorts
East Midlands 148w
Greater London 147w
Humberside 148w
Privatisation 499-500

Prisoners
Abu Dhabi 304w
AIDS 143w
Bosnia-Herzegovina 232w, 567w
Drug abuse 639w
Nigeria 574w
Racial discrimination 620w
Restraint equipment 387-8w
Thailand 17w

Prisoners' clothing
372w

Prisoners' home leave
Jarvis, Mark 621-2w

Prisoners on remand
Osman, Lorrain Esme 142w

Prisoners' release
Drug crimes 758w

Prisoners' transfers
Northern Ireland 859-60w
Terrorism 859-60w

Prisoners' transport
East Midlands 9w
Humberside 9w

Prisons
Bosnia-Herzegovina 567w
Sanitation 372w
Ships 370-1w, 637w

Private education
Residential care of children 666w
Wales 666w

Private health services
Ambulance services 293w

Private rented housing
695w
Government grants 904w

Private sector
Crime prevention 7-8w

Privatisation
16
Belfast Airport 850-1w
British Coal Corporation 255w, 946w, 950w
British Rail 76w, 283w, 578w, 735-6, 918w
British Rail Maintenance 283-4w
British Telecom 344-6
Bus services 741
Drivers Vehicles & Operators Information Technology 405w
Forests 977w
France 501
Level 5 Group 283-4w
Overseas aid 871-2w
Prisoner escorts 499-500
PSA Building Management 66-7w
Red Star 282w
Skillcentres 499-500
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority 643w

Privy Council
Civil service manpower 557-8w

Prize money
Lotteries 8w

Probation hostels
148-9w
Bail hostels 408-10w, 636w

Procedure Select Committee
(19:07:93) 167

Procurators fiscal
496-8w

Procurement
Computers in National Health Service 826w
NHS 289-90w

Production quotas
Milk 38w
Sugar 884-6w

Professional organisations
Audit 13w, 269w

Professional qualifications
Architects 694w

Profitability
Nuclear Electric 644w

Project Al Yamamah
84w

Property development
Bradford 706w
Kelburn 253w
Stockton on Tees 66-7w
Wales 243w

Property transfer
County Hall 103w, 693w
Rented housing 902w
Road construction 911-2w

Prosecutions
Fishing vessels 736w
Georgiou, Jason 534w, 626w
Motor insurance 629w
Offensive weapons 633w
Road tax 631w
Torture 22w
Water pollution 64w
Weight limits 584w

PSA Building Management
Privatisation 66-7w
Scotland 67w

PSV operators licences
914w

Psychiatric nurses
505-6w

Psychiatry
Manpower 213w
Postgraduate education 107w

Psychology
Family practitioner services 4w

Public access
Electoral register 869w

Public Accounts Committee
(26:07:93) 976

Public appointments
700-1w
Advertising 759-60w, 829w
Advisory Committee on the Landscape Treatment of Trunk Roads 918-9w
Arts 24-5w
Boundary Commission for Wales 371w
Dept of Health 110-2w, 119w
District health authorities 112w, 552w
EC Committee of the Regions 998w
Economic & Social Committee 999w
Further Education Funding Council for England 784w
Hearing Aid Council 362w
Merseyside 133w
National Environmental Technology Centre 931w
NHS trusts 112w, 537w
Parole Board 11w
Particle Physics & Astronomy Research Council 761w
Police Complaints Authority 865w
Research councils 42w, 235-6w
Scotland 975w
Scottish Office 975-7w
Street Works Advisory Committee 917w
Wales 11
Water supply industry 175w
Women 41w

Public bodies
Dept for Education 776w
Dept of Employment 791w
Dept of Health 829-30w
Dept of National Heritage 763w
Dept of Social Security 1020w
Dept of the Environment 899w
Dept of Trade & Industry 944w
Dept of Transport 912w
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 1005w
Home Office 853w
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 882-3w
Ministry of Defence 752w
Northern Ireland Office 847-8w
Scottish Office 975w
Treasury 875-6w
Welsh Office 923w

Public expenditure
31w, 876w
Housing associations 901-2w
Urban development corporations 901-2w

Public Health Laboratory Service
548w
Porton International 549w

Public inquiries
Members' correspondence 906w

Public interest
Crown Prosecution Service 239-40w

Public meetings
Grant maintained schools 609w
Training & enterprise councils 807w

Public order offences
Travelling people 136-7w

Public petitions
Bus services (27:07:93) 982
Hertford County Hospital (27:07:93) 981
Social security payments (20:07:93) 323, (23:07:93) 623-4, (27:07:93) 982
Taking & driving away (23:07:93) 624
Timex (27:07:93) 981
Unemployment (20:07:93) 322

Public Record Office
91w

Public records
41-2w

Public sector housing
347w

Public sector housing sales
Armed forces housing 184-5
Development Board for Rural Wales 339-40w
New towns 708-9w

Public service
Greater London 742-3
Right to strike 686w

Public service vehicles
Driving licences 913-5w

Public transport
402w
Greater London 578w, (26:07:93) 873-93
Local government services 564w
Scotland 564w
Wirral 403w

Publications
Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee 896w

Pupil exclusions
416w
Grant maintained schools 437w, 784w
Wales 658w, 666w

Purchase, Mr Ken
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 760
Questions
Cooperatives, Government assistance 520-2w
Exports 336
Privy Council, Civil service manpower 557-8w
Young offenders 497

Pwllheli Harbour (Amendment) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Lords amends* (21:07:93) 335
Royal Assent (27:07:93) 1060

Qa Business Services
Contracts for services 542w
West Midlands Regional Health Authority 542-3w

Queen Mary's University Hospital
Hospital closures (23:07:93) 724-30

Quin, Ms Joyce
Questions
Aircraft, Air conditioning 404-5w
EC Labour & Social Affairs Council 806-7w
EC social policy 806w
Good Childcare Good Business 806w
Vocational guidance 687w, 805w

Quota of disabled workers
Training & enterprise councils 808w

Race relations
Armed forces 824w

Racial attacks
Greater London 369w
Scotland 975w

Racial conflict
Crime 975w

Racial discrimination
Health service staff 546w
Prisoners 620w
Young people 855w

Radiation hazards
Armed forces 820-1w
Sellafield 707-8w

Radice, Mr Giles
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 591-2
Questions
Drugs, Misleading advertising 827w
Zopiclone, Drug hazards 827w

Radio
Gloucestershire Constabulary 859w
Police 860w

Radioactive Incident Monitoring Network
645w

Radioactive materials
13w
Disclosure of information 644w

Radioactive waste disposal
702w, 940w
Advanced gas-cooled reactors 104w, 645w
British Nuclear Fuels 940w
Dounreay 129w
Health physics 694w
North Sea 920-1w
Nuclear power stations 895w
Sellafield 895w
THORP 341w, 347w, 366w, 888w, 931w
United Kingdom NIREX 484w

Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee
Publications 896w

Radioactive wastes
AWE Aldermaston 352-3w
Dockyards 353w
Imports 96w
Japan 642w
Scottish Nuclear 974w
THORP 124w, 643w, 702w, 895w
Torness power station 973w

Radiocommunications Agency
Performance standards 519-20w

RAF Dishforth
Army Air Corps 357w

RAF Fairford
88w

RAF Institute for Aviation Medicine
Defence contracts 749w

RAF Kinloss
Nimrod aircraft 359w

RAF Leeming
357w

RAF Northolt
Communication engineering 819w

RAF Pitreavie
246-7w

RAF St Athan
748-9w

RAF St Mawgan
Joint Maritime Communications Centre 746w

RAF Spadeadam
Armed forces training 746-7w

RAF Stornoway
Construction 88w

RAF Wattisham
Army Air Corps 357w

RAF Wyton
Nimrod aircraft 359w

RailTrack
578w

Railway freight transport
Armed forces storage depots 185-6, 454w
Channel tunnel 330-1w

Railway network
Channel tunnel 405w, 734

Railway safety
Temporary employment 335-7w

Railway stations
Ashford 733-4
Bournemouth 581w
Crossrail 335w

Railway transport
Construction 401w
Sound insulation 581w

Railway travel
Concessionary fares 582-3w
NHS Management Executive 506w

Railway travel—continued
Wales 918w
West coast railway line 578-9w
Worcestershire 740

Railway workers
Death 336-7w

Rain
354-6w
Belfast Airport 355-7w

Ramor Investments
269w
Company investigations 131-2w

Randall, Mr Stuart
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 239, 241
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 555-7

Rape
Bail 489
Bosnia-Herzegovina 1004w
Sentencing 488-90
Yugoslavia 17-8w

Rate collection
Northern Ireland 258w

Rate fund contributions
652w

Rate rebates
Uniform business rate 906w

Rateable value
Scotland 978w

Rathbone, Mr Tim
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 101
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 693
Questions
Alcoholism, Residential care 554w
Drug abuse 559w
Drug abuse, Health education 784w, 860w
Prisoners, Drug abuse 639w

Rating revaluations
Non-domestic rates 979w

Raynsford, Mr Nick
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 217
Questions
Disposable income 729w
Housing & handicapped 702w
Housing association grant 483w
Housing benefits, Administrative delays 713w
Housing benefits, Expenditure 722-3w, 1008-9w
Income support, Expenditure 723w
Royal Parks Review 556w
VAT, Housing construction 588-9w

Recess motions
(26:07:93) 773-814

Recruitment
Locums 551-2w
Teachers 922w

Recruitment & Assessment Services Agency
Annual reports 287w

Recycling
890w, 949-50w
Construction materials 900w
Domestic wastes 692w
EC action 692w
Government grants 892-5w
Local government services 890w, 892w
Packaging 890-2w

Recycling credits
692w

Red Arrows
Air safety 354w
Netherlands 354w

Red Star
Privatisation 282w

Redmond, Mr Martin
Questions
Armed forces pay 824w
AWE Aldermaston, Operating costs 740w
Civil defence, Government grants to local authorities 408w
11 Downing Street, Carpets 876w
Fires, Tyres 209w
Harrier aircraft, Repairs & maintenance 750w
Hazardous wastes 56-64w
Hazardous wastes, Waste disposal 180-6w
Long stay patients, Hospital beds 546w
NATO, Standardisation 749w
NHS internal market, Patient's Charter 112w
Nuclear weapons tests 354w
Nursing homes 512w
RAF Institute for Aviation Medicine, Defence contracts 749w
Red Arrows, Netherlands 354w
Sea Harrier aircraft, Low flying 749w
Student unions 108w
Warships, Guided weapons 246w
Waste disposal, Tyres 263w

Redundancy
12
Aerospace industry 923w, (27:07:93) 1001-10
Armed forces 189
Clwyd 923w
Legislation 804-5w
Merseyside 340
Mining 126w
Teachers 51-2w
Wales 11

Redwood, Rt Hon John, Secretary of State for Wales
Questions
Aerospace industry, Redundancy 923w
Agricultural production, Wales 52-3w
Agricultural Wages Board, Wales 474w
Agri-environment action plan, Wales 244w
Assisted areas, Wales 650w
Assisted places scheme, Expenditure 477-8w
Care & repair initiative, Wales 477w
Defence industries 7
Defence industries, Wales 923w
Defence procurement 7-8
Development Board for Rural Wales, Public sector housing sales 339-40w
Drug industry, Wales 10-1, 51w
Environment protection, Civil service agencies 474w
European Environment Agency, Wales 652w
Foreign investment in UK 49-50w
Hill farming, Farm incomes 50-1w
Housing for Wales, Expenditure 51w
Interest rates 12
Interim development orders 478w
International conferences, Local government staff 470w
Iron & steel industry, Wales 243-4w
JPM Automatic Machines, Government assistance 244w
KONVER programme, Fishguard 470w
Local government reform, Contracts for services 927w
Local government reform, Glamorgan 50w
Local government reform, Local government staff 929w
Local government reform, Wales 929-30w
Lone parent families, Family income 122w
Lone parent families, Wales 3-5, 122-3w
Lone parents, Social security recipients 123w
Lone parents, Wales 123w
Low incomes, Wales 123w
Low pay, Wales 662w
Manufacturing industries, Wales 50w
Members' correspondence, Wales 481w
Pensioners, Wales 338-9w
Property development, Wales 243w
Public appointments, Wales 11
Redundancy 12
Redundancy, Wales 11
Sheep dipping, Poisoning 470-1w
Sick leave, Wales 244w
Unemployment, Wales 9-12, 480-1w
Valleys initiative, Expenditure 662w
Welsh Development Agency, Finance 49w
Welsh Economic Council 477w
Welsh Office, Computers 658-60w

Redwood, Rt Hon John—continued
Welsh Office, Contracts for services 480w
Welsh Office, Departmental publications 479w
Welsh Office, Environmental policy 478w
Welsh Office, Non-departmental public bodies 923w
Welsh Office, Public bodies 923w
Welsh Office, Small businesses 922w
Women's employment, Wales 244w
Youth organisations, Government grants to voluntary organisations 470w

Reed Committee
see Mentally Disordered Offenders Services Review

Rees-Mogg, Lord
Treaty on European Union 746-7

Refreshment Dept
746
Expenditure 745-6
Working conditions 746

Refugees
Family doctors 833w
Government grants to local authorities 908w
Immigration appeals 495
Immigration applications 857w
Self-mutilation 859w
Yugoslavia 231w, 233w

Refuse derived fuel
Non-fossil fuel obligation 641-2w

Regional aid
EC grants & loans 28-9w, 947-8w

Regional airports
737

Regional enterprise grants
662w

Regional health authorities
Expenditure 516w
NHS finance 112w

Regional selective assistance
15w
Northern region 367w
South Down 851w

Registered homes
Residential care of children 117w

Registers of Scotland
see Dept of the Registers of Scotland

Rehabilitation centres
Preston 295w

Reid, Dr John
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 673, 698, 701
Questions
Armed forces recruitment 188-9

Religious freedom
Russia 93w, 457w

Relocation of employees
Adjutant-General Corps 189, 358w
Customs & Excise 301-2w
Inland Revenue 301-2w
Ministry of Defence 178

Remand in custody
367-8w
Young offenders 853-4w

Rendel, Mr David
Questions
Jones, Fiona, Homicide 860w
Planning permission, Greenham Common 907w
Sheep premiums 882w

Rent a room scheme
346-7w

Rent arrears
Council house rents 102-3w
Council tenants 479w, 703w, 968-9w

Rent arrears—continued
Local authorities 105w
Scotland 968-9w
Wales 479w

Rent increases
703w
Council housing 341w

Rental deposits
466-7w

Rented housing
Property transfer 902w

Renton, Rt Hon Tim
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 541-5

Rents
Business premises (26:07:93) 805-7
Council housing 900-1w
Housing associations 900-1w
Social Fund 466-7w

Repatriation
Vietnamese refugees 457w

Representation of the People Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323

Republic of Ireland
39w, 414w, 512-3
Foreign tourists 255w

Rescue services
Armed forces deployment 246-7w

Research councils
235w
Public appointments 42w, 235-6w

Research finance
Surgery 509w

Resettlement Agency
468w

Residential care
Alcoholism 554w
Drug abuse 554w

Residential care of children
Private education 666w
Registered homes 117w

Resignations
Attali, Jacques 469w

Respite care
337w
Mentally ill 513w
Wales 338w

Restart programme
677-8w

Restraint equipment
Prisoners 387-8w

Retail trade
Football pools 639w
Furs 947-9w

Retirement age
National insurance contributions 74w

Retirement pensions
Departmental forms 197w
Hospital patients 717w
Social security benefits rates 197w
Social security benefits rules 466w

RFA Argus
172-3w

RFA Auxiliary
Shipbuilding 174w

Richards, Mr Rod
Questions
Agricultural production, Wales 52-3w
Breast cancer, Surgery 121w
Cancer, Out-patient clinics 52w
Child prostitution, Crime prevention 135-6w

Richards, Mr Rod—continued
Clinical wastes, Waste disposal 53-4w
Crime prevention, Private sector 7-8w
Crime prevention, Wales 7w
Defence expenditure 162w
Development Board for Rural Wales, Public sector housing sales 339-40w
Environmentally sensitive areas, Road traffic 53w
Family health services authorities, Finance 923-7w
Fishing, Licensing 52w
Forests, Access to countryside 653-4w
Forests, Land ownership & tenure 653w
Hospital length of stay, Wales 53w
Income support, Mortgages 397-8w
Intimidation, Schools 476w
Kerb crawling, Crime prevention 136w
Kerb crawling, Wales 136w
Local government reform, Contracts for services 927w
Local government reform, Local government staff 929w
Local government reform, Wales 929-30w
Missing persons, Children 135w
Opencast mining, Asthma 476w
Pensioners, Personal income 194-8w
Police, Ethnic minorities 136w
Property development, Wales 243w
Public appointments, Wales 11
Steroid drugs, Death 476w
Steroid drugs, Drug abuse 619w
Steroid drugs, Drug side effects 511w
Telephone charges, Billing 950-1w
Training & enterprise councils, Take-up of employment 654w
Travelling people, Public order offences 136-7w
Truancy, Clwyd 53w

Riddick, Mr Graham
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 600-1, (23:07:93) 644, 647
Questions
Business questions 510
Employment opportunities, Foreign investment in UK 811-2w
Magistrates' courts committees 756w
Privatisation 16

Rifkind, Rt Hon Malcolm, Secretary of State for Defence
Questions
Armed forces casualties, Northern Ireland 186
Army in Northern Ireland 186
Army in Northern Ireland, Army strength 187
Chatham Dockyard 183-4
Defence expenditure 162w, 183-4
Defence expenditure, NATO countries 183
European fighter aircraft, Defence procurement 180-1
European fighter aircraft, Guided weapons 181
Nuclear weapons policy 181-2
Nuclear weapons tests 162w
Rescue services, Armed forces deployment 246-7w
Tornado aircraft, Airwork 181

Right of abode
141w

Right to buy
Housing associations 97w

Right to strike
Public service 686w

Rimington, Stella
508-9

River pollution
Coal mine closures 348-9
River Wear 348-9

River Safety Inquiry
78w

River Severn
Bridges 580w

River Wear
River pollution 348-9

Rivers
Shipping safety 78w

Road accidents
Armagh 849w
Scotland 494-6w
Tyres 159w
Welshpool bypass 663w

Road blocks
Taxis 282-3w

Road closures
282-3w
City of London 578w

Road construction
739-40
A550 401-2w
Administrative delays 401w
Birmingham relief road 585w
Bypasses 579w
Cultural heritage 331w
Environmental impact assessment 916w
Expenditure 738-9
M11 918w
M25 75-6w, 332-5w, 739-40
M53 403w
Property transfer 911-2w
South Glamorgan 481w

Road safety
403w
Welshpool bypass 663w

Road tax
Post offices 405w
Prosecutions 631w
Tax evasion 586w, 631w

Road tolls
EC countries 580-1w
Motorways 332w
Severn bridge 331w

Road traffic
282w
A550 401-2w
Air pollution 579w
Environmentally sensitive areas 53w
M25 75-6w, 332-3w
Motorways 78-9w
Severn bridge 331w

Road traffic control
916w
Police 630w

Road Traffic (Driving Instruction by Disabled Persons) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323

Road traffic offences
629-30w, 632w

Road works
A205 732-3
M1 (27:07:93) 1044-50
M4 580w
M6 329w
M65 329w
Motorways 157-8w, 160w, 912-3w
Scotland 251-2w
Stonehenge bypass 404w

Robathan, Mr Andrew
Questions
Non-fossil fuel obligation 646w
Water & sewerage companies, Codes of practice 491w

Robbery
Post offices 38-9w, 851-2w

Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn, Minister of State for Wales
Questions
Bus services, Competition 244-5w
Cardigan Bay, Marine nature reserves 666-7w
Educational assessment, Gwent 121w
Educational publications, Expenditure 660w
Educational qualifications, Wales 928w
Employment level, Mid Glamorgan 49w

Roberts, Rt Hon Sir Wyn—continued
Environmentally sensitive areas, Road traffic 53w
European Regional Development Fund, Wales 49w
Forest Enterprise, Wales 50w
Forests, Access to countryside 653-4w
Forests, Land acquisition 928w
Forests, Land ownership & tenure 653w
Grant maintained schools, School governors 928-9w
Handicapped pupils, Access to buildings 921w
Intimidation, Schools 476w
Medical education, Postgraduate students 121-2w
Post offices, Rural areas 1-3, 54w
Pre-school education, Wales 244w
Private education, Residential care of children 666w
Pupil exclusions, Wales 658w, 666w
Road construction, South Glamorgan 481w
Secondary education, School population 654-8w
Special education, Wales 54-6w
Speech therapists, Local education authorities 338w
Sustainable development, Research 478w
Teacher training, Wales 929w
Teachers, Recruitment 922w
Teachers, Redundancy 51-2w
Tourism, Wales 49w
Training & enterprise councils, Take-up of employment 654w
Truancy, Clwyd 53w
Village halls, Wales 338w
Wales Youth Agency 650-2w
Water pollution, EC law 665-6w
Welsh language 6
Welsh language, Languages education 5-6
Welshpool bypass, Road accidents 663w
Welshpool bypass, Road safety 663w
Youth organisations, Government grants to voluntary organisations 650w
Youth services, Wales 652w
Youth training, Wales 653w

Robertson, Mr George
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 866-70
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 641, 706-11

Robertson, Mr Raymond S
Questions
Crown Office for Scotland, Buildings 351w
Dept of the Registers of Scotland, Annual reports 192w
Historic Scotland, Annual reports 192w
Scottish Secondary Education Review Committee 250w
Trident 165w

Robinson, Mr Mark
Debates etc.
Helicopters, Defence procurement (26:07:93) 914-6
Questions
Defence industries 179
Sentencing, Appeals 368w

Robinson, Mr Peter
Questions
Making Belfast work programme, Schools 39w

Rochdale
Take-up of employment 799w

Roche, Mrs Barbara
Debates etc.
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 372-6, 400
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 314
Questions
Priority routes, Parking 158w
Racial attacks, Greater London 369w

Roe, Mrs Marion
Questions
British citizenship 495-6

Rogers, Mr Allan
Debates etc.
Latin America, Foreign policy (26:07:93) 820, 829-33
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 669
Unparliamentary expressions, Points of order (19:07:93) 23-4
Questions
Welsh language 6

Rolling stock
British Rail 76w
Investment 581w
Leaseback arrangements 580w
Network SouthEast 77-8w, 735

Rooker, Mr Jeff
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 52-6

Ross, Mr William
Questions
Personal income 236w
Rain 354-6w
Rain, Belfast Airport 355-7w
Salmon, Fishing catches 151-4w, 248w, 256-8w
Salmon, Fishing gear 248w
State visits 413w

Ross-on-Wye
Assisted areas 342-3

Rosyth Dockyard
86w
Trident submarines 358w

Roundabouts
970w

Rowe, Mr Andrew
Debates etc.
Drug crimes, Points of order (26:07:93) 768
Social security (20:07:93) 206, 220
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 580, 590-1
Questions
Age of criminal responsibility 496
Channel tunnel, Railway network 734
Medical education 602w
Paramedical staff, Educational finance 513w
Road construction, Administrative delays 401w
Rolling stock, Leaseback arrangements 580w
Speech therapists, Training 512w
Student grants 776w

Rowlands, Mr Ted
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 23
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 533
Questions
Employment level, Mid Glamorgan 49w

Roxburgh
Children in care 970w

Royal Armouries
Leeds 26w

Royal Artillery Range Hebrides
977w

Royal British Legion
954w

Royal Commission on Criminal Justice
see Criminal Justice Royal Commission

Royal Fleet Auxiliary
Shipbuilding 816-8w

Royal High School
Buildings 351w

Royal Naval Hospital Plymouth
743w

Royal Parks Review
556w

Ruddock, Ms Joan
Debates etc.
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 392-6
Questions
Crime, Greater London 135w
Manchester Prison 9w, 147-8w
Parole Board, Public appointments 11w
Prisoner escorts, Greater London 147w
Prisoner escorts, Humberside 148w
Prisoners' transport, East Midlands 9w
Young offenders, Secure training orders 493

Rumbold, Rt Hon Dame Angela
Questions
Exhibitions, Upper Waiting Hall 23w
Housing association grant 97w
Housing associations, Finance 96-7w
Housing associations, Right to buy 97w

Runaway children
Children in care 472-3w
Wales 619w

Runciman Committee
see Criminal Justice Royal Commission

Rural areas
Northern Ireland 848-9w
Post offices 1-3, 54w, 335
Poverty 848-9w

Rural Development Council for Northern Ireland
see Northern Ireland Rural Development Council

Rural planning
Northern Ireland 851w

Russia
British Nuclear Fuels 942w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing 642-3w
Overseas aid 536w
Overseas trade 269w
Religious freedom 93w, 457w

Sackville, Mr Tom, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Health
Debates etc.
AIDS (22:07:93) 617-20
Charing Cross Hospital (27:07:93) 989-90
Limited list prescribing (26:07:93) 963-6
Queen Mary's University Hospital (23:07:93) 725, 728-30
Questions
Accident & emergency departments 114w, 829w
Accident & emergency departments, Administrative delays 114-5w
Accident & emergency departments, Domestic violence 213w
Ambulance services, Contracts for services 216-8w
Ambulance services, Private health services 293w
Anthrax, Vaccination 547-8w
Baby care units 1-2w
Baby care units, Manpower 116w
British Orthopaedic Association 289w
Cancer, Vaccination 510w
Central Research & Development Committee 507-8w
Central Research & Development Committee, Finance 508-9w
Centre for Applied Microbiology & Research 548w
Centre for Applied Microbiology & Research, Manpower 548w
Childbirth 835w
Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products, Herbalism 825-6w
Computers in National Health Service, Procurement 826w
Congenital abnormalities 515-6w
Contracts for services, Dept of Health 545w
Corporate Affairs Intelligence Unit 118w
Creutzfeldt-Jakob dementia 547w
Dental services, Hygiene 515w, 553-4w
Dental services, Per capita costs 293-4w
Dentists 511w
Dept of Health, Computers 512w
Dept of Health, Data processing 545w

Sackville, Mr Tom—continued
Dept of Health, Public appointments 110-2w, 119w
Dept of Health, Public bodies 829-30w
Dept of Health, Small businesses 511-2w
District health authorities, Accountability 832-3w
District health authorities, Public appointments 112w, 552w
Drugs, Children 1w
Drugs, Counterfeit manufacturing 544-5w
Drugs, Misleading advertising 827w
Eye disorders, Screening 543w
Family doctors 510w
Family doctors, Complaints 117w
Family doctors, Pay 290w
Family doctors, Prescriptions 551w
Family doctors, Refugees 833w
Family health services authorities, Finance 288w, 541-2w
Fluoridation 513w
Fluoridation, Health hazards 830w
Fluoride, Prescriptions 289-91w
Folic acid, Pregnancy 839w
Generic prescribing 537-8w
Geriatric patients, Hospital admissions 115-6w
Geriatric patients, York Health Authority 510w
GP fundholders 288-9w, 552w
GP fundholders, Expenditure 509w
Great Yarmouth & Waveney District Health Authority 4w
Health authorities, Pension rights 543w
Health hazards, Water supply disconnections 546w
"Health of the Nation White Paper" 513-4w
Health service staff, Inner London boroughs 505-6w
Health service staff, Managers 835-8w
Health service staff, Racial discrimination 546w
Health services 294w
Heart diseases, Medical treatments 830w
Hip replacements 118w
Hospital admissions, North Western Regional Health Authority 212w
Hospital waiting lists, South East region 215w
Hospitals, Health services 293w
Hypnosis, Training 554-5w
Immigrant doctors, Work permits 509-10w
Information Management Group, Contracts 825w
Junior hospital doctors, Working hours 514w
Locums, Recruitment 551-2w
Maternity services, Costs 832w
Medical Devices Directorate, Civil service agencies 835w
Medical education, Student numbers 290w
Mid Staffordshire Health Authority, Finance 215w
Midwives, Manpower 212w, 218w, 541w
NHS, Empty housing 553w
NHS, Ethnic minorities 832w
NHS, Land acquisition 910-1w
NHS, Procurement 289-90w
NHS complaints, Children 828w
NHS complaints, Young people 547w
NHS internal market, Administrative costs 213-4w
NHS internal market, Patient's Charter 112w
NHS Management Executive, Railway travel 506w
NHS Management Functions & Manpower Review 505-6w
NHS Pensions Agency 118-9w
NHS treatment centres, Surgery 212w
NHS Trust Federation 546w
NHS trusts 826w
NHS trusts, Expenditure 112w, 552w
NHS trusts, Government grants 826w
NHS trusts, Political parties 549w, 834w
NHS trusts, Public appointments 537w
Nurses' training, Finance 549w
Nurses' training, Paediatrics 214w
Nurses' training, South East region 550w
Opticians, Complaints 117-8w
Organ donors, Costs 831-2w
Orthopaedics 833-4w

Sackville, Mr Tom—continued
Orthopaedics, Manpower 506-7w, 834-5w
Paediatrics, Hospital consultants 550-1w
Paramedical staff, Educational finance 513w
Parkfield Sterile Supplies Unit 511w
Patients 115-6w
Poisoning, Pesticides 507w
Porton International, Public Health Laboratory Service 549w
Pregnancy, Ultrasonics 554w
Prescriptions, Budgeting 826w
Prescriptions, North Tyneside Health Authority 826w
Psychiatry, Manpower 213w
Public appointments, Advertising 829w
Qa Business Services, Contracts for services 542w
Qa Business Services, West Midlands Regional Health Authority 542-3w
Regional health authorities, Expenditure 516w
Regional health authorities, NHS finance 112w
Sellafield, Health hazards 292-3w
Steroid drugs, Drug side effects 511w
Suicide, Agricultural workers 328-30w
Surgery 117w
Surgery, Medical research 540-1w
Surgery, Research finance 509w
Surgery, Training 294w
Surgery, Working hours 546w
Tranquillisers, Drug abuse 825w
Trauma centres, Expenditure 834w
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 828-9w
Wandsworth Health Authority, Surgery 539-40w
West Midlands Regional Health Authority, Maternity services 515-7w
West Midlands Regional Health Authority, Occupational pensions 510-1w
Zopiclone, Drug hazards 827w

Safety standards
Hotels 267-8w
Tyres 159w

Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim, Minister for Industry
Debates etc.
Aerospace industry, Redundancy (27:07:93) 1007-10
Assisted areas, Ministerial statements (26:07:93) 749-67
Questions
Accounts Services Agency, Performance standards 362-3w
Aerospace industry 127-8w, 268w
Aerospace industry, Clwyd 933w
Aerospace industry, Production 933w
Assisted areas 16w, 342-3, 518w
Assisted areas, Ross-on-Wye 342-3
Balance of trade 343-4
Car industry, Charitable donations 341
Company finance, Japan 365-6w
Crime, Dept of Trade & Industry 270w
Defence industries, Diversification 266w
Deregulation initiative 344
Development areas, Birmingham 945w
EC grants & loans, Merseyside 945w
Export Credits Guarantee Department, Manpower 268w
Foreign investment in UK, Employment opportunities 267w
Furs, Overseas trade 949w
Furs, Retail trade 947-9w
Industrial investment 517w
Industrial training 344
KONVER programme 341-2, 647w, 649w
Leather & fur industries 948w
Lonrho 268w
Machine tools 361w
Machine tools industry, Investment 129w
Manufacturing industries 265w
Perifra programme 954w
Peugeot Talbot, Coventry 341
Radiocommunications Agency, Performance standards 519-20w
Regional aid, EC grants & loans 947-8w
Regional selective assistance 15w
Regional selective assistance, Northern region 367w

Sainsbury, Rt Hon Tim—continued
Shipbuilding, EC grants & loans 363-4w
Shipbuilding Intervention Fund 129-30w, 273w
Trade competitiveness 266w, 343
Zinc 648-9w

St Helena
Work permits 680-1w

Salmon
309w, 324-5w
Drift nets 151-4w
Fish farming 176w
Fishing catches 151-4w, 248w, 256-8w
Fishing gear 248w
Scotland 248w

Salmon & Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975
Questions
324-5w

Salmond, Mr Alex
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 863
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 629
Questions
Advanced gas-cooled reactors, Nuclear safety 972w
British Nuclear Fuels, West Cumbria Development Agency 951w
Business questions 509
Fluoridation, Strathclyde 250-1w
Local government reform, Scotland 960-2w
Nuclear submarines, Decommissioning 174w
Scottish Nuclear, Government assistance 974w
Scottish Nuclear, Radioactive wastes 974w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 931w
Torness power station, Radioactive wastes 973w

Salmonella
Compensation 451-2w
Disease control 452w

Sanctions
Croatia 233w, 304-5w, 565w, 1000-1w
Drugs 955w
Iraq 757w
Libyan Arab Republic 574w
Serbia 232w, 955w
South Africa 20w
Yugoslavia 18w, 566w, 595w, 1002w

Sanitation
Prisons 372w

Schizophrenia
23w

School admission
Grant maintained schools 609w, 611w

School closures
Grant maintained schools 607-8w

School Curriculum & Assessment Authority
(19:07:93) 26-167

School discipline
415-6w

School Discipline Inquiry
415-6w

School fees
Assisted places scheme 613-7w

School governors
Accountability 781-3w
City technology colleges 781-2w
Grant maintained schools 782-3w, 928-9w

School meals
314w

School population
611-3w
Assisted places scheme 777-81w
Churston Grammar School 781w
Grant maintained schools 446-50w
Secondary education 654-8w

School population—continued
Standard spending assessments 493w

Schools
(19:07:93) 26-167
Inspections 601w
Intimidation 476w
Making Belfast work programme 39w

Schools' Funding Council for Wales
(19:07:93) 26-167

Science & technology
95w

Science & technology policy
14

Science education
GCE A level 600w
General certificate of secondary education 600-2w

Science Museum
644w

Scientific & technological options assessment
598w

Scotland
Advanced gas-cooled reactors 972w
Alternative energy 249-50w
Arts 250w
Asbestosis 252-4w
Bed & breakfast accommodation 176w, 496w
Blind 966-8w
Bridges 251w
Bursaries to writers scheme 48w
Child Support Agency 280w
Civil service agencies 790-1w, 814w
Coastal zone management 499w
Collective bargaining 805-6w
Community care 501w, 564-5w
Compulsorily detained mental patients 43w
Council housing 965-7w
Council tax 313w, 980-2w
Councillors allowances 958w
Criminal proceedings 496-8w
Day care of children 189-90w
Drugs 43w
Employment level 805w
Employment training 964w
Ethnic minorities 979w
Eye disorders 247-8w, 979w
Eye tests 969w
Fisheries 972w
Fluoridation 501w
Forestry 978w
GP fundholders 46-7w
Hard core unemployed 987w
Hazardous wastes 180-6w
Hospital admissions 565w
Hospital consultants 42w
Hospital waiting lists 979w
Housing associations 253-4w
Housing benefits 979w
Income support 395-6w
Industrial diseases 191w
Invalidity benefits 46w, 464-5w
Laboratories 971-2w
Labour market 805w
Listed buildings 253w
Local government elections 188w
Local government reform 190w, 958-64w
Local government staff 958w
Lone parent families 503-4w
Lone parents 725-6w
Low incomes 502-4w
Maternity services 187w
Mental patients 499w
Mental welfare officers 499w
Mentally ill 188w
Midwives 177-80w, 984-8w
Mink 972w
Miscarriages of justice 191-2w
Monofilament gill nets 502w
Museums & galleries 970w
NHS finance 973-4w
NHS trusts 501w, 980w
Non-domestic rates 979w
Nurses 500w
Nursing homes 248-9w, 497-9w
Ophthalmology 247-8w, 968w

Scotland—continued
Paediatrics 981-4w
Patients 188w
Police authorities 564w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry (26:07:93) 778-82
Prison staff 190-1w
PSA Building Management 67w
Public appointments 975w
Public transport 564w
Racial attacks 975w
Rateable value 978w
Rent arrears 968-9w
Road accidents 494-6w
Road works 251-2w
Salmon 248w
Sea pollution 186-7w
Sewage 254-5w
Smoking 500-1w
Social security recipients 1013-5w
Surgery 980w
Teachers 45-6w
Tenants 504w
Unemployment 42-3w
Water pollution 187w
Water supply industry 44w, 175-6w, 962-3w
Working mothers 806w
Writers in residence scheme 48w
Young people 188-9w
Youth training 964w
Youth unemployment 981w

"Scotlands Health: A Challege to Us All"
500-1w

***Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas**, Minister for Social Security and Disabled People*
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 292-4
Questions
Budgeting loans, Lone parents 1013w
Community care grants, Social security claims 1020w
Dept of Social Security, Departmental publications 724-5w
Disability living allowance, Administrative delays 716-7w
Disability living allowance, Concessionary fares 397w
Disability living allowance, Mobility of disabled 1012w
Disability living allowance, Social security appeals 201w
Disability living allowance, Social security claims 467-8w
Disability living allowance, Take-up 1009-10w
Disability working allowance 717w
Disability working allowance, Take-up 1009w
Disabled workers, Voluntary work 726w
Exhibitions, Upper Waiting Hall 243w
Handicap benefits 715-6w
Handicap benefits, Home visits 278w
Independent Living 1993 Fund 727-8w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Accountability 728w
Independent Living 1993 Fund, Chronically sick 200w, 728w
Independent Living Fund, Chronically sick 200w
Industrial disablement benefits, Newcastle upon Tyne 1020-1w
Invalid care allowances, Wales 394w
Invalidity benefits, Burnley 465w
Invalidity benefits, Expenditure 200w
Invalidity benefits, Medical examinations 199w
Invalidity benefits, Seaham 394w
Invalidity benefits, Social security claims 1011w
Invalidity benefits, Social security recipients 278-9w, 463-4w
Invalidity benefits, Women 464-5w
Judgments 73w
National insurance contributions 202w
Pneumoconiosis, Social security claims 204w
Social Fund 202w
Social Fund, Child patients 394w
Social Fund, Debt collection 1019w
Social Fund, Floods 467w
Social Fund, Rents 466-7w

Scott, Rt Hon Nicholas—continued
Social Fund, Social security benefits reductions 1019w
Social Fund, Southwark 72-3w
Social security benefits, Carers 716w
Social security benefits, Expenditure 395w
Social security finance, EC countries 726w
Social services, Chronically sick 200w

Scott Inquiry
see Arms to Iraq Inquiry

Scottish Agricultural Science Agency
Annual reports 309w

Scottish Arts Council
48w, 987-8w

Scottish courts
Children 990w
Closed circuit television 989w
Performance standards 309-12w

Scottish Grand Committee
509

Scottish health boards
Capital investment 43-4w

Scottish Hydro Electric
249-50w

Scottish Islands
Sea transport 313-4w

Scottish Mining Museum
970w

Scottish Nuclear
104w, 644w, 972w
Government assistance 974w
Radioactive wastes 974w

Scottish Office
Computers 966w
Contracts for services 967-8w
Data processing 967w
Departmental publications 966w
Non-departmental public bodies 974-5w
Public appointments 975-7w
Public bodies 975w
Small businesses 964-5w

Scottish Power
249-50w

Scottish renewables obligation
249-50w

Scottish Secondary Education Review Committee
250w

Screening
Cervical cancer 971w
Eye disorders 543w

Sea Fish Industry Authority
972w

Sea Harrier aircraft
357w
Low flying 749w

Sea King helicopters
246-7w

Sea pollution
Beaches 187w, 264-5w, 907w
Petroleum exploration 518-9w
Scotland 186-7w

Sea transport
Expenditure 283w
Orkney 252w
Scottish Islands 313-4w
Subsidies 252w

Seaham
Invalidity benefits 394w

Season tickets
506w

Secondary education
School population 654-8w
Wales 654-8w

Secret Intelligence Service
see MI6

Secure accommodation
Wales 339w
Young offenders 213w, 487-8, 492, 861-2w

Secure training orders
367w, 369w, 492
Young offenders 493

Secured by design scheme
633w

Securities & Investments Board
296-300w
Annual reports 239w

Security guards
Ministry of Defence 84w

Security industry
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 926-37

Security Service
see MI5

Seized articles
Animal products 878w

Select committees
Northern Ireland 323w

Selective schools
611w

Self-mutilation
Refugees 859w

Sellafield
124-6w, 645-6w, 701w, 889-90w, 931w, 999-1000w.
Health hazards 292-3w
Industrial health & safety 804w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing 104w
Radiation hazards 707-8w
Radioactive waste disposal 895w
Transport of radioactive materials 930-1w

Senior Salaries Review Body
559-60w

Sennybridge
Firing ranges 737-9w

Sentencing
Appeals 368w
Rape 488-90
Young offenders 492-3

Serbia
Military aircraft 93w
Sanctions 232w, 955w

SERCO
67w

Serjeant at Arms Dept
see Dept of the Serjeant at Arms

Set-aside schemes
157w, (19:07:93) 167
Agricultural land 156w
EC action 37w

Severe hardship provision
718-20w
Bishop Auckland 198-9w
Wales 721w

Severn bridge
Road tolls 331w
Road traffic 331w

Sewage
Scotland 254-5w
Waste disposal 254-5w
Yorkshire Water 895w

Sex education
617-8w

Sexual Offences Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323

Shared ownership schemes
Elderly 482w

Shares
British Telecom 30-1w

Shaw, Mr David
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 762
Monklands District Council (26:07:93) 810
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 633, 661
Questions
Army bases 351w
Business questions 511-2
Customs & Excise, Relocation of employees 301-2w
Ferries, Shipping safety 732
Immigration applications 495
Lambeth Borough Council, Direct labour departments 490-1w
Pensions & Divorce Working Group 73w
Small businesses, Attorney General 773w
Small businesses, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 759-61w
Small businesses, Dept for Education 415w
Small businesses, Dept of Employment 786w
Small businesses, Dept of Health 511-2w
Small businesses, Dept of National Heritage 555w
Small businesses, Dept of Social Security 723-4w
Small businesses, Dept of the Environment 710-1w
Small businesses, Dept of Trade & Industry 934-6w
Small businesses, Dept of Transport 911w
Small businesses, Foreign & Commonwealth Office 571w
Small businesses, Home Office 626-7w
Small businesses, Lord Chancellor's Dept 755w
Small businesses, Lord President of the Council 324w
Small businesses, Ministry of Defence 742w
Small businesses, Northern Ireland Office 527-8w
Small businesses, Scottish Office 964-5w
Small businesses, Treasury 594-5w
Small businesses, Welsh Office 922w

Shaw, Sir Giles
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 675-8
Questions
Research councils, Public appointments 42w, 235-6w
Science & technology policy 14
Sellafield, Radiation hazards 707-8w

Sheehy Committee
see Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry

Sheep
Animal breeding 325w
Melatonin 325w

Sheep dipping
326w, (21:07:93) 479-86
Organophosphorous pesticides 150w
Pesticides 326-8w
Poisoning 470-1w
Wales 470-1w

Sheep premiums
882w

Sheerman, Mr Barry
Questions
Occupational deafness 274-5w
Occupational deafness, Compensation 274w
Orange badge scheme 76-7w
Passive smoking 41w
Personal injury compensation, Occupational deafness 523w
Trade competitiveness 266w

Sheldon, Rt Hon Robert
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 361
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 766

Sheltered housing
488-90w

Sheltered housing wardens
488-90w

Sheltered placement scheme
274w

Shephard, Rt Hon Gillian, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
Questions
EC Agriculture Council 157w
Furs, Farms 883w
Salmonella, Compensation 451-2w
Salmonella, Disease control 452w
Set-aside schemes, Agricultural land 156w

Shepherd, Mr Colin
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 757
Questions
Parliamentary data & video network 744

Shepherd, Mr Richard
Debates etc.
Taking & driving away, Public petitions (23:07:93) 624
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 663-5

Shersby, Mr Michael
Questions
Police, Facilities agreements 369w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 494

Shetland Islands Council
46w

Ship chartering
Oceanographic vessels 762w

Shipbuilding
EC grants & loans 363-4w
RFA Auxiliary 174w
Royal Fleet Auxiliary 816-8w
Warships 86w

Shipbuilding Intervention Fund
129-30w, 273w

Shipping accidents
Fishing vessels 744w
Gosport 587w
MV Avon 587w
MV Braer 970w
MV Marchioness 78w
National Rivers Authority 919w
Submarines 453w

Shipping registration
Fishing vessels 737w

Shipping safety
Ferries 731-2
Passenger ships 920w
Rivers 78w
Tanker ships 917w

Ships
Prisons 370-1w, 637w

Shirayama Group
693w

Shore, Rt Hon Peter
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 759
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 550-2, (23:07:93) 627-8
Questions
Educational needs, Standard spending assessments 32w
Ethnic minorities, Tower Hamlets 6w
Homelessness, Tower Hamlets 705-6w
Housing investment programmes, Tower Hamlets 705w

Short, Ms Clare
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 840, 843, 861, 867
Energy conservation (26:07:93) 897-9, 900
Questions
Availability for work 675-6w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Peace keeping operations 501

Short, Ms Clare—continued
Economic policy, Unemployment 876w
Employment schemes, Northern Ireland 839w
Employment training 667-9w
Employment training, Scotland 964w
European Social Fund, Employment schemes 785w
Income support, Social security claims 1016-8w
Income support, Young people 718-20w
International trade, Environment protection 936-7w
International trade, Sustainable development 936w
Job interview guarantee scheme 674-7w
Jobclubs 670-4w, 811-2w
Non-ionizing radiation, Measurement 697-8w
Restart programme 677-8w
TEC Challenge Fund 669-70w
Training & enterprise councils 669w
Training & enterprise councils, Directors 678-9w
Youth training, EC grants & loans 669w
Youth training, Scotland 964w
Youth training, Wales 653w

Showers
372w

Shropshire
Standard spending assessments (26:07:93) 773-4

Sick leave
Wales 244w

Sickness benefits
Unemployed 801w

Simpson, Mr Alan
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 283-6

Sims, Mr Roger
Questions
EC Agriculture Council 157w

Single people
Taxation 875w

Sir John Moore Barracks Shorncliffe
351w

Sites of special scientific interest
Defence land 360w

Sittings of the House Select Committee
507, 748

Sizewell C
Construction 14w

Skillcentres
Privatisation 499-500

Skinner, Mr Dennis
Debates etc.
Arts Council (21:07:93) 359
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (23:07:93) 621
Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) (Amendment) Measure 1993 (21:07:93) 475-7
Ministers, Points of order (26:07:93) 769-70
Prime Minister's questions, Points of order (20:07:93) 197
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 544, (23:07:93) 646, 702-3
Questions
Business questions 509-10
Coal mine closures 337
Ferries, Shipping safety 732
House of Commons times of sittings 557w
Nuclear weapons tests 162w

Skyguard radar
746w

Slaughterhouses
Animal welfare 735-6w
Netherlands 241w

Slovakia
Diplomatic service 21-2w

Small businesses
Attorney General 773w
Audit 347
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 759-61w
Debts 364-5w
Dept for Education 415w
Dept of Employment 786w
Dept of Health 511-2w
Dept of National Heritage 555w
Dept of Social Security 723-4w
Dept of the Environment 710-1w
Dept of Trade & Industry 934-6w
Dept of Transport 911w
Deregulation initiative 266-7w, 347-8
Foreign & Commonwealth Office 571w
Government assistance 324w, 415w, 511-2w, 555w, 571w, 594-5w, 626-7w, 710-1w, 723-4w, 742w, 755w, 759-61w, 773w, 786w, 911w, 922w, 934-6w, 953-5w, 964-5w
Home Office 626-7w
Industrial research 953-5w
Lord Chancellor's Dept 755w
Lord President of the Council 324w
Ministry of Defence 742w
Northern Ireland Office 527-8w
Scottish Office 964-5w
Treasury 594-5w
Welsh Office 922w

SMART awards
953-5w

Smith, Mr Andrew
Questions
National debt 302-3w
Tobacco duties, Tax evasion 877-8w

Smith, Mr Chris
Questions
Advanced gas-cooled reactors, Radioactive waste disposal 104w
Birds, Nature conservation 321w, 350w
Cabinet committees, Environment 559w
Chlorofluorocarbons, Dept of the Environment 485-7w, 700w
Chlorofluorocarbons, Dept of Trade & Industry 937-9w
Defence land, Otterburn 741w
Deregulation initiative 561-2w
Forestry Commission, Land acquisition 978w
Halons, Dept of the Environment 487w
Halons, Dept of Trade & Industry 938w
HM Inspectorate of Pollution 481-2w
Homosexuality, Bermuda 317w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons, Dept of the Environment 487w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons, Dept of Trade & Industry 937w
Nuclear power, Consultants 649-50w
Nuclear power stations, Radioactive waste disposal 895w
Plutonium 649w
Radioactive waste disposal 702w
Radioactive waste disposal, Advanced gas-cooled reactors 645w
Radioactive waste disposal, Health physics 694w
United Kingdom NIREX, Radioactive waste disposal 484w
Water pollution, Disclosure of information 263w
Water pollution, Helpston 55-6w

Smith, Sir Dudley
Debates etc.
Domestic violence (21:07:93) 385, 399
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 447
Questions
Objects in lieu of tax 245w

Smith, Rt Hon John
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 529-41, 611, (23:07:93) 632-8
Questions
European Communities (Amendment) Bill 1992/93 190-1
Privatisation, Skillcentres 499-500

Smith, Karyn
17w

Smith, Mr Llew
Questions
Ammunition, Uranium 176-7w, 245w, 453w, 739-40w
Armed forces, Race relations 824w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry 758w
Arms to Iraq Inquiry, Documents 80w
Arms trade, Middle East 817w
AWE Aldermaston, Waste disposal 79w
British Nuclear Fuels, Radioactive waste disposal 940w
British Nuclear Fuels, Russia 942w
Chemical Industries Association 897-8w
Compost, Kirklees 341w
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988, Deregulation initiative 686w
Defence industries, Wales 923w
Defence Research Agency, Environment 68w
Departmental publications, English language 65w
Deregulation initiative 951-2w
Desert Storm syndrome 757-8w
Dounreay, Decommissioning 943w
Dounreay, Nuclear accidents 969w
EC Energy Council, Nuclear power 940w
Environment protection, Urban areas 65-6w
EUREKA 941w
Firing ranges, Environment 79w
Firing ranges, Sennybridge 737-9w
Greenhouse effect, Conferences 66w
Hazardous materials, Training 67-8w
Heart diseases, Wales 8
Machine tools, Exports 129w
MI6, Disclosure of information 1000w
Ministry of Defence, Departmental publications 79-80w
Ministry of Defence, Environment 80w
North Sea, Radioactive waste disposal 920-1w
Nuclear accidents, Conferences 951w
Nuclear accidents, Emergency planning 81w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing, Japan 13w
Nuclear non proliferation, Japan 19w, 589w
Nuclear safeguards 13w, 644w
Nuclear safeguards, Emergency planning 940w
Nuclear safeguards, Training 644w
Nuclear weapons tests, Defence estimates 80w
Pollution monitoring, Uranium 63w
Radioactive materials, Disclosure of information 644w
Radioactive waste disposal 940w
Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee, Publications 896w
Radioactive wastes, Japan 642w
Scientific & technological options assessment 598w
Sellafield, Radioactive waste disposal 895w
Textiles, Trade agreements 943w
THORP 645w, 999w
THORP, Compensation 124w
THORP, Environment protection 889w
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, Performance standards 940w
United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, Privatisation 643w
Uranium, Ammunition 245-6w
Uranium, Transport of radioactive materials 245w
Waste management, Licensing 903-4w
Water pollution, Prosecutions 64w

Smoking
Health education 500-1w
Scotland 500-1w

Smyth, Rev Martin
Questions
British Coal Corporation, Privatisation 255w
Fire regulations 703w
Obscene Publications Act 1959 491
Ophthalmology, Hospitals 526w
Ophthalmology, Out-patient clinics 526-7w

Snape, Mr Peter
Questions
Birmingham Airport, Air routes 737

***Soames, Mr Nicholas**, Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture*
Debates etc.
Leather & fur industries (21:07:93) 482-6
Questions
Advisory Committee on Novel Foods & Processes, Lupins 37w
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy 325w, 732w
Equine viral arteritis, EC countries 732-3w
Equine viral arteritis, Poland 733w
Furs, Farms 450-1w, 883-4w
Pesticides, Health hazards 326w
Poultry, Transport of animals 733-4w
Sheep, Melatonin 325w
Sheep dipping, Organophosphorous pesticides 150w
Sheep dipping, Pesticides 326-8w
Slaughterhouses, Animal welfare 735-6w
Transport of animals, Animal welfare 736w
Transport of animals, Netherlands 241w
Veterinary drugs, EC law 149-50w

Social class
Students 108-10w

Social Fund
202w
Child patients 394w
Debt collection 1019w
Floods 467w
Rents 466-7w
Social security benefits reductions 1019w
Southwark 72-3w

Social Justice Commission
see Commission on Social Justice

Social security
(20:07:93) 201-98
Research 201-2w

Social security abuse
Civil service manpower 1025w

Social Security Agency for Northern Ireland
see Northern Ireland Social Security Agency

Social security appeals
Disability living allowance 201w

Social security benefits
Capital rules 393-4w
Carers 716w
Expenditure 199w, 202w, 395w
Pensioners 460-2w
Take-up 395-6w
Unemployed 199w
Yugoslavia 727w

Social Security Benefits Agency
468w

Social security benefits overpayment
Income support 720w

Social security benefits rates
Retirement pensions 197w

Social security benefits reductions
Income support 720-2w, 1016-9w
Social Fund 1019w

Social security benefits rules
Departmental publications 681-5w
Maintenance 200-1w
Retirement pensions 466w

Social security claims
Community care grants 1020w
Disability living allowance 467-8w
Income support 1016-8w
Invalidity benefits 1011w
Pneumoconiosis 204w

Social Security Contributions Agency
468w

Social security finance
EC countries 726w
Tax yields 878-9w

Social security payments
Post offices (20:07:93) 323, 336, (23:07:93) 623-4, (27:07:93) 982

***Social security payments**—continued*
Public petitions (20:07:93) 323, (23:07:93) 623-4, (27:07:93) 982

Social security recipients
Concessionary fares 46w
Handicap benefits 531w
Income distribution 468w
Income support 1019w
Invalidity benefits 278-9w, 463-4w
Lone parents 123w
Scotland 1013-5w
Strathclyde 1013-5w
Taxpayers 726-7w

Social security reciprocal agreements
1020w

Social services
Chronically sick 200w

Social Services Inspectorate
514w

Social workers
Prison staff 190-1w

Soley, Mr Clive
Debates etc.
Charing Cross Hospital (27:07:93) 983-6
Questions
Hospital waiting lists, South East region 215w

Sound insulation
Railway transport 581w
Traffic noise 79w

South Africa
Democracy 21w
Sanctions 20w

South circular road
732-3

South Down
Regional selective assistance 851w

South East region
Airports 332w
Hospital waiting lists 215w
Nurses' training 550w

South Glamorgan
Road construction 481w

South Hams
Local plans 101w

South Tyneside
Industrial disablement benefits 1020-1w

South Tyneside Borough Council
Contracts for services 905w

South West region
Air transport (26:07:93) 776-8
Water charges (26:07:93) 776-8

South Western Regional Health Authority
Maternity services 515-7w

Southwark
Social Fund 72-3w

Spain
Fish conservation 737w
Fishing vessels 155w

***Speaker and deputies**, For rulings & statements see separate heading Speaker's rulings & statements*
Debates etc.
Addressing the Chair (19:07:93) 59
Amendments & new clauses (19:07:93) 49, 65, 79, 94, 153, (20:07:93) 201, (22:07:93) 519, (23:07:93) 625
Calling of Members (20:07:93) 270
Calls to order (19:07:93) 43, (20:07:93) 190-2, 218, 299, 321, (22:07:93) 502, 532-3, 535, 564, 601, 610, (23:07:93) 623, 636, 638, 669, 687, (26:07:93) 872, (27:07:93) 990, 1010, 1020, 1036
Estimates motions (21:07:93) 368
House of Commons divisions, Points of order (23:07:93) 621-2, 627-8, 629, 642, 646, 660, 661, 666-7, 675, 692

***Speaker and deputies**—continued*
Members' interventions (19:07:93) 40, 41, (20:07:93) 305, 312, 326, (21:07:93) 448, 449, (22:07:93) 533-4, 545, (23:07:93) 662, 681-2, (26:07:93) 829, 900
Members' speeches (27:07:93) 1040
Ministerial statements (21:07:93) 358, (26:07:93) 752
Oral questions (19:07:93) 3
Points of order (19:07:93) 21-4, 64-5, 94, (20:07:93) 195-7, 307-8, 312, (21:07:93) 364, 444, 448, 449, (22:07:93) 518, 532, (26:07:93) 768-72
Public petitions (20:07:93) 322
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323, (27:07:93) 1058
Scope of debate (19:07:93) 34, 35-6, (20:07:93) 234-5, 239, (26:07:93) 895, 933
Supplementary questions (22:07:93) 487, 497, (26:07:93) 740
Suspension of sittings (27:07:93) 1058
Ten minute rule (22:07:93) 548, 576

Speaker's rulings & statements
Adjournment debates (19:07:93) 25
House of Commons divisions (22:07:93) 606
Parliamentary privilege (21:07:93) 351-2
Sub judice (22:07:93) 519
Ten minutes rule (22:07:93) 519
Unparliamentary expressions (19:07:93) 6, 13

Spearing, Mr Nigel
Debates etc.
EC Social Charter, Points of order (26:07:93) 770-1
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 31, 40, 94-6, 105-6, 110
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 598
Questions
Air pollution monitoring, Greater London 907w
EC Social Charter 295w, 800w
M25, Road construction 333w
M25, Road traffic 75-6w, 332-3w
Teacher training 106w
Teacher training, Finance 105-6w
VAT, Energy prices 879w
West coast railway line, Joint ventures 77w
Young offenders 856-7w

Special areas of conservation
491-2w

Special constables
497-8

Special education
32-6w, 610w
Appeals 252w
Grant maintained schools (26:07:93) 802-3
Highlands of Scotland 252w
Wales 54-6w

Special Educational Needs Tribunal
(19:07:93) 26-167

Special protection areas
491-2w
Coastal areas 494w

Special training needs
812-3w

Special voucher scheme
East Africa 372-4w
India 372-4w

Speech therapists
Local education authorities 338w
Manpower 218-9w
Training 512w
Wales 338w

Speech therapy
Postgraduate education 107w

Speed, Sir Keith
Questions
Channel tunnel, Railway network 405w
Cyprus 458w
Dept of Transport, Compensation 335w
Driving licences, EC law 914w
VAT, Press 590w

Speed limits
Cameras 160w

Spellar, Mr John
Questions
Channel tunnel, Railway freight transport 330-1w
Defence expenditure 165w
Government car service 905w
Multiple occupation, Fires 142w
North American Free Trade Agreement, Exports 126w
Older Workers' Advisory Group 161w
Palace of Westminster, Industrial health & safety 563w, 743
Rent increases 703w
Social security benefits rules, Departmental publications 681-5w
United Nations, Israel 571w

***Spencer, Sir Derek**, Solicitor-General*
Questions
International Investments, Criminal investigation 240w

Spicer, Sir Jim
Debates etc.
Helicopters, Defence procurement (26:07:93) 908, 912-4, 924
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 599-600, (23:07:93) 680

Spink, Dr Robert
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 61-2, 73-7
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 659, 668
Questions
British Rail, Rolling stock 76w
Carbon dioxide, Air pollution control 709-10w
Crime prevention 367w
Cyprus, Peace negotiations 17-8w
Diabetes, Prescriptions 2w
Hard core unemployed, Essex 801w
Network SouthEast, Rolling stock 77-8w
Osman, Lorrain Esme, Prisoners on remand 142w
Planning permission, Nature conservation 491-2w

Sports
Finance 766-7w
VAT exemptions 303w

Sports Council
287w, 413w, 766-7w

Sports Council for England
287w

Spring, Mr Richard
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 599
Questions
One stop shop initiative 266w
Privatisation, France 501

***Sproat, Mr Iain**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of National Heritage*
Debates etc.
Globe Theatre (19:07:93) 172-6
Questions
Art works, Export licensing 26w
Dept of National Heritage, Computers 765w
Dept of National Heritage, Contracts for services 764w
Dept of National Heritage, Data processing 555w
Dept of National Heritage, Non-departmental public bodies 763-4w
Dept of National Heritage, Public bodies 763w
Dept of National Heritage, Small businesses 555w
Local history, Finance 555-6w
National lottery 25w
National lottery, Gaming machines 25w
National lottery, Tourism 765-6w

***Sproat, Mr Iain**—continued*
Objects in lieu of tax 768w
Royal Armouries, Leeds 26w
Royal Parks Review 556w
Tourist industry, Bureaucracy 768-71w

***Squire, Mr Robin**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept for Education*
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 79-80, 88-93, 154-6
Questions
Churston Grammar School, School population 781w
Craft design & technology, Educational assessment 217-8w
Curriculum, Complaints 774-5w
Dept for Education, Departmental publications 601-2w
Dept for Education, Non-departmental public bodies 783w
Education Reform Act 1988, Complaints 774-5w
Educational administration, Complaints 775w
Educational assessment 610w
Educational assessment, Disclosure of information 610w
Educational needs, Standard spending assessments 32w
General studies, GCE A level 107w
Grant maintained schools 219-28w, 416-40w, 442-6w
Grant maintained schools, Conferences 440-2w
Grant maintained schools, Government grants 609-10w
Grant maintained schools, Headteachers 609w
Grant maintained schools, Inspections 441-2w
Grant maintained schools, Local education authorities 608-9w
Grant maintained schools, Public meetings 609w
Grant maintained schools, School admission 609w, 611w
Grant maintained schools, School closures 607-8w
Grant maintained schools, School governors 782-3w
Grant maintained schools, School population 446-50w
Grant maintained schools, Teacher training 608w
Grant maintained schools, Voting methods 228-9w, 449w, 610w
Pre-school education 775-6w
Schools, Inspections 601w
Science education, GCE A level 600w
Science education, General certificate of secondary education 600-2w
Teacher training 106w
Teacher training, Finance 105-6w
Teacher training, Primary education 781w
Teacher training, Student numbers 106w
Teachers, Educational qualifications 229-30w
Teachers, Working hours 108w
Technical education, Curriculum 603w
Technical education, Finance 602-3w

Staff associations
369w

Standard assessment tasks
610w

Standard spending assessments
99-100w, 699w, 708w
Educational finance 100w
Educational needs 32w
Health 100w
Housing amenities 493w
Lone parent families 492-3w
Lone parents 100w
Multiple occupation 493w
School population 493w
Shropshire (26:07:93) 773-4
Tower Hamlets Borough Council 32w

Standardisation
NATO 749w

Standards specifications
EC internal trade 520w
Environment protection 126-7w, 482w
Handicapped 518w

Stanley, Rt Hon Sir John
Questions
Mid Kent Water, Water charges 348w
Water charges 347-8w
Water pollution, EC law 348-50w

Stansted Airport
(27:07:93) 1011-20

START Treaty
Ukraine 92w

State visits
413w

Steel, Rt Hon Sir David
Debates etc.
Social security payments, Public petitions (20:07:93) 323
Questions
Regional aid, EC grants & loans 28-9w

Steen, Mr Anthony
Questions
Beaches, Sea pollution 264-5w, 907w
Churston Grammar School, School population 781w
Deregulation initiative 267w
Government grants to voluntary organisations 212w
Local plans, South Hams 101w
National Rivers Authority, Shipping accidents 919w
Plymouth Airport 738
Refreshment Dept, Expenditure 745-6

Steinberg, Mr Gerry
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 55, 70
Questions
General studies, GCE A level 107w
Teacher training, Open university 105w
Teacher training, Student numbers 106w
Teachers, Educational qualifications 229-30w
Teachers, Working hours 108w

Stephen, Mr Michael
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 243
Questions
Income tax, Tax yields 27-8w
National insurance contributions 202w
Special constables 498

Sterling
Caribbean 597w
Channel Islands 597w
Switzerland 303w

Stern, Mr Michael
Questions
Driving offences 331-2w
Means tested benefits, Capital rules 466w
Non-fossil fuel obligation 337-8

Steroid drugs
Death 476w
Drug abuse 619w
Drug side effects 511w
Wales 476w

Stevenson, Mr George
Debates etc.
Assisted areas, Points of order (26:07:93) 768
Questions
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 494

***Stewart, Mr Allan**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scottish Office*
Questions
Advanced gas-cooled reactors, Nuclear safety 972w
Ambulance services, Contracts for services 980w
Ammunition, Uranium 176-7w
Arts, Scotland 250w

Stewart, Mr Allan—continued
Asbestosis, Scotland 252-4w
Blind, Scotland 966-8w
Cervical cancer, Screening 971w
Children in care, Telephones 970w
Community care, Hospital discharges 501w
Compulsorily detained mental patients, Scotland 43w
Council housing, Empty housing 965-7w
Council tax, Handicapped 313w
Council tax, Strathclyde 980-2w
Councillors' allowances, Scotland 958w
Day care of children, Scotland 189-90w
Digestive system disorders, Hospital consultants 42w
Digestive system disorders, Hospital waiting lists 979w
Dounreay, Nuclear accidents 969w
Drugs, Date marking 43w
Employment training, Scotland 964w
Ethnic minorities, Government grants to local authorities 979w
Eye disorders, Medical treatments 979w
Eye disorders, Scotland 247-8w
Eye tests, Optical charges 969w
Fluoridation, Scotland 501w
Fluoridation, Strathclyde 250-1w
GP fundholders, Laboratories 971-2w
GP fundholders, Scotland 46-7w
Greater Glasgow Health Board, Acute beds 43w
Hard core unemployed, Scotland 987w
Hospital admissions, Scotland 565w
Hospital waiting lists, Scotland 979w
Inverclyde Enterprise Zone, EC grants & loans 989w
Inverclyde Enterprise Zone, Nature conservation 989w
Local government constituencies, Dunbartonshire 959w
Local government elections, Candidates 958w
Local government elections, Scotland 188w
Local government reform, East Lothian 44w
Local government reform, Scotland 190w, 958-63w
Local government reform, Strathclyde 44-5w
Lone parent families, Scotland 503-4w
Lothian Health Board, Geriatric patients 504w
Low incomes, Scotland 502-4w
Maternity services, NHS trusts 187w
Mental patients, Hospital admissions 499w
Mental welfare officers, Scotland 499w
Mentally ill, Scotland 188w
Midwives, Manpower 177-80w, 984-8w
NHS finance, Scotland 973-4w
NHS trusts, Fringe benefits 501w
Non-domestic rates, Rating revaluations 979w
Nurses, Scotland 500w
Nursing homes, Labour turnover 497w
Nursing homes, Manpower 497-9w
Nursing homes, Scotland 248-9w
Ophthalmology, Hospitals 247w
Ophthalmology, Out-patient clinics 247w, 968w
Paediatrics, Hospital consultants 981-4w
Patients, Scotland 188w
Property development, Kelburn 253w
Public transport, Local government services 564w
Rateable value, Scotland 978w
Scottish health boards, Capital investment 43-4w
Scottish Nuclear, Government assistance 974w
Scottish Nuclear, Radioactive wastes 974w
Scottish Office, Departmental publications 966w
Scottish Office, Small businesses 964-5w
Smoking, Health education 500-1w
Surgery, Scotland 980w
Torness power station, Radioactive wastes 973w
Unemployment, Scotland 42-3w
Youth training, Scotland 964w
Youth unemployment, Strathclyde 981w

Stockton on Tees
Property development 66-7w

Stockton on Tees Borough Council
Contracts for services 905w

Stonehenge bypass
Road works 404w

Stott, Mr Roger
Questions
Belfast Airport, Fire services 851w
Belfast Airport, Privatisation 850w

Stoy Hayward
Dept of Trade inquiries 133w

Strathclyde
Council tax 980-2w
Fluoridation 250-1w
Local government reform 44-5w
Lone parents 279-80w
Social security recipients 1013-5w
Youth unemployment 981w

Straw, Mr Jack
Questions
Council housing, Rents 900-1w
Council tax, Valuation 346w
County Hall, Operating costs 693w
County Hall, Property transfer 693w
Greater London 64-5w
Local government functions 909-10w
Local government reform 708w
Rented housing, Property transfer 902w
Standard spending assessments 699w

Street Works Advisory Committee
Public appointments 917w

Streeter, Mr Gary
Questions
Rent arrears, Local authorities 105w

Student grants
776w
North Yorkshire Education Authority 415w
Open University 415w

Student loans
776w

Student numbers
Medical education 290w
Teacher training 106w

Student unions
108w
Finance 39-40w
Manpower 618w
Ministers' domestic visits 776w
Northern Ireland 39-40w
Political activities 40w

Students
Personal income 109w
Social class 108-10w

Sub judice
746-7
Speaker's rulings & statements (22:07:93) 519

Sub post offices
Passports 856w

Submarines
Shipping accidents 453w

SubSaharan Africa
Debts 305-6w

Subsidies
Sea transport 252w

Suckler cow premiums
512

Sudan
Foreign policy 1007-8w

Sugar
Production 945-6w
Production quotas 884-6w

Sugar beet
Prices 884w

Suicide
Agricultural workers 328-30w

Sulphur dioxide
Fiddlers Ferry power station 898w

Sumberg, Mr David
Debates etc.
Assisted areas, Points of order (26:07:93) 769
Questions
Assisted areas, Bolton 340

Summary trial
Greater London 307w

Supervision orders
Young offenders 857w

"Supply Estimates 1993/94"
(21:07:93) 368-402, 443-4

"Supply Estimates 1993/94, Supplementary Estimates"
(21:07:93) 368-402, 443-4

Support for products under research scheme
953-5w

Support Force for Children's Residential Care
see Children's Residential Care Support Force

Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993
Debates etc.
(21:07:93) 445-68

Surgery
117w
Breast cancer 121w
Heart diseases 9
Injuries 833-4w, 927w
Medical research 540-1w
NHS treatment centres 212w
Research finance 509w
Scotland 980w
Training 294w
Wales 121w, 927w
Wandsworth Health Authority 539-40w
Working hours 546w

Surplus land
Government departments 303w
Land acquisition 303w

Surveyor Generals' Organisation
732

Sustainable development
102w
House of Commons select committees 869-70w
International trade 936w
Research 478w
Wales 478w

Swan Hunter Shipbuilders
Defence contracts 752w

Sweeney, Mr Walter
Questions
Secure accommodation, Wales 339w
Unemployment, Wales 10

Switzerland
Sterling 303w

Sykes, Mr John
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 600
Questions
Fluoridation, Health hazards 830w
Young offenders, Sentencing 492-3

Tai Cymru
see Housing for Wales

Take-up of employment
Devon & Cornwall Training & Enterprise Council 785w
Rochdale 799w
Training & enterprise councils 654w
Wales 654w

Taking & driving away
Public petitions (23:07:93) 624

Tanker ships
Shipping safety 917w

Tapsell, Sir Peter
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 525
Questions
Official engagements 94w, 319w, 757w

TASM
353w

Tate & Lyle
945-6w

Tax allowances
British merchant fleet 579w
Costs 879w
Insurance companies 300-1w
Pensions 27w

Tax burden
Yorkshire & Humberside 90w

Tax collection
VAT 874w

Tax evasion
879w
Road tax 586w, 631w
Television licences 620w
Tobacco duties 877-8w
VAT 873-4w

Tax yields
879w
Corporation tax 590w
Drug industry 28w
Football 876w
Income tax 27-8w
Pensions 28w
Social security finance 878-9w
VAT 588-90w

Taxation
Air pollution control 877w
Packaging 874w
Single people 875w

Taxis
Greater London 282-3w
Road blocks 282-3w

Taxpayers
Social security recipients 726-7w

Taylor, Mrs Ann
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 29-33, 38, 41, 67-9, 73-4, 76-7, 155
Questions
Grant maintained schools 416-40w, 442-6w
Grant maintained schools, Conferences 440-2w
Grant maintained schools, Inspections 441-2w
Grant maintained schools, Pupil exclusions 437w
Grant maintained schools, School population 446-50w
Grant maintained schools, Voting methods 449w
Teacher training, Primary education 781w
Training & enterprise councils, Conferences 450w

Taylor, Mr Ian
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 656
Questions
British Telecom, Privatisation 345-6
Local government reform 908-9w
Medical Devices Directorate, Civil service agencies 835w
Non-fossil fuel obligation 641-2w
Nuclear weapons policy 189

Taylor, Rt Hon John David
Questions
Army in Northern Ireland 186
Demonstrations, Northern Ireland 39w
Health centres, Armagh 527w
Interest rates 12
Student unions, Finance 39-40w
Student unions, Political activities 40w

Taylor, Rt Hon John David—continued
Submarines, Shipping accidents 453w
Terrorism, Television advertising 262w

Taylor, Mr John M, Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Dept
Questions
Coroners, Administrative delays 753w
Court of Appeal, Judges 308w
Courts, Cleaning services 399w
Criminal appeals 308w
Evidence, Children 523-5w
Homicide, Trials 211w, 306w
Immigration appeals, Immigrants' dependants 10-1w
Industrial diseases, Compensation 91w
Judges, Corruption 523w
Judges, Dismissal 308w
Land Registry Office, Computers 753-4w
Land Registry Office, Contracts for services 755w
Land Registry Office, Data processing 754-5w
Legal aid, Drug abuse 399-400w
Legal aid scheme, Immigration 756-7w
Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Legal Education Etc, Annual reports 212w
Lord Chancellor's Dept, Computers 753w
Lord Chancellor's Dept, Contracts for services 755w
Lord Chancellor's Dept, Data processing 754w
Lord Chancellor's Dept, Non-departmental public bodies 400-1w
Lord Chancellor's Dept, Small businesses 755w
Magistrates, Training 211w
Magistrates' courts, Administration of justice 306-7w
Magistrates' courts, Performance standards 307-8w
Magistrates' courts committees 756w
Personal injury compensation, Occupational deafness 523w

Taylor, Mr Matthew
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 223, 233-7, 252-4, 282
Questions
Citizen's Charter 15-6
Departmental publications, Dept for Education 601-2w
Departmental publications, Dept of Employment 786-7w
Departmental publications, Dept of Health 512-3w
Departmental publications, Dept of National Heritage 556w
Departmental publications, Dept of Social Security 724-5w
Departmental publications, Dept of the Environment 701w
Departmental publications, Dept of Trade & Industry 647-8w
Departmental publications, Dept of Transport 917-8w
Departmental publications, Foreign & Commonwealth Office 569w
Departmental publications, Home Office 625w
Departmental publications, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 732w
Departmental publications, Ministry of Defence 817-8w
Departmental publications, Northern Ireland Office 839-41w
Departmental publications, Scottish Office 966w
Departmental publications, Treasury 591w
Departmental publications, Welsh Office 479w

Taylor, Sir Teddy
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 765
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 542, 550, 557-60, 582, (23:07:93) 635, 660
Questions
Business questions 511

Taylor, Sir Teddy—continued
Common agricultural policy, Expenditure 193-4
Defence expenditure 165w
Sub judice 746-7
VAT zero rating, EC law 29-30w, 238w

Teacher training
106w
Finance 105-6w
Grant maintained schools 608w
Open University 105w
Primary education 781w
Student numbers 106w
Technical education 602w
Wales 929w

Teachers
Early retirement 230w
Educational qualifications 229-30w
Performance appraisal 45-6w
Recruitment 922w
Redundancy 51-2w
Scotland 45-6w
Wales 51-2w, 922w
Working hours 108w

TEC Challenge Fund
669-70w

Technical education
Curriculum 603w
Finance 602-3w
Teacher training 602w

Technology schools initiative
602-3w

Technology transfer
Departmental responsibilities 15w

Teenage pregnancy
122w

Telephone charges
Billing 950-1w

Telephone services
Pornography 490

Telephones
Children in care 970w

Television
Ownership 24w

Television advertising
Terrorism 262w

Television licences
Tax evasion 620w

Temple-Morris, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
BBC External Services (26:07:93) 804
Questions
Disability living allowance, Administrative delays 716-7w

Temporary accommodation
Housing standards 691-2w
North West region 487w
Northern Ireland Housing Executive 529-30w
Wales 663w

Temporary employment
Railway safety 335-7w

Temporary immigrants
373-4w
Immigration applications 857w

10 Downing Street
Fund raising 757w

Ten minutes rule
Speaker's rulings & statements (22:07:93) 519

Tenant farmers
Lands Tribunal 593-4w

Tenants
Housing associations 253-4w, 898w, 979w
Scotland 504w

Terrace pavilion
House of Commons catering 564w

Terrorism
Extradition (21:07:93) 445-68
Northern Ireland 192, 262w
Prisoners' transfers 859-60w
Television advertising 262w

Textiles
Trade agreements 943w

Thailand
Drug crimes 758w
Prisoners 17w

Thames Water
Disabled workers 813-4w

Theatre nuclear weapons
Defence research 83w

Thomason, Mr Roy
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 576
Questions
Bail 491
Coal mining, Methane 943-4w
Direct labour departments 490w
Employment level 804w
Energy Advisory Panel 943w
Environment protection, Expenditure 906w
Gibraltar, Air transport 458-9w
VAT, Tax evasion 873-4w

Thompson, Sir Donald
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 635

Thompson, Mr Jack
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 692

Thompson, Mr Patrick
Questions
Defence expenditure, NATO countries 183
Price Marking Order 1991 16w

THORP
68-9w, 104w, 273w, 338, 642-3w, 645w, 701w, 707-8w, 889-90w, 999w
Building workers 270w
Compensation 124w
Employment opportunities 124w, 126w
Environment protection 889w
Nature conservation 325-6w
Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty 999-1000w
Plutonium 124w
Radioactive waste disposal 341w, 347w, 366w, 888w, 931w
Radioactive wastes 124w, 643w, 702w, 895w
Transport of radioactive materials 643w, 931w
Uranium 889w

3D
City grants 706w

Thurnham, Mr Peter
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 34
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 310
Social security (20:07:93) 203, 224, 229-33
Questions
Home helps, Fees & charges 216w
Lone parent families, Wales 3

Tibet
Human rights 19-20w, 93w

Timex
Public petitions (27:07:93) 981

Tipping, Mr Paddy
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 764-5
Social security payments, Public petitions (27:07:93) 982
Questions
Armenia, Diplomatic relations 234w
Armenia, Economic situation 234w
British Coal Corporation, Directors 957w
Firearms, Crime 370w

Tipping, Mr Paddy—continued
Local Government Commission for England 101w
Monopolies & Mergers Commission, Gas supply industry 953w
Nuclear power 130w
Office of Gas Supply, Directors 953w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 410w
THORP, Radioactive wastes 643w
THORP, Transport of radioactive materials 643w, 931w

Tobacco
Children 500w

Tobacco duties
Tax evasion 877-8w

Tomlinson Inquiry
see Londons Health Service Medical Education & Research Inquiry

Tornado aircraft
Airwork 181, 747-8w
Defence contracts 749w

Torness power station
972w, 974w
Radioactive wastes 973w

Torture
Prosecutions 22w

Tourism
EC grants & loans 322-3w
National lottery 765-6w
Northern Ireland 255-6w, 322-3w, 413w
USA 255-6w
Wales 49w

Tourist attractions
Motorways 914w

Tourist industry
Bureaucracy 768-71w

Tourists
National parks 912w
Northern Ireland 414w

Tower Hamlets
Ethnic minorities 6w
Homelessness 705-6w
Housing investment programmes 705w

Tower Hamlets Borough Council
Standard spending assessments 32w

Town & country planning
Greenbelt 65w

Town & Country Planning (Minerals) Act 1981
Questions
693w

Townend, Mr John
Questions
Burglary, Crime prevention 369w
Deregulation initiative 500

Townsend, Mr Cyril D
Questions
Army in Northern Ireland, Army strength 187

Tracey, Mr Richard
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 766

Trade agreements
Textiles 943w

Trade competitiveness
266w, 343
Deregulation initiative 953-4w

Trade Union Reform & Employment Rights Act 1993
Questions
687w, 690-1w, 804-5w

Traffic examiners
583w

Traffic noise
Sound insulation 79w

Trafford
Hospitals (26:07:93) 787-90

Training
Astra Training Services 809w
Child support officers 192-3w
Disabled workers 807-8w
Hazardous materials 67-8w
Hypnosis 554-5w
Magistrates 211w
Merchant seamen 282w
Nuclear safeguards 644w
Speech therapists 512w
Surgery 294w
Young people 802-3w

Training & enterprise councils
669w, 785w, 802w, 808-9w
Annual reports 679w
Conferences 450w
Directors 678-9w, 807w
Disabled workers 807-8w
Disclosure of information 680w
Expenditure 799w
Pay 679-80w
Public meetings 807w
Quota of disabled workers 808w
Take-up of employment 654w

Training credit
Yorkshire & Humberside 162w

Training credits
802-3w

Training for work
785w

Tranquillisers
Drug abuse 825w

Transitional arrangements
Council tax 101w

Transport of animals
Animal welfare 736w
Netherlands 241w
Poultry 733-4w

Transport of hazardous materials
Chemical & biological warfare 80-3w
Imports 663w

Transport of radioactive materials
Safety 273w
Sellafield 930-1w
THORP 643w, 931w
Uranium 245w

Trauma centres
Expenditure 834w
Wales 927w

Travel to interview scheme
Earnings rules 691w

Travelling people
Public order offences 136-7w

Trawsfynydd power station
339, 514
Decommissioning 338-9

Treasury
301-2w
Computers 593w
Contracts for services 594w
Crime 587-8w
Data processing 590-1w
Departmental publications 591w
Public bodies 875-6w
Small businesses 594-5w

Treasury Solicitors' Dept
Computers 772-3w
Contracts for services 772w
Data processing 771w

Treaties
990-7w

Treaty of Rome
155w

Treaty on European Union
19w, 155w, 192, 275-6w, 500-4, (22:07:93) 519-611

Treaty on European Union*—*continued
EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 625-723
Judicial review 1005w
Rees-Mogg, Lord 746-7

Trials
774w
CORRUPTION 533w
Homicide 211w, 306w

Trident
165w

Trident submarines
164-5w, 746w
Rosyth Dockyard 358w

Trimble, Mr David
Questions
West coast railway line, Investment 735

Tritium
Defence procurement 751w

Trotter, Mr Neville
Questions
Navy, Armed forces deployment 452-3w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 10w
Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Shipbuilding 816-8w
Swan Hunter Shipbuilders, Defence contracts 752w
Warships, Defence contracts 752w

Truancy
Clwyd 53w

Turner, Mr Dennis
Questions
Ever Ready, Wolverhampton 347

Turner Committee
see Building Regulations Advisory Committee

Twinn, Dr Ian
Debates etc.
Assisted areas (26:07:93) 760
Questions
Armed forces deployment, Hong Kong 88w
Training, Young people 802-3w

Tyler, Mr Paul
Questions
Devon & Cornwall Training & Enterprise Council, Take-up of employment 785w
Milk, Production quotas 38w
War widows, Members' correspondence 11w

Tyres
Fires 209w, 263w
Imports 272w
Road accidents 159w
Safety standards 159w
Waste disposal 209w, 263w

UK contributions
Development banks 16w
European Development Fund 231w
High definition television 125w
International organisations 536-8w
World Bank 534w

UK contributions to EC budget
29w

UK delegations
Council of Europe 94w
Western European Union 94w

UK Onshore Operators' Group
944w

Ukraine
START Treaty 92w

Ulster Unionist Party
747-8

Ultrasonics
Pregnancy 554w

UN Angola Verification Mission
234-5w, (27:07:93) 1021-8

UN Conference on Environment & Development
977w

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
828-9w

UN High Commissioner for Refugees
231w, 233w, 457w, 1002w

UN Register of Conventional Arms
745w
Far East 568w

Unemployed
Sickness benefits 801w
Social security benefits 199w

Unemployment
Coal mine closures 800w
Disabled workers 807w
EC action 70w
Economic policy 876w
Moray (20:07:93) 322
Public petitions (20:07:93) 322
Scotland 42-3w
Wales 9-12, 49w, 480-1w

Unemployment benefits
EC countries 466w
Fraud 689-90w

Unfair trading practices
Mortgages 947w

Unibank Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
Rep* (20:07:93) 177
3R order read (26:07:93) 731

Uniform business rate
Rate rebates 906w

UNITA
234-5w, (27:07:93) 1021-8

United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority
931-2w
Performance standards 940-2w
Privatisation 643w

United Kingdom NIREX
895w
Radioactive waste disposal 484w

United Kingdom Sports Commission
287w

United Nations
304-5w, 510, (26:07:93) 837-72, 1006w
Israel 571w, 1003w

Universities
Defence research 172w, 750w

Unparliamentary expressions
Speaker's rulings & statements (19:07:93) 6, 13

Upper Waiting Hall
Exhibitions 23w, 95-6w, 242-3w, 456w, 871w

Uranium
Ammunition 63w, 163w, 176-7w, 179-80, 245-6w, 453w, 739-40w, 749w, 819-20w
Defence equipment 750w
Departmental publications 245-6w
Exports 646-7w
Nuclear fuel reprocessing 125-6w, 646w
Pollution monitoring 63w
Prices 645-6w
THORP 889w
Transport of radioactive materials 245w

Urban areas
Environment protection 65-6w

Urban development corporations
Public expenditure 901-2w

Urban investment grant
243w, 662w

Urban programme
341w, 710w

Urban railways
Manchester (26:07:93) 787-90

US bases
817-9w

USA
Air routes 74w
Defence contracts 191
Foreign tourists 255-6w
Tourism 255-6w

Vacancies
Employment Service local offices 688-90w
Paediatrics 551w

Vaccination
Anthrax 547-8w, 647w, 743-4w
Cancer 510w
Iraq-Kuwait conflict 87w

Vagrancy Act 1824
Questions
388w

Valleys initiative
Expenditure 662w

Valuation
Council tax 346w

Valuation tribunals
Computer applications 119-20w
Wales 119-20w

VAT
Clothing 194
Concessionary coal 29w
EC countries 589w
Energy prices 29w, 879w
Fuels 191-2, (26:07:93) 778-82
Housing construction 588-9w
Press 590w
Tax collection 874w
Tax evasion 873-4w
Tax yields 588-90w

VAT exemptions
Aids for handicapped 875w
Sports 303w

VAT postponed accounting
874w

VAT zero rating
EC law 29-30w, 238w

Vaz, Mr Keith
Debates etc.
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 307, 312
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 446, 449
Questions
Abu Dhabi 321w
Abu Dhabi, Prisoners 304w
Bank of Credit & Commerce International, Company liquidations 363w
City challenge 347w
Immigration 370w
Local authority associations 710w
Official visits 560-2w
Olympic Games, Manchester 319-20w
Urban programme 710w

Vehicle Inspectorate
Annual reports 583w

Veterinary drugs
EC law 149-50w

Veterinary services
Highlands of Scotland 970w

Victim support schemes
631-2w

"Victoria History of the Counties of England"
555-6w

Video Recordings Bill (HL) 1992/93
Debates etc.
Royal Assent (20:07:93) 323

Vietnam
Human rights 11-2w

Vietnamese refugees
Hong Kong 457-8w
Immigrant detainees 457-8w

Vietnamese refugees—continued
Repatriation 457w

Viggers, Mr Peter
Questions
MV Avon, Shipping accidents 587w

Village halls
Wales 338w

Visas
Ghana 207-10w
Indian subcontinent 207-10w
Working holidays 858w

Vocational education
Fire prevention 372w

Vocational guidance
687w, 805w

Voluntary unemployment
Income support 720-2w

Voluntary work
Disabled workers 726w

Vote Office
309w

Voting behaviour
EC Environment Council 67w

Voting methods
Grant maintained schools 228-9w, 449w, 610w

***Waldegrave, Rt Hon William**, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster*
Questions
Chartermark scheme 13
Citizen's Charter, EC action 41w
Civil Service College 42w
Contracts for services 17-8
Efficiency scrutinies 598-9w
Government buildings, Management 559-600w
Local government services, Contracts for services 16-7
Open government 40w, 758-9w
Particle Physics & Astronomy Research Council, Public appointments 761w
Postgraduate education 40-1w
Public appointments, Advertising 759-60w
Public records 41-2w
Recruitment & Assessment Services Agency, Annual reports 287w
Research councils 235w
Research councils, Public appointments 42w, 235-6w
Science & technology policy 14
Small businesses, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 759-61w

Walden, Mr George
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 41-2, 61-3

Wales
Aggregates 122w, 652w
Agricultural production 52-3w
Agricultural Wages Board 474w
Agri-environment action plan 244w
Alcoholic drinks 622-6w
Assisted areas 650w
Assisted places scheme 477-8w
Asthma 476w
Beaches 664w, 923w
Bed & breakfast accommodation 653w
Bursaries to writers scheme 25-6w
Bus services 244-5w
Cancer 52w
Care & repair initiative 477w
Child abuse 654w
Child prostitution 135-6w
Child protection registers 474-6w
Children in care 472-4w, 664-5w
Civil service agencies 474w
Clinical wastes 53-4w
Complaints 664w
Council house rents 475-6w
Council housing management 475w
Crime prevention 7w

Wales—continued
Defence industries 923w
Defence land 742w
Diet & disease 8
Drug abuse 627w
Drug industry 10-1, 51w
Educational publications 660w
Educational qualifications 928w
Employment training 653w
Environmentally sensitive areas 53w
European Environment Agency 652w
European Regional Development Fund 49w
Family health services authorities 923-7w
Fishing 52w
Forest Enterprise 50w
Forests 653-4w, 928w
GP fundholders 661w
Grant maintained schools 928-9w
Handicapped 470w
Handicapped children 122w, 337w, 470w
Handicapped drivers 921w
Handicapped pupils 921w
Hazardous wastes 663-5w
Health service staff 120-2w
Heart diseases 8-9
Hill farming 50-1w
Hospital length of stay 53w
Hospital waiting lists 338w
Housing associations 481w
Housing benefits 73w, 720w
Housing revenue accounts 477-8w, 652w
Housing stock 51w
Housing subsidies 480w
Income support 397-8w
Incontinence aids 928w
Infant mortality 478w
International conferences 470w
Invalid care allowances 394w
Iron & steel industry 243-4w
JPM Automatic Machines 244w
Kerb crawling 136w
Local government reform 927w, 929-30w
Local government social services 665w
Lone parent families 3-5, 51w, 122-3w
Lone parents 123w
Low incomes 123w
Low pay 662w
Manufacturing industries 50w
Members' correspondence 481w
Mentally ill 661-2w
Military exercises 358-9w
Minerals 471-2w
NHS internal market 927-8w
Nurses 480w
Oil pollution 666w
Orthopaedics 929w
Pensioners 338-9w
Poisoning 337w
Police 136w
Post offices 1-3, 54w
Postgraduate students 121-2w
Pre-school education 244w
Private education 666w
Property development 243w
Public appointments 11
Pupil exclusions 658w, 666w
Railway travel 918w
Redundancy 11
Rent arrears 479w
Respite care 338w
Runaway children 619w
Secondary education 654-8w
Secure accommodation 339w
Severe hardship provision 721w
Sheep dipping 470-1w
Sick leave 244w
Special education 54-6w
Speech therapists 338w
Steroid drugs 476w
Surgery 121w, 927w
Sustainable development 478w
Take-up of employment 654w
Teacher training 929w
Teachers 51-2w, 922w
Temporary accommodation 663w
Tourism 49w
Trauma centres 927w
Unemployment 9-12, 49w, 480-1w
Valuation tribunals 119-20w
Village halls 338w

Wales—continued
Water pollution 665-6w
Women's employment 244w
Writers in residence scheme 25-6w
Young offenders 853-4w
Youth organisations 650w
Youth services 652w
Youth training 653w

Wales Council for the Disabled
470w

Wales Youth Agency
650-2w

Wallace, Mr James
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 644
Questions
British Wool Marketing Board 735w
Fisheries, Orders & regulations 972w
Local government reform, Scotland 959w, 963-4w
Lorries, Axle weights 251-2w
Museums & galleries, Arts finance 970w
MV Bnar, Shipping accidents 970w
Parliamentary recess 999w
Public appointments, Scotland 975w
Shetland Islands Council 46w
Veterinary services, Highlands of Scotland 970w

Waller, Mr Gary
Debates etc.
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 455-7
Questions
Red Star, Privatisation 282w

Walley, Ms Joan
Debates etc.
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 466
Questions
Cancer, Vaccination 510w
Ferries, Shipping safety 732
Lotteries, Prize money 8w
Motorways, Road works 160w, 912-3w
Motorways, Tourist attractions 914w
National lottery 25w
National parks, Tourists 912w
Passenger ships, Shipping safety 920w
Public service vehicles, Driving licences 913-5w
Road traffic 282w
Severn bridge, Road traffic 331w

Walsall Borough Council
Concessionary fares 397w

Wanamaker, Sam
(19:07:93) 168-76

Wandsworth Health Authority
Surgery 539-40w

Wandsworth Prison
Construction 626w

War crimes
Yugoslavia (26:07:93) 798-802

War widows
Members' correspondence 11w

Ward, Mr John
Debates etc.
Nuclear power stations, Eastern Europe (26:07:93) 782-5
Questions
Council of Europe, UK delegations 94w
Ferries, Shipping safety 731

Wardell, Mr Gareth
Questions
Architects, Professional qualifications 694w
"Architects' Registration Acts Consultation Paper" 483w
Dentists 511w
Eye disorders, Screening 543w

Wardell, Mr Gareth—continued
GP fundholders, Hospital patients 661w
Maintenance, Genetics 1026w
Medical education, Postgraduate students 121-2w
NHS treatment centres, Surgery 212w
Palace of Westminster, Water supply 309w
Postgraduate education, Speech therapy 107w

Wardle, Mr Charles, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
Debates etc.
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 302-10, 317-8
Security industry (26:07:93) 933-7
Questions
Bows & Arrows 370w
British citizenship 5-6w, 143-4w, 495-6
British nationality, Hong Kong 620w
Burglary, Crime prevention 369w
Centre for Information Discussion & Exchange on Asylum 391w, 393w
Child prostitution, Crime prevention 135-6w
Citizenship of the British Dependent Territories, Hong Kong 207-8w
Complaints against police, Young people 865w
Crime prevention 367w
Crime prevention, Private sector 7-8w
Crime prevention, Wales 7w
Crimes of violence, Crime prevention 634w
Deer 852-3w
Deportation 205-6w, 411w, 857-8w
Dogs, Animal breeding 633w
Drinking & driving 368w
EC nationals, Income support 858-9w
Entry clearances, Foreign tourists 387w
Entry clearances, Indian subcontinent 8w
European Police Office, Drug crimes 205w
Fire prevention, Vocational education 372w
Fire services, Cenotaph 858w
Fires, Tyres 209w
Genetic engineering, Animal welfare 6-7w
Gloucestershire Constabulary, Radio 859w
Home Office, Computers 628-9w
Home Office, Contracts for services 625w
Hong Kong, British nationality 374-86w
Illegal immigrants 137-8w
Illegal immigrants, Criminal investigation 209-10w
Immigrant detainees 373w, 867-9w
Immigrant detainees, Deportation 618w
Immigrant doctors, Work permits 408w, 617-9w
Immigration 370w
Immigration appeals, Refugees 495
Immigration applications 206-7w, 495, 865-8w
Immigration applications, Bangladesh 139-40w
Immigration applications, Blood tests 386w
Immigration applications, Foreign spouses 139-41w
Immigration applications, Foreign tourists 385-8w
Immigration applications, Immigrants' dependants 138-40w, 389-90w
Immigration applications, Medical examinations 205w, 388-9w
Immigration applications, Political refugees 142w
Immigration controls, Deportation 5w
Immigration rules 6w, 141w
Jones, Fiona, Homicide 860w
Kerb crawling, Crime prevention 136w
Merseyside Fire & Civil Defence Authority, Inspections 860w
Metropolitan Police 367w
Metropolitan Police, Falkland Islands 9w
Metropolitan Police, Manpower 142-3w
Multiple occupation, Fires 142w
National Criminal Intelligence Service, Computers 629w
Naturalisation, Administrative delays 209w
Neighbourhood watch schemes 631w
Overseas workers 858w
Passports, Sub post offices 856w
Police 368w
Police, Ethnic minorities 136w
Police, Facilities agreements 369w

Wardle, Mr Charles—continued
Police, Newham 631w
Police, Radio 860w
Police, Road traffic control 630w
Police cautions 137w
Police national computer, Computer privacy 852w
Police Responsibilities & Rewards Inquiry 9-10w, 410w, 619w
Political refugees 391-3w
Racial attacks, Greater London 369w
Refugees, Immigration applications 857w
Right of abode 141w
Road traffic offences 632w
Secured by design scheme 633w
Special voucher scheme, India 372-4w
Temporary immigrants 373-4w
Temporary immigrants, Immigration applications 857w
Travelling people, Public order offences 136-7w
Visas, Indian subcontinent 207-10w
Working holidays, Visas 858w
Youth organisations 410-1w

Warehouse parties
371w

Wareing, Mr Robert N
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 864-5
Brewing industry (27:07:93) 1034
Questions
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Armed forces deployment 360w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Human rights 305w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mentally handicapped 304w
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Peace negotiations 321w
Croatia, Sanctions 304-5w
EC grants & loans, Merseyside 945w
Health aid 872w
Merseyside Fire & Civil Defence Authority, Inspections 860w
Sanctions, Drugs 955w
Slovakia, Diplomatic service 21-2w
Yugoslavia, Army strength 304w
Yugoslavia, Sanctions 566w, 595w
Yugoslavia, Social Security benefits 727w

Warren Spring Laboratory
361-2w, 366w
Consultants 271-2w

Warships
Defence contracts 752w
Guided weapons 246w
Shipbuilding 86w

Waste disposal
AWE Aldermaston 79w
Clinical wastes 53-4w
Fees & charges 98-9w
Hazardous wastes 180-6w
Sewage 254-5w
Tyres 209w, 263w

Waste management
Licensing 707w, 903-4w

Water & sewerage companies
Codes of practice 491w
Environment protection 491w

Water charges
347-8w
Mid Kent Water 348w
South West region (26:07:93) 776-8
West Kent Water 348w

Water pollution
904-5w
Coal mine closures (20:07:93) 324-32
Disclosure of information 263w
EC law 348-50w, 665-6w
Hazardous wastes 342w
Helpston 55-6w
Prosecutions 64w
Scotland 187w
Wales 665-6w

Water supply
704-5w
Coal mining (26:07:93) 938-47

Water supply—continued
Palace of Westminster 309w

Water supply disconnections
906-8w, 962-3w
Health hazards 546w

Water supply industry
Bye laws 897w
Capital investment 175-6w
Complaints 104w
Public appointments 175w
Scotland 44w, 175-6w, 962-3w

Waterson, Mr Nigel
Questions
Benzodiazepines, Drug abuse 854w
European fighter aircraft, Defence procurement 180-1
Sustainable development 102w

Watson, Mr Mike
Questions
Asbestosis 276-7w
Asbestosis, Scotland 252-4w
Average earnings 791-2w
Collective bargaining, Scotland 805-6w
Employment level, Scotland 805w
Industrial diseases, Compensation 91w, 191w
Labour market, Scotland 805w
Pneumoconiosis, Social security claims 204w
Working holidays, Visas 858w
Working mothers, Manpower 806w

Watts, Mr John
Debates etc.
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 452, 462, 466

Weeds Act 1959
Questions
514-5

Weight limits
583w
Prosecutions 584w

Wells, Mr Bowen
Debates etc.
Hertford County Hospital, Public petitions (27:07:93) 981
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 687
Questions
Economic policy 192-3
Exhibitions, Upper Waiting Hall 23w

Welsh, Mr Andrew
Questions
Local government reform, Scotland 959-60w
Water supply industry, Scotland 44w

Welsh Development Agency
662w
Finance 49w

Welsh Economic Council
477w

Welsh language
6
Languages education 5-6

Welsh Office
Computers 658-60w
Contracts for services 480w
Data processing 477w
Departmental publications 479w
Environmental policy 478w
Non-departmental public bodies 923w
Performance standards 470w
Public bodies 923w
Small businesses 922w

Welshpool bypass
Road accidents 663w
Road safety 663w

West coast railway line
918w
Investment 579w, 735
Joint ventures 77w
Railway travel 578-9w

West Cumbria Development Agency
British Nuclear Fuels 951w

West Kent Water
Water charges 348w

West Midlands
City grants 343-4w
Manufacturing industries 803w

West Midlands Regional Health Authority
Maternity services 515-7w
Occupational pensions 510-1w
Qa Business Services 542-3w

West Wales
Industrial development 9

West Yorkshire
Homeworking 804w

Western European Union
Armed forces deployment 165w
UK delegations 94w

Westminster City Council
Local government audit (27:07:93) 1051-8

Westminster Foundation for Democracy
Annual reports 999w

Whales
Norway 333, (26:07:93) 807

Wheat
Prices 730-1w

***Wheeler, Rt Hon Sir John**, Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office*
Questions
Computers, Northern Ireland Office 841-6w
Data processing, Northern Ireland Office 841w
Departmental publications, Northern Ireland Office 839-41w
EC grants & loans, Northern Ireland 258-62w
LEADER programme, Northern Ireland 849w
Post offices, Robbery 38-9w, 851-2w
Public bodies, Northern Ireland Office 847-8w
Rural areas, Poverty 848-9w
Terrorism, Northern Ireland 262w
Terrorism, Television advertising 262w

Whitney, Mr Ray
Debates etc.
Latin America, Foreign policy (26:07:93) 824, 827, 832
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 566-8

Wicks, Mr Malcolm
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 861
Croydon Tramlink Bill (HL), 2R (21:07:93) 427-31
Social security (20:07:93) 215, 231, 270-3
Questions
House of Commons accommodation 745
National Audit Office 742-3

***Widdecombe, Miss Ann**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dept of Employment*
Debates etc.
Adoption, Leave (27:07:93) 994-1000
Questions
Apprentices 68w, 161-2w
Astra Training Services 808-9w
Astra Training Services, Employment protection 809w
Astra Training Services, Training 809w
Average earnings 792-8w
Average earnings, Women 791w
Business start-up scheme 804w
Civil service agencies, Manpower 790-1w, 814w
Collective bargaining, Scotland 805-6w
Day care of children, EC action 675w
Dept of Employment, Computers 788-90w
Dept of Employment, Contracts for services 787w

***Widdecombe, Miss Ann**—continued*
Dept of Employment, Data processing 787-8w
Dept of Employment, Departmental publications 786-7w
Dept of Employment, Non-departmental public bodies 791w
Dept of Employment, Public bodies 791w
Dept of Employment, Small businesses 786w
Devon & Cornwall Training & Enterprise Council, Take-up of employment 785w
Disabled workers, Employment level 812-3w
Disabled workers, Unemployment 807w
Disabled workers, Yorkshire & Humberside 813w
EC Social Charter 800w
Employment level 804w
Employment level, Scotland 805w
Employment level, Statistics 799w
Employment opportunities, Foreign investment in UK 811-2w
Employment rehabilitation 801w
Employment training 667-9w
Equal opportunities, Young people 691w
European Social Fund, Employment schemes 785w
Good Childcare Good Business 806w
Hard core unemployed, East Midlands 799w
Holiday pay, Company liquidations 688w
Horse racing, Manpower 803w
Labour market, Scotland 805w
London East Training & Enterprise Council, Newham 161w, 686-7w
Manufacturing industries, Employment level 803-4w
Manufacturing industries, West Midlands 803w
North Norfolk Action 809-10w
Official engagements 71w
Older Workers' Advisory Group 161w
Take-up of employment, Rochdale 799w
TEC Challenge Fund 669-70w
Training, Young people 802-3w
Training & enterprise councils 669w
Training & enterprise councils, Annual reports 679w
Training & enterprise councils, Directors 678-9w, 807w
Training & enterprise councils, Disabled workers 807-8w
Training & enterprise councils, Disclosure of information 680w
Training & enterprise councils, Expenditure 799w
Training & enterprise councils, Pay 679-80w
Training & enterprise councils, Public meetings 807w
Training & enterprise councils, Quota of disabled workers 808w
Training credit, Yorkshire & Humberside 162w
Training for work 785w
Unemployment, Coal mine closures 800w
Vocational guidance 687w, 805w
Women's employment 690-1w
Women's employment, Equal opportunities 803w
Work permits, St Helena 680-1w
Working mothers, Manpower 806w
Young people, Employment level 802w
Youth employment 802w
Youth training 69-70w
Youth training, East London 810w
Youth training, EC grants & loans 669w
Youth training, Take-up 160-1w
Youth unemployment 802w

Widows
Armed forces married quarters 741w

Wiggin, Sir Jerry
Debates etc.
Helicopters, Defence procurement (26:07:93) 916-8

Wigley, Mr Dafydd
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 21-2
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 523

***Wigley, Mr Dafydd**—continued*
Questions
Buses, Handicapped 160w
Child protection registers, Wales 474-6w
Children in care, Runaway children 472-3w
Children in care, Wales 472-4w
Defence procurement 7-8
Disabled facilities grants 341w
Elder abuse 215w
Handicapped, Information 470w
Handicapped children 117w
Handicapped children, Wales 122w, 337w, 470w
Handicapped drivers, Parking 921w
Handicapped pupils, Access to buildings 921w
HELIOS programme 215w
House of Commons select committees, Sustainable development 869-70w
Housing & handicapped 342-3w, 345w
Housing benefits 277w
Income support, Food 203w
Income support, Mortgages 1018w
Income support, Social security benefits reductions 1017-9w
International conferences, Local government staff 470w
Invalid care allowances, Wales 394w
Overseas aid 231-2w
Overseas aid, Expenditure 232w
Pension rights, Dementia 394w
Pesticides, Health hazards 326w
Poisoning, Hospital admissions 337w
Poisoning, Pesticides 507w
Residential care of children, Registered homes 117w
Respite care, Wales 338w
Runaway children, Wales 619w
Severe hardship provision, Wales 721w
Sheep dipping, Organophosphorous pesticides 150w
Sheep dipping, Pesticides 326-8w
Sheep dipping, Poisoning 470-1w
Social Fund, Rents 466-7w
Social security benefits, Carers 716w
Speech therapists, Local education authorities 338w
Speech therapists, Manpower 218-9w
Standards specifications, Handicapped 518w
Trawsfynydd power station, Decommissioning 338-9
VAT exemptions, Aids for handicapped 875w

Wilkinson, Mr John
Debates etc.
Latin America, Foreign policy (26:07:93) 816-21, 825
Questions
Armed forces deployment, Germany 182-3
RAF Northolt, Communication engineering 819w

Willetts, Mr David
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 265-70

Williams, Rt Hon Alan
Questions
Drivers' Vehicles & Operators' Information Technology, Privatisation 405w

Williams, Mr Alan W
Debates etc.
Calling of Members, Points of order (19:07:93) 24
Questions
Welsh Development Agency, Finance 49w

Wilson, Mr Brian
Questions
British Rail, Privatisation 736
Crown Estate Commissioners, Pay 469w
Drinking & driving, Disqualifications 336w
Heathrow Airport 587w
Monofilament gill nets, Scotland 502w
Post offices, Robbery 38-9w, 851-2w
Railway safety, Temporary employment 335w
Railway workers, Death 336-7w

Wilson Committee
see NHS Complaints Review Committee

Wind power
271w, 639-40w
Non-fossil fuel obligation 640w

Winnick, Mr David
Debates etc.
Immigration regulations 1993 (20:07:93) 312
Ministers, Points of order (26:07:93) 769-70
Parliamentary sovereignty (20:07:93) 196-7
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (23:07:93) 686, 690-1
Questions
Contracts for services 18
Disability living allowance, Concessionary fares 397w
House of Commons committees, Ministers 870w
Intelligence services, Accountability 371w
Occupational pensions 468w
Pensioners, Personal income 281-2w
Pensions 73w
Select committees, Northern Ireland 323w

Winterton, Mrs Ann
Questions
Armed forces casualties, Northern Ireland 186
KONVER programme 649w
Obscene Publications Act 1959 489-90

Winterton, Mr Nicholas
Debates etc.
Treaty on European Union, EC Social Charter (22:07:93) 528, (23:07:93) 640
Questions
Business questions 514
Deregulation initiative 344, 952w
Deregulation initiative, Trade competitiveness 953-4w
Obscene Publications Act 1959 489-90
Pharmacists, Pay 3w
Zinc 648-9w

Wirral
Public transport 403w

Wise, Mrs Audrey
Questions
Childbirth 835w
Maternity services, Costs 832w
Pregnancy, Ultrasonics 554w
Rehabilitation centres, Preston 295w
West Midlands Regional Health Authority, Maternity services 515-7w

Wolfson, Mr Mark
Questions
Senior Salaries Review Body 559-60w

Wolverhampton
Ever Ready 347

Women
Average earnings 791w
Invalidity benefits 464-5w
Mental hospitals 213w
Public appointments 41w

Women's employment
690-1w
Equal opportunities 803w
Wales 244w

Woodgrange Park Cemetery Bill (HL) 1990/91
Debates etc.
2R order read (22:07:93) 487

Woodland grant scheme
156w

Worcestershire
Railway travel 740

Work permits
Immigrant doctors 408w, 509-10w, 617-9w
St Helena 680-1w

Working conditions
Refreshment Dept 746

Working holidays
858w
Visas 858w

Working hours
Junior hospital doctors 514w
Surgery 546w

Working hours—continued
Teachers 108w

Working mothers
Manpower 806w
Scotland 806w

World Bank
535-6w
UK contributions 534w

World Health Organisation
545w, 566w

World Summit for Children
16w, 231w

Worthing
A27 75w

Worthington, Mr Tony
Questions
Beef, Botswana 734-5w
Educational aid, Colombia 233-4w
Ethnic minorities, Government grants to local authorities 979w

Wray, Mr Jimmy
Debates etc.
Social security (20:07:93) 264-6, 268

Wright, Dr Tony
Debates etc.
Education Bill, Allocation of time motion & Lords amendts (19:07:93) 91
Social security (20:07:93) 275
Questions
Birmingham relief road 741
Birmingham relief road, Road construction 585w
Local Government Commission for England 695w
Manufacturing industries, West Midlands 803w
Mid Staffordshire Health Authority, Finance 215w
Public appointments, Advertising 759-60w, 829w
Public bodies, Dept for Education 776w
Public bodies, Dept of Employment 791w
Public bodies, Dept of Health 829-30w
Public bodies, Dept of National Heritage 763w
Public bodies, Dept of Social Security 1020w
Public bodies, Dept of the Environment 899w
Public bodies, Dept of Trade & Industry 944w
Public bodies, Dept of Transport 912w
Public bodies, Foreign & Commonwealth Office 1005w
Public bodies, Home Office 853w
Public bodies, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food 882-3w
Public bodies, Ministry of Defence 752w
Public bodies, Northern Ireland Office 847-8w
Public bodies, Scottish Office 975w
Public bodies, Treasury 875-6w
Public bodies, Welsh Office 923w

Writers in residence scheme
768w
Scotland 48w
Wales 25-6w

Yeo, Mr Tim, Minister of State, Dept of the Environment
Questions
Air pollution monitoring, Greater London 907w
Beaches, Sea pollution 264-5w, 907w
Birds, Blood sports 903w
Birds, Nature conservation 350w
Cetaceans, Nature conservation 707w
Chemical Industries Association 897-8w
Chlorofluorocarbons, Dept of the Environment 485-7w, 700w
Coastal protection, EC action 704w
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species 103w
Countryside stewardship scheme 97-8w
EC Environment Council, Voting behaviour 67w

Yeo, Mr Tim—continued
Environment, Disclosure of information 484w
Environment protection, Expenditure 906w
Environment protection, Standards specifications 482w
Environment protection, Urban areas 65-6w
Environmental impact assessment 484w
Fiddlers' Ferry power station, Sulphur dioxide 898w
Greenhouse effect, Conferences 66w
Halons, Dept of the Environment 487w
Hazardous wastes 56-64w
Hazardous wastes, Water pollution 342w
HM Inspectorate of Pollution 481-2w
Hydrochlorofluorocarbons, Dept of the Environment 487w
Medical Research Council, Environmental health 904w
Methyl bromide 905w
Methyl bromide, Air pollution 483w
Methyl bromide, Air pollution control 483w
Mid Kent Water, Water charges 348w
National Rivers Authority, Manpower 264w
National Rivers Authority, Operating costs 264w
Nature conservation, EC law 706w
Non-ionizing radiation, Measurement 697-8w
Nuclear power stations, Radioactive waste disposal 895w
Oil pollution, Offshore structures 703w
Peat bogs, Nature conservation 103-4w
Plumbing, Contracts 898w
Pollution monitoring, Uranium 63w
Radioactive waste disposal 702w
Radioactive waste disposal, Health physics 694w
Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee, Publications 896w
Radioactive wastes, Imports 96w
Recycling 890w
Recycling, Domestic wastes 692w
Recycling, EC action 692w
Recycling, Government grants 892-5w
Recycling, Local government services 890w, 892w
Recycling, Packaging 890w
Sellafield, Radiation hazards 707-8w
Sellafield, Radioactive waste disposal 895w
Special protection areas, Coastal areas 494w
THORP 701w, 889-90w, 999w
THORP, Environment protection 889w
THORP, Radioactive waste disposal 341w, 347w
THORP, Radioactive wastes 895w
THORP, Uranium 889w
United Kingdom NIREX, Radioactive waste disposal 484w
Waste disposal, Fees & charges 98-9w
Waste disposal, Tyres 263w
Waste management, Licensing 707w, 903-4w
Water & sewerage companies, Codes of practice 491w
Water charges 347-8w
Water pollution 904-5w
Water pollution, Disclosure of information 263w
Water pollution, EC law 348-50w
Water pollution, Helpston 55-6w
Water pollution, Prosecutions 64w
Water supply 704-5w
Water supply disconnections 906-8w
Water supply industry, Bye laws 897w
Water supply industry, Complaints 104w
Yorkshire Water, Sewage 895w

York Health Authority
Geriatric patients 510w

Yorkshire & Humberside
Disabled workers 813w
Family credit 202w
Income support 202w
National income 239w
Pensioners 366w
Tax burden 90w
Training credit 162w

Yorkshire Water
Sewage 895w

Young, Mr David
Debates etc.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Military intervention (26:07:93) 853-4
Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978 (Application of Provisions) (India) Order 1993 (21:07:93) 451-2

Young, Rt Hon Sir George, Minister for Housing and Planning
Questions
Council house rents, Rent arrears 102-3w
Council housing, Empty housing 695w
Council housing, Rents 900w
Council housing finance 488w
Council tenants, Rent arrears 703w
Homelessness 698w
Homelessness, Tower Hamlets 705-6w
Housing & handicapped 702w
Housing association grant 65w, 96-7w, 483w, 708w, 904w
Housing associations, Finance 96-7w
Housing associations, Housing improvement 903w
Housing associations, Right to buy 97w
Housing associations; Tenants 898w
Housing investment programmes, Tower Hamlets 705w
New towns, Public sector housing sales 708-9w
Private rented housing 695w
Private rented housing, Government grants 904w
Rent arrears, Local authorities 105w
Rent increases 703w
Sheltered housing 488-90w
Temporary accommodation, Housing standards 691-2w

Young, Rt Hon Sir George—continued
Temporary accommodation, North West region 487w

Young offenders
149w, 369w, 496-7, 856-7w
Prison population 853w
Remand in custody 853-4w
Secure accommodation 213w, 487-8, 492, 861-2w
Secure training orders 493
Sentencing 492-3
Supervision orders 857w
Wales 853-4w

Young Offenders (Increase of Maximum Sentence) Bill 1992/93
Debates etc.
1R (20:07:93) 198-200

Young people
Alcoholic drinks 622-6w
Complaints against police 865w
Employment level 802w
Equal opportunities 691w
Income support 718-21w, 1017-8w
Local government social services 665w
NHS complaints 547w
Racial discrimination 855w
Scotland 188-9w
Training 802-3w

Youth employment
802w

Youth organisations
410-1w
Government grants to voluntary organisations 470w, 650w
Wales 650w

Youth services
416w
Wales 652w

Youth training
69-70w, 654w, 667-9w, 785w, 799w
East London 810w
EC grants & loans 669w
Greater London 802-3w
Hartlepool 802w
Scotland 964w
Take-up 160-1w
Wales 653w

Youth training programme
839w

Youth training scheme
160-1w

Youth treatment centres
Complaints 827-8w

Youth unemployment
802w
Scotland 981w
Strathclyde 981w

Yugoslavia
Armed conflict 1005w
Army strength 304w
Consolidated fund debates (26:07:93) 837-72
Military aircraft 357w
Rape 17-8w
Refugees 231w, 233w
Sanctions 18w, 566w, 595w, 1002w
Social security benefits 727w
War crimes (26:07:93) 798-802

Zinc
648-9w

Zopiclone
Drug hazards 827w